

Safety & Security Meeting
March 19, 2024, 10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
Meeting Notes

Attending:

Keith Baich – Explore Washington Park (EWP)
Erin Bird – EWP
Danny Dunn – Portland Parks & Recreation (PPR)
Rowan Lockett – Portland Japanese Garden (PJG)
Erica Luke – Oregon Zoo (OZ)
Dennis McAfee – World Forestry Center (WFC)
Becky Schreiber – Hoyt Arboretum Friends (HAF)
Hallie Wilkerson – EWP

Partner Updates:

Rowan (PJG): The Garden has been heavily impacted by the Water Bureau Project that closes Kingston Avenue. The project has been extended through the end of April. Vehicle break-ins as usual and a Park guest drove over one of the bioswales and got their vehicle stuck. There was no damage to the vehicle or curb, but it brought up the discussion of how staff members can help Park guests during vehicle problems with creating a liability concern.

Erin (EWP): Preparing for spring break and peak-season, which means thinking about seasonal employees, as well as safety and security training. Happy to share what is covered in these trainings or take any feedback for what EWP's seasonal staff should know. GroupMe data has been updated and revised based on feedback from a data consultant. Portland Police Bureau data will be incorporated into the safety data in the future through EWP's new data software.

Keith states that the intention of this data via the new software will help show trends and make arguments for increased resources.

Becky (HAF): Looking forward to a busy season and car prowlers have already been very apparent. HAF is curious about the role that PPR Rangers can play during vehicle break-ins? In the past, they have come to the guests who are dealing with the issue and helped with the reporting process. When dispatch has been contacted, HAF are being told this is a Portland Police Bureau issue and that rangers cannot be of service.

Rowan includes that his staff has had similar pushback from the dispatch department.

Danny speaks on this issue stating that this is a systematic issue as vehicle break-ins are handled very differently in Washington Park compared to the rest of the ranger program. He thanks everyone for the feedback and will follow up with the dispatch program to see how this service can be streamlined.

Danny (PPR): There has been a red Toyota Tundra reported in Washington Park multiple times and the individual has been seen in different vehicles in the past. No specific crime has been observed but the vehicle has been acting suspiciously and the individual has acted aggressively. A picture of the individual is shown, and rangers can be contacted immediately if this vehicle or individual is seen in Washington Park.

Rowan asks if Danny can speak on the PPR Rangers training and protocols behind active crime as there have been a few scenarios when dispatch was contacted, and the rangers were unable to respond. Becky also acknowledges a few scenarios where dispatch has rejected to help during an incident.

Danny states he will have to follow-up as everything the PPR Rangers do is voluntary and in compliance. This means their main focus is checking in and informing people, rather than enforcing laws.

Erica (OZ): Focusing on the sunny weather and preparing for spring break and field trips. Meetings about bus organization and process during the South Entry project.

Dennis (WFC): The fire suppression sprinkler system has been broken since the storm back in January which will hopefully be repaired on March 21. The WFC has a new employee named Sara who is a visitor services specialist but will also focus on security. He will be out of the office next week so James or Benji can be contacted if there or any questions or concerns.

Peak Season Preparations:

Keith transitions the conversation to peak-season preparation and an updated security contact sheet will be distributed to all of the Park partners. This will be requested by the committee members after the meeting via email or Google Sheet.

Another shared resource includes the parkwide safety and security protocols owned by EWP. Keith reviews a couple of these documents and will send these out to the committee members asking for any feedback or updated information prior to peak-season. It could also be helpful to share individual policies to ensure some of the details are aligned.

Keith calls attention to the use of the GroupMe app and that the Safety & Security channel is intended for reporting safety and security incidents only with limited, necessary details.

Rowan requests language behind an institution adding a new user to the GroupMe channel and using this document as part of the training.

Keith agrees that this language should be added, and the document should be utilized for new members of the GroupMe channel.

Rowan also highlights that a missing child could become a police matter, and if this should be added into the missing person's document.

Danny speaks on this concern and emphasizes that each cultural institution will have their own policy on how to handle this issue, and the parkwide policy was created to not contradict the individual policies.

Peak Season Rangers/PPR Update

Danny begins his update on the PPR Ranger schedules that will begin March 20. There will be two day-shift rangers from 6 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., and then one swing shift which is 3:30 p.m. – 10 p.m. This schedule will go until September and there may be a reduction of service on holidays. The call/text service to PPR Rangers will continue until May 1 and will then be streamlined to the dispatch process.

Becky questions the best way to report failed dispatch attempts in the future.

Danny states that you can alert him via email right away and he will liaise it to the right person.

Rowan points out the discrepancy in the dispatch service ending at 8 p.m., while PPR Rangers are present in the Park until 10 p.m. The later hours experience more incidents and knowing how to contact the rangers would be helpful. There has also been inconsistency across dispatch language calling a ranger to an incident, but the ranger has not showed up. He emphasizes the importance of ranger presence throughout Washington Park, and a decrease in level of service will be missed.

Danny acknowledges the appreciation of their service and will follow up on these discrepancies.