

MINUTES
Board Meeting
July 11, 2-4 pm. Oregon Zoo

Attending

Michael Cavanaugh – Travel Portland (TP)
Lisa Christy – Portland Japanese Garden (PJG)
Steve Cole – At-large
Joe Furia – World Forestry Center (WFC)
Kathy Goeddel – Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association (AHNA)
Anna Goldrich – Hoyt Arboretum Friends (HAF)
Todd Lofgren – Vibrant Communities (VC)
Heather McCarey – Explore Washington Park (EWP)
Billie Moser – TP
Heidi Rahn – Oregon Zoo (OZ)
JC Vannatta – TriMet (TM)

Absent

Dave Malcolm – Sylvan Highlands Neighborhood Association (SHNA)

Guests

Keith Baich - EWP
Brie Becker – Nelson Nygaard (NN)
Danny Dunn - VC
Meghan McCloskey - EWP
Alex Mercuri - NN
Utpal Passi - OZ
Victor Sanders - VC
Eiji Toda – NN

The meeting begins with an overview of the agenda and the welcoming of a new board member. Billie Moser, who has been on the EWP Board since May 2020, will be leaving Travel Portland. Director of Destination Industry Affairs, Michael Cavanaugh will be filling this board position. The Travel Portland position is an at-large position appointed by the PPR Bureau commissioner; therefore, EWP will be reaching out to the Mayor's Office to make this official in the letter.

Keith Baich, EWP's Deputy Director will also be leaving EWP to pursue a project management career with the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

North End Field Project

Portland Water Bureau is closing Sherwood Blvd for the reservoir project this fall, which affects parking availability and traffic flow on the north end of the Park. PJG is interested in a pilot project on the soccer field for additional parking. EWP would like to hire Nelson Nygaard to do a feasibility study on this site, as well as plan for implementation if the project is approved by PPR to move forward. The scope of work has been approved and there is interest to begin this project in September.

The proposed vote is for EWP to allocate \$22,000 to cover this one-time pilot project from the existing budget. There was discussion about the fact that it is the beginning of the fiscal year and there is a history of EWP underspending the budget. It was therefore agreed that if the budget goes \$22,000 over for this fiscal year, the board will vote to use Restricted Meter Reserve funds to cover this effort.

Motion: JC moves the approval of \$22,000 to cover the soccer field pilot project from the existing budget, Joe seconds. The motion was approved by all members, with Todd abstaining.

Kathy expresses concern from the Arlington Heights neighborhood behind the environmental impact of the project. As a temporary effort, there needs to be funding to restore this field back to its original condition.

There is clarification that the project begins with a feasibility study and will not move forward until approved by the PPR director after reviewing impacts and permitting requirements. The scope of work is to include a plan/mitigation for restoring the soccer field.

Consent agenda

The consent agenda includes April 2024 financials, May 2024 financials, May 2024 meeting minutes, and a revised investment strategy that priorities FDIC insurance on funds.

Motion: Heidi moves the approval of the July 2024 consent agenda and the motion passes unanimously.

Funding Model Study

Anna shares the findings of the funding model study workgroup which met in early June. The purpose of this workgroup is to explore fundraising opportunities for new efforts, rather than replace the current sources of funding.

Both programmatic and capital efforts were explored, with safety and security excluded from the programmatic list unless it was additional funding to the current PPR ranger program. There was a clear need to prioritize these lists, as well as maintain a varied list to target different funding sources.

Potential funding sources were discussed and there was discussion about streamlining grant applications throughout the Park, rather than competing against one another. There was acknowledgement of future conflicts with the current board makeup, as the current board structure does not allow for engagement in fundraising.

Lisa suggests that the State of Oregon could be looked at as a potential funding source as the Park could qualify for state funding since it is city property.

JC states that Oregon has a decent philanthropic atmosphere, but that Oregon has many non-profits so there is a high amount of competition.

Lisa expressed interest in having an opportunity to provide continuous feedback regarding the programmatic and capital projects being considered for fundraising efforts.

Transportation Access Plan (TAP)

Brie begins Nelson Nygaard's presentation by reviewing the goals of the TAP, including edits from the Board feedback survey. Discussion on these goals is listed below:

Growth

- Maintain positive visitor experience
- Provide a clear, efficient and reliable experience rather than putting restrictions on the number of visitors

Environmental Stewardship

- A focus on Environmental stewardship, rather than transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions

Alex presents the parking projections based on venue feedback. The classifications on parking projections include "less busy days", "typical busy days" and "unusually busy days." Solutions will be created for the typical busy days.

When the Portland Water Bureau (PWB) project ends and the reservoir reopens, it will be a big tourist attraction and should be accounted for in this project. Vibrant Communities will research this topic and provide visitor projections.

There is discussion behind how this data may not accurately represent the north end of the Park due to the lack of accessibility options. If parking is not available, there is no alternative to accessing the Park. Autonomous driving should be considered in the mode-split scenarios for the 2035 projections numbers, as well as tour bus drop-off locations.

The Zoo would like to highlight that their ten-year projections were based on time-ticketing methods and parking/off-site capacity. Special events and including an event analysis could also be an important component of this work for both the Oregon Zoo and World Forestry Center.

The projected parking space gap for 2035 is 944 spaces. The following list are ideas the board brainstormed to solve for this parking deficit.

Parking & Transit

- Create formal agreements with offsite locations
- Increase wayfinding & visitor service for offsite locations
- Reduce congestion by improving offsite parking experience
- Rezone/repaint to allow for more parking
- Add parking while considering price tag
- Develop citywide shuttle that links major tourist destinations and is clearly branded
- Look at informal parking such as soccer field
- Share parking garages with downtown areas that have low parking demand
- Tour bus parking, loading, & permitting
- Active parking management

Services:

- Increase access to alternative transportation options
- Reopen rose garden loop of WP Zoo Railroad
- Expand BikeTown and scooter services
- Offer real-time parking availability

Incentives:

- Manage parking pricing with demand-based pricing
- Consider different parking prices for different areas
- Incentivize Sunset Transit center
- Include transit tickets with venues' reduced-fare programs
- Free ride zone between Sunset Transit Center and the Park

Programs/ Security

- Restrooms
- Food/Refreshments
- Cooling space
- EWP presence in Park for safety & efficiency
- Activate TriMet plaza – signage, safety
- Permitting – surcharges to rideshare companies to drop off in Park

Nelson Nygaard will follow up with World Forestry Center regarding visitor growth projections. The Board will reconvene in September to review the scenarios based on the feedback from this meeting.