



**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
April 9, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Andrea Smith, President  
Aaron Pointer, Clerk  
Tim Reid  
Erik Hanberg  
Jessie Baines

**IN THE CHAIR:** Andrea Smith

**PLACE:** 4702 South 19<sup>th</sup> Street

**FLAG SALUTE:** Commissioner Baines

**STUDY SESSION POINT DEFIANCE VISITOR SERVICES**

Phedra Redifer was introduced to brief the Board on the visitor services program at Point Defiance Park. Ms. Redifer opened the discussion by highlighting the objectives of the program as being to inform visitors to explore the many features of the park, increase visitorship as well as repeat visitorship by providing high-quality educational and interpretive programming, help visitors navigate the park during construction, and support positive parks use. Ms. Redifer reviewed the Center's usage noting the overall increase since it was opened in 2012.

The Point Defiance Downtown to Defiance Trolley pilot program was then discussed. Ms. Redifer commented that the plan is to run the trolley again on Fridays and Saturdays Jun 1-Sept. of this summer. She noted that the affordable trolley is pet friendly and ADA accessible. Another successful program that piloted last summer was the Junior Ranger Program. The program resulted in 60 new junior rangers being sworn in. The program will continue this coming summer. The Center and other attractions in the park are also going to continue to offer Point Defiance branded apparel and merchandise.

Ms. Redifer also commented on the surveys conducted by the Park's volunteer ambassadors. Results of the surveys demonstrated that about 79% are repeat visitors with the top preferred offerings being hiking or fitness, shoreline, sea life or fishing, and music and cultural offerings. 77% of those surveyed indicated they would support some level of fee-based programming if it is well balanced with other free program offerings. Programmed attendance has increased from 285 participants in 2016 to 834 participants in 2017. Such programming includes park history walks, birding of seniors, Park Rx Family Health Day, bio-blitz and several others.

Volunteer management of the Park includes Friends of Point Defiance and the Park Watch Program. In 2017 2,485 Park Watch hours were reported and 394 Park Watch online reports submitted.

Ms. Redifer pointed out that animal management in the park continues to be a focus including wildlife, dogs on leash, and marine mammals. The campaign has been refreshed and more community outreach has occurred.

Within the area of visitor management, a robust communication plan is in place to keep the community informed about what is happening about construction and traffic challenges at the park. Ms. Redifer commented that plans for dealing with the crowds in busy summer months continue to evolve including traffic flaggers, improved signage and promotion of trail usage. Enhanced police patrols are also being lined up for the summer to help with vehicle speeding and other violations that occur.

The 2018 Visitor Plan includes the following:

- Hire a 2nd full-time Park Ranger.
- Further develop Ranger program and Ranger Roundtable impact.
- Expand Park Ranger service area from Dune Peninsula to Chinese Reconciliation Park.
- Continue year-round park patrols and interpretive programming.
- Continue collaborating with Tacoma Police and Ruston Police Departments.
- Expand Park Watch Program to WaterWalk and Ruston Way waterfront parks.
- Promote “encouraged park behaviors” campaign based on seasonal use.
- Celebrate PDVC’s National Register of Historic Places Designation.

Commissioner Pointer commented that the City’s recent survey ranks Parks very high in services provided to the community due in part to the great work at Point Defiance Park.

### **REGULAR MEETING**

The regular meeting of the Metropolitan Park District Board of Park Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner Smith at 6:00p.m.

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

#### **2018 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REVIEW**

District lobbyist TK Bentler was present to provide a session review. He reported that most of the session was centered on McCleary funding. Tacoma was able to get additional \$12M for Tacoma schools.

Andrew Austin commented that the Capital Budget was successful with funding for the Eastside Community Center totaling \$3.7M for the project. Mr. Bentler commented that local grass roots support helped influence the successful outcome of capital funding. He also commented on the great work of Senator Conway and Representative Fye.

The Board per diem issue did well in Senate but the House Local government committee was a bit more challenging. There were so many competing bills that it was not able to pass.

Commissioner Pointer inquired about future revenues due to current market conditions. Mr. Bentler noted that the local economy continues to be strong within the areas of business and real estate.

Board members thanked Mr. Bentler for his work.

#### **POINT DEFIANCE ZOO SOCIETY**

Alan Varsik commented on the great work of the Zoo Society. Alan Varsik introduced Larry Norvell, Executive Director of the Point Defiance Zoo Society. He commented on the major accomplishments including:

- Significant Increase in Vision Keeper Giving
- Explored “Special Event” Funding – with a higher return on investment
- First Brew Night as the society has moved away from the Zoobilee event to reach out to younger attendees. There will be four events for 2018 to reach out to different audiences
- Completed Fundraising For Beautiful E.T. Statue.
- Developed New Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

- ROI and Key Performance Indicators for All Major Activities.
- Recruitment of 6 New Board Members.
- Board Meetings with Strategic Focus.

Mr. Norvell commented that the capital campaign effort for the aquarium is currently at 60%, he noted the major gifts that have come in from the Milgard Foundation, Murdock Foundation, Mercer Family Foundation and De Falco Family.

Funding being considered for acceptance tonight totals \$1.7M for multiple programs and projects at the Zoo. New Board Members were then highlighted by Mr. Norvell. Commissioners thanked the Society for their work.

### **RESIDENTS REPORT**

President Smith commented that the Commissioners had a great retreat on March 30<sup>th</sup>. She commented positively on the Downtown on the Go walk recently held at Wright Park.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL REPORTS** None

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director, Shon Sylvia commented on the following:

- Norpoint Spring fling hosted 300 attendees.
- Aquatics internship program with TSD is going well. The high school interns are job shadowing at MPT pools and are becoming certified for lessons and lifeguarding with the intent for future employment at the District's pools.
- Three proposals have been received for the Portland Avenue Lease: Korean Women's Association, Making Difference Foundation & Soar Academy. The six member steering committee will be reviewing those proposals this week. He noted that there appear to be conversations occurring in the community indicating a recommendation has been made on the proposals, which is not the case. A future status report will be made to the Board later in the month.
- Staff will be updating the Board in the near future regarding parking at Point Defiance Park.
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### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Ryan McHugh commented that he represents the Tacoma Rugby Club. He spoke of his concerns related to the future of the Portland Avenue Community Center and the amenities in the Park. He noted his club is growing with youth programs. He noted the club looks forward to working with Metro Parks Tacoma.

Ernest Oldfield commented on his concerns related to the current services provided at Portland Avenue Community Center. He commented that the kids that use the services may have transportation barriers to get to the new community center. Mr. Oldfield further commented that he does not want to see Portland Ave. Center lose its current services.

Stephanie Smith handed out a proposal put together by the First Creek Neighborhood related to what the group would like Commissioners to consider as the Portland Avenue Community Center formal submitted proposals are reviewed. She noted that a quarter of the residents are Hispanic, so several non-profits should be considered to run the center for better collaboration. She noted that a majority of the residents in that neighborhood are females ages 5-34, so services offered should be geared to that population. Ms. Smith also commented that that the neighborhood has a large percentage of unoccupied homes so no additional housing in that area is needed. She commented that possible housing built on the site will not work. She

also requested the Board dedicate a staff member solely to manage this process related to Portland Avenue Center that is not involved with any other District projects as that could distract them.

Heather Bennett commented that she has lived in the Portland Avenue Park Area for three years with her two young children. She noted that park is a convenient walk for her family since she does not have a car at this time to drive to another location.

Paula VanPul stated that from a health perspective the neighborhood is struggling. She stated that mental health issues in the neighborhood are also prevalent due to overcrowding and related stress. She stated open space are important to the development of healthy individuals. Ms. VanPul commented there is no investment on the Eastside of Tacoma and there are transportation barriers.

Linda Sliva commented on her concern on an easement behind her home near Stewart Heights Park. She requested additional information from staff.

Suzanne Marten, chair of Centro Latino commented that her agency hopes that there will be continued programming for young children and adults at Portland Ave. She supports the efforts to improve health to individuals residing on the eastside of Tacoma. She commented that park agencies must build and sustain park support for culturally diverse residents. She suggested an equity based approach to future park planning.

Cynthia Feleppa commented in support of the Tacoma Waldorf School partnering with Metro Parks on using the Portland Ave Center for future use.

Jack Russum commented he has lived at E. 34<sup>th</sup> St. for 35 years. He commented on the changes he has witnessed over the years at Portland Avenue Park and Community Center. He urged the Board to leave the park as is and to find a suitable partner to take over the center that does not include housing.

Commissioner Reid thanked the citizens for commenting.

**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 26, 2018 REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

Commissioner Hanberg moved to adopt the minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Pointer and passed on a vote of 5-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**RESOLUTION NO C. 32-18:** APPROVAL OF WARRANTS CLAIM FUND FOR MARCH 2018

**RESOLUTION NO C33-18:** ACCEPTING AND APPROPRIATING DONATIONS FROM THE ZOO SOCIETY

Commissioner Hanberg moved to adopt the consent agenda as presented; seconded by Commissioner Pointer and passed on a vote of 5-0.

**PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS****RESOLUTION NO. P34-18:** AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF GOODS AND SERVICES FOR METRO PARKS TACOMA

1. PIERCE COUNTY SECURITY FOR SECURITY SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$85,000.

Commissioner Hanberg moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Commissioner Pointer.

Marina Becker commented that this is for the contract with Pierce County Security. Ms. Becker noted and RFP was conducted in fall of 2015. Pierce County Security provides for a number of security needs for the District including the locking of gates and buildings, checking parks and restrooms, responding to alarm calls.

Commissioner Hanberg asked about the scope of services provided. Ms. Becker commented that the District has a window of time for parks to be opened /closed and monitored and having this service is the most efficient way to handle those needs. Commissioner Hanberg also asked about wage requirements for the services, Ms. Becker commented that PCSS is responsible in their contract to pay prevailing wages.

Ms. Becker indicated that the contract does cover the whole year and the PCSS is staff appropriately by the contractor depending on the needs outlined by MPT. They also coordinate with Tacoma and Ruston PD but are not armed and have limited authority.

Commissioner Baines asked about night patrols. Ms. Becker commented those patrols are based on current need identified by MPT. Commissioner Baines commented about future use of Park Rangers for this type of service as well

Being no additional comments the question was called and the resolution passed on a vote of 5-0.

**PUBLIC WORKS PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS** None**SINGLE READING RESOLUTIONS** None**SECOND READINGS RESOLUTIONS** None**FIRST READING RESOLUTIONS**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT OF TACOMA, PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON, AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF UNLIMITED TAX GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS IN THE AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000,000 TO CONSTRUCT, EQUIP, RENOVATE, ACQUIRE, AND MAKE CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FACILITIES OF THE DISTRICT AND TO PAY CERTAIN COSTS OF ISSUANCE OF THE BONDS; PROVIDING FOR THE ANNUAL LEVY OF TAXES TO PAY THE BONDS; AND DELEGATING TO THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF THE DISTRICT THE AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE THE FINAL TERMS OF THE BONDS UNDER THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS SET FORTH HEREIN.

Commissioner Hanberg moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Commissioner Pointer.

Erwin Vidallon, Chief Financial Officer commented this is the third sale of bonds associated with the 2014 bond issue. A brief video giving an overview of municipal bond sales was

shown. This resolution has gone to the CIC for consideration. Staffers Don Higgins and Marci Kriebel were recognized for the prep. work on this issue. Bond council / advisors and underwriting team were introduced. Geoff Urbina of KeyBanc walked commissioners through the model of bond issuance to stay in line with the commitment made to taxpayers by building out assumptions.

Commissioner Hanberg asked what will allow the tax rate to stay the same from 2018-2026, Mr. Urbina indicated that amortizing and assessed value growth assumptions are used. Mr. Urbina stated that the bonds are on a fixed rate basis. Current market conditions were briefly reviewed with the Board. He noted the interest rate for non-taxable bonds is still healthy. Shon Sylvia commented that staff will update the Board with the 6 year CIP.

Commissioner Reid asked if there will be any changes in the next two weeks that would affect anything associated with the sale. Erwin Vidallon commented that the market volatility is not expected to change anything prior to second reading.

Being no additional comments, the resolution moves to second reading on April 23, 2018.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** None

**NEW BUSINESS** None

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Hanberg commented positively on the Agents of Discovery app at Snake Lake.

President Smith commented that there will be a Committee of the Whole Meeting on April 16th.

**ADJOURN:**

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25.m.

**APPROVED:**

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President

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Clerk

Submitted by: Jennifer Bowman, Board Secretary