
**BUSINESS & RESPONSIVE AGENCY ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES**

MISSION STATEMENT

This Council advises and makes recommendations to the programs and operations of
Metro Parks Tacoma concerning financial management and business practices.

Metro Parks Tacoma Headquarters Building
4702 S 19th Street, Tacoma, WA 98405
October 11, 2016

Present: Jeff Albers, Aaron Blaisdell, Su Dowie, Peter Kram, Johnny Mojica, Dan Powell,
Absent: Don Golden
Staff: Brett Freshwaters, Julie Wilfong
Board Liaison: Commissioner Baines
Guest:

SUMMARY

- An update on the 2017/18 Biennium Budget Review was given by Brett Freshwaters.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 a.m.

MINUTES

The September 13, 2016 minutes were approved as written.

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

No recruitment update was given.

DESTINATION POINT DEFIANCE UPDATE

Dirt being moved for the Waterfront Phase I project. There is a huge gulch that has been dredged out for the boat trailer parking. The area at the top of the hill will eventually be developed and will impact the view for some of the residences of the Town of Ruston. This project is scheduled to be completed in 2018.

2017/18 BIENNIUM BUDGET REVEIW

Metro Parks is currently going through the budget process. Departments are working on their second draft of the overall budget, and prioritizing programs. The budget and work plan will be presented to the Committee of the Whole and then two public hearings will be scheduled in November and adoption of the budget in December.

During the summer Board Retreat, recommendations were made for the next biennium and staff incorporate this information into their budgets. If Commissioners have concerns with a program then they will work with specific staff on budget. An example would be scholarships. We want to make our youth programs are available to everyone, but cannot do it for free. We had challenges in the past, with how much scholarship could be provided to low-income households. This year we were able to double the amount of scholarships we had in our budget through recommendations from our Commissioners.

The budget process starts with the Strategic Plan, Community Needs and other planning documents. This information is included in the Mission Led Comprehensive Plan which is updated every six years. This gives us a lot of good information on what is important to the community and where we should be focusing our services not just in programming but in areas and amenities. This is turned into our Strategic Action Plan that informs work plans over a six-year period. This is our planning tool to develop our budget. We look at all the data that is provided to build our programs. We also have conversations with our Executive Cabinet and talk about our priorities and what we should be thinking about in terms of service and how all of this measured. This forms our budget development. The budget is the two-year work plan with dollars associated with it.

We look at our budget and if it needs to be reduced then we figure out what can be cut that would have the least impact on programs. We go back and look at some performance measures, financial measures and other data to help make these decisions.

The “Guiding Priorities was setup at the beginning and includes:

- The use of technology – We are currently implementing a new Point of Sale/registration system that will be used in Recreation and Parks. This will replace a system Metro Parks has been using since 2000. This new system will allow us to be more responsive to our customers and is more interactive. We will be able to track data and it will be user friendly especially with online registration for customers.
 - Some of the data we would be able to track would be:
Who uses our facility, when they use our facility, track by zip codes, demographics (based on voluntary information) and how many people are using each program. We would also be able to cross-tabulate with other data sources as we want to do more data analytics.
- The collaboration with other government agencies to formalize agreements, align goals with partners. - We are working with other agencies to be able to utilize facilities such as pools to provide lessons to elementary school students. We look at some of the gaps in service and try to find partners like Tacoma Public Schools, the YMCA and Boys & Girls Club to provide the services for areas in need. We have been very successful with the afterschool sports programs at the schools and are now having trouble with finding coaches. We need to do a better job at communicating with the schools to get the word out to parents about the programs being offered. Our hope is parents would volunteer to coach these teams.
- Staff training and organization development; talent management – We all know of the aging workforce and we have seen two key retirements here at Metro Parks with Jack Wilson, Executive Director and Gary Geddes, Director of Zoological & Environmental Education. So we are now focusing on the next level moving up, so we have the succession planning in place.
- Capital Bond program – This not only has an impact on the Planning Department managing the project but this goes beyond and has a financial impact on departments especially in 2017/18. As our new assets come online, maintenance are required. We will have both a brand new park and a new community center in the next biennium. The Capital Bond program as an impact beyond just the implementation of the project. This also has an impact on staff resources. We will need staff to maintain the new park and implement programs in the new center.
- Sustainability: environmental, social and economic – We are looking at trying to find ways to reduce our carbon footprint by reducing our consumption of water, natural gas, electricity as outlined in the Sustainability Plan. We will look at programming with scholarships. We will also look at our economic long term responsibilities.

The biggest challenge for Metro Parks in the new biennium is the impact of the new assets coming online and the increase of staffing cost with limited new revenue sources. We will be looking at cutting back where there is the least impact in the organization.

The financial impact would come from the two primary sources of revenue for the general fund which is Property and Sales Tax. This makes up about 70% percent of our revenue. We have a much lower increase in Property Tax as we will have reached our limit with the Levy Lid at 1%. We will see an impact on staff wages and medical insurance as these expenses will be increasing.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The overall financials for the District are looking good. Revenue is on track for the year and expenditures are catching up now that summer is over. Metro Parks will end the year slightly over budget.

The Point Defiance Marina Complex had a short fishing season and the Waterfront Phase I construction project has had some impact on the facility, but they are on track with budget.

Meadow Park Golf Course is slightly behind budget on Rounds, and there was miscellaneous revenue received for anticipated golf tournaments. The revenue and expenses are a wash.

The Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium are behind in attendance compared to 2015.

Northwest Trek has exceeded their attendance budget in August.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 8, 2016, held at People's Community Center located at 1602 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Tacoma.

ADJOURNED

The meeting ended at 9:00 a.m.

Approved:

Aaron Blaisdell, Chair

Submitted by: Julie Wilfong