
**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
4702 S 19th Street, Tacoma, WA 98405
February 14, 2017

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

SUMMARY

- An update in depth review of Destination Point Defiance.
- 2017 Work Plan was discussed.

CALL TO ORDER

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

MINUTES

The January 10, 2017 minutes were approved as written.

OTHER

Brett Freshwaters introduced Tara Dunford as the Interim Chief Financial Officer who will replace Brett while Metro Parks works to hire the new CFO for his position.

Brett was recognized for the great job he has done as the Staff Liaison for the Council.

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Brett Freshwaters mentioned a prospective new member may be joining the council in the near future. Noreen Plum is an accountant with RSM US LLP. Still looking for prospective high school or college students to join also. Aaron contacted members from other councils to recruit to the BRAAC.

DESTINATION POINT DEFIANCE UPDATE

Debbie Terwilleger presented an overview of the Point Defiance Park Master Plan and project. One third of the 2014 Bond Program is dedicated to Point Defiance. Two of the major bond projects being constructed at Point Defiance, the new Aquarium project that is happening at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and the Waterfront Phase I (WPI). The Environmental Learning Center, a third major project in the park is being funded and managed by the Tacoma Public Schools and will be located within the Zoo facility.

WPI is a high level environmental remediation project that includes the slag piles from the Asarco smelter down to the Yacht Club road. These slag piles form the slag peninsula. The site was purchased by Metro Parks with the expectation for future development. Metro Parks received \$6 Million from the Asarco Settlement as the property is considered a “super fund” site. Additional funding was received from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Browns Field Restoration Project for the remediation efforts in addition to the 2014 Bond dollars. The EPA is responsible for the remediation and design work of the peninsula and will reimburse Metro Parks up to \$20 Million for this specific work. It is a very complex project as Metro Parks has hired an A&E firm and contractor for this project, but EPA is directing the site development and has the final approval to ensure the area has been remediated.

From the remediation Metro Parks will have waterfront access, a new park on the peninsula which still has to be named, a new boat trailer parking lot and access to the Marina which is key to this project.

The 2014 Bond dollars will focus on additional park improvements such as the pedestrian bridge, the water walk and pedestrian trails.

A question was asked if remediation work was also being done in the Marina basin or is it being treated separately? Debbie responded that it was separate. The EPA would like to remediate the entire inside basin but that is not part of the current project scope.

Scheduled to take place in WPI are the installation of utilities in the new park, the columns and girders will be set for the new pedestrian bridge, paving for the new roadways and parking lots and the installation of the new bridge deck. The new restroom building should be in place by the end of summer and hopefully construction will be wrapping up by the end of the year. An opening ceremony may not happen until sometime next year.

The walls are up and utilities are being installed in the new Aquarium Project, you can see the building start to take shape. The Rocky Shores exhibit area is also under construction near the Aquarium project. This area is being updated for the new Sea Lions Exhibit and should be completed in late March.

Construction on the new Educational Learning Center is being overseen by the Tacoma School District. This new building will be shared with the Science and Math Institute (SAMI) and the Zoo's Education Staff. The building will be located within the Zoo facility.

The Point Defiance Master Plan includes a traffic circulation study for the park. An engineering firm with traffic modeling expertise was hired to help Metro Parks evaluate which solutions make sense and when should it be implemented to help move visitors through the park in the near term and future. Options may include changing traffic flow from a one-way to a two-way in certain areas.

One of the big concerns Metro Parks will need to address is how to accommodate the increased visitorship for the Zoo when the new aquarium is completed within the 0 – 5 year time frame and beyond? Metro Parks will look at the possibility of opening a second entrance to the Zoo. Metro Parks is working on an Interlocal agreement with the City of Tacoma and Pierce Transit for a pilot project utilizing a transit service to get visitors in and round the park. As the park is currently in a construction zone, we feel it would be a good time to do a trial with the transit services.

Su Dowie suggested reaching out to Diamond Parking and have an open conversation about possibly leasing land within the park for \$1.00 per year for the next sixty (60) years and have them build a parking garage. Metro Parks would not have to reach out to the tax payers to vote for structured parking. Think of other opportunities for public/private partnerships.

Aaron Blaisdell mentioned BRAC had a presentation of the Master Plan for Point Defiance Park five (5) years ago and wanted to know how the initial plans changed from then to now. Debbie responded that when the Master Plan was adopted in 2015, Metro Parks took recommendations from various planning efforts done before and organized them into the official Master Plan. Earlier efforts for programming now show up in the plans for the Triangle. Some supporters are dismayed as the details from the Leland Consulting Group report are not being followed. However, before any building could be developed on site, there are initial steps that need to be done before construction of any type could happen. The first step is the remediation of the site.

Metro Parks must also look at what would be economical and feasible. So we had to go back and refresh some elements. One of the efforts we will be embarking on within the next year is revisiting the triangle plans. We will review and look at opportunities and incorporate some of the items listed on the plan.

One example is the SAMI program. The new Learning Center can accommodate eight (8) classrooms and not the entire program. SAMI is still in need of other classrooms. The Master Plan indicates we could build the extra spaces

at Camp 6, the triangle or add classrooms down at the Marina as there is underutilized capacity there. So we are now at the point where we must figure out which area would make the most sense to build the needed spaces. We will meet with the School District to come up with a recommendation.

Brett commented when the Master Plan was initially developed it was focused on potential revenue generating ideas at the start as it came out of the Revenue Taskforce with public/private partnerships in mind. We are now more focused on getting the right infrastructure in place and looking at a program study for the peninsula. We will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to help Metro Parks develop ideas for revenue generating events once the park on the peninsula is completed.

Brett further commented that the council keep the revenue generating public/private partnerships in mind as Metro Parks will have several new assets coming on line and needs to figure out how to pay for the staff and maintenance cost because we cannot rely on just the tax money received.

2017 WORK PLAN

The Work Plan was reviewed and public/private partnerships should be added in the month of October and a good time for an update on the program plan for Capital Projects.

In September, the council will meet at Northwest Trek. This meeting will be held later in the day. The group can decide when it should start.

FINANCIAL REPORT

No report was given.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14, 2017, held in the main conference room at Metro Parks Tacoma Headquarters building.

ADJOURNED

The meeting ended at 9:00 a.m.

Approved:

Aaron Blaisdell, Chair

Submitted by: Julie Wilfong