
**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
June 13, 2017

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

SUMMARY

An update of the Capital Projects was presented by Debbie Terwilleger.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m.

MINUTES

The May 9, 2017 minutes were approved as written.

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

No update was given.

DESTINATION POINT DEFIANCE UPDATE

Update was part of the Capital Projects Update presented by Debbie Terwilleger.

CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Debbie Terwilleger reported the Trolley Project is underway and started on Friday, June 2nd. This was two years in the making working with Pierce Transit, Point Ruston and the City of Tacoma. This is a pilot program that will run through Labor Day weekend and is similar to the Gig Harbor project. The Trolley route is from the Tacoma Dome Station through downtown Tacoma and into Point Defiance Park. It is important to see if the public will accept a transit mode to get the Tacoma waterfront.

Metro Parks is currently working with the City of Tacoma on a vision plan that will focus on the waterfront. The vision for the waterfront front is to include transportation from Titlow Park, through Point Defiance Park, along Ruston Way and over to the Tacoma Dome. Tourism is the driver behind this new plan.

Metro Parks is greatly interested in the Trolley project as we move forward to find parking solutions around the park. This project ties in to the Circulation Study which has already had three (3) public meetings and an internal STEERING Committee and we have been doing vigorous work trying to develop what the vision will be for the next 50 to 100 years for Point Defiance. This isn't just a pilot on how to improve tourism to the waterfront but a model that can be extended through Point Defiance as a way to gradually move away from an auto based access. If the ridership for this program is strong, Metro Parks would like to encourage Pierce Transit to lengthen the pilot and service the whole park. The goal is to have a working model as we move in to spring 2018 when the new aquarium is scheduled to open and it is not a new thing for visitors.

Commissioner Baines commented the Metro Parks Tacoma Board strongly supports this as there has been a transportation lag with the inability for certain demographic populations to get to the Zoo. Part of this has to do with

not having a public bus stop in front of the Zoo. This will help Metro Parks expand and bring more visitors into the park.

Aaron Blaisdell asked, at what point will the main partners come back to the table to review the data on the Trolley Project?"

Debbie Terwilleger responded, as we get closer to the end of the pilot program, the usage will continued to be monitored. We are in conversations internally within Parks and are asking if we want to extend a shuttle, what would this look like? Currently the Zoo has a contract for transportation services that is used for Zoolights. With the limitations of trailer parking for the Parks Department at the Boathouse, they are shuttling around boaters due to the Waterfront Phase I project. We have several different partners that are looking at ways to shuttle people through the park and if we collectively pool our money together we can create something that can serve all of us. We would like to have something in place at least through Zoolights.

Tara Dunford stated this is a big benefit when you look at the program, as Pierce Transit is paying all the cost for the shuttle which is significant.

Six (6) major resolutions were approved by the Park Board. Metro Parks is investing \$15 Million back into the community through park development. A majority of the money will go towards the construction of the new Eastside Community Center on the First Creek Middle School site. \$13 Million was approved and added to the GC/CM contract for Korsmo Construction the prime contractor for the project bringing the total contract amount to \$27 Million. Construction will start this week for the project. The total project cost including soft costs is \$31.1 Million.

The funding for the new Eastside Community Center included innovative funding tools such as the New Market Tax Credit. This tool is most commonly used by private and non-profit organizations and not by government entities. We have been approved for \$6.1 Million. We have also partnered with the Tacoma Housing Authority, the Boys & Girls Club and the City of Tacoma.

Dan Powell asked, what was the target completion date for the project? Debbie Terwilleger responded it would be completed within 12 – 14 months, which would be August or September of 2018.

Other projects underway include the Wapato Lake Dock Replacement project that includes grant funding from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). In addition, Metro Parks realized the trolley stops needed to be ADA accessible and did a small contract for asphalt work. There are a lot of small projects in the works.

The Planning Department is working on a cost tracking spreadsheet to track funding cost and could be used for audit purposes. This would also be used to report on projects at an intermediate stage. Currently we do not have software that can do the work.

The 2014 Bond is a total of \$198 Million and divided into 11 categories and is structured differently from the 2005 Bond which was not flexible with how funds are used. Metro Parks is able to leverage funds through other sources such as grant funding through the RCO.

Aaron Blaisdell stated that signage notifying the public of work coming soon at the various sites is helpful as it show the public of the work Metro Parks agreed to do when the bond was passed. Debbie stated it may be premature to put the signs up especially if the work will not start for two years.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tara Dunford reported the April financials were reviewed and the General Fund revenues were under target budget and this is mostly due to property tax. The only property tax we receive this time of year are past due taxes. The forecast was a best guess on how much would be collected. Typically we collect around 98% of our levy in any given year. We are not too far off by the end of the year. Expenses are under budget as there are some services anticipated to happen but did not move forward with a contract and therefore budget was not spent.

Revenue and expenses are under budget for ZEED and this is due to timing differences with their operations. Usually they are not as busy during this time of year. Part time hours our down and spending is down. Weather plays a factor for them. This is also a similar pattern with the Boathouse and Meadow Park Golf Course.

Parks and Natural Resources is doing well with revenue for rentals, attractions and permitting. They have a new manager who has done a great job with events and sales. Expenses are down as they have not hired their part time staff for the season.

Governance & Direction is under budget quite significantly due to vacant staff positions. A new Assistant Executive Director was hired and started at the end of April. This position was vacant for at least three months. The Chief Financial Officer position has not yet been filled and this contributes to some of the big variance in budget.

Sales tax came in higher than budget and we are hoping this is a good indicator of what is to come by the end of the year. Earned income is down slightly, but is not a concern, this is due to best guess estimates.

Aaron Blaidell asked if attendance could be reported for the Enterprise Funds as part of the financials.

Meadow Park Golf Course's golf revenue is up considering the weather but overall down. Pro Shop revenue is down. They are currently evaluating their current inventory system. This is a struggle for them as it is hard to compete with online businesses. Expenses are on track.

The first quarter of 2017 is similar to past years. The General Fund variance is due to lost personnel.

MEETING SUMMARY AND FOLLOW-UP

Update on the POS System.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday August 8, 2017, held at Metro Parks Tacoma Headquarters building.

August meeting was cancelled.

ADJOURNED

The meeting ended at 9:00 a.m.

Approved:

Aaron Blaisdell, Chair

Submitted by: Julie Wilfong