



**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
November 18, 2020**

**PRESENT:**

Tim Reid, President  
Erik Hanber, Clerk  
Andrea Smith  
Jessie Baines  
Aaron Pointer

**IN THE CHAIR:** Tim Reid

**PLACE:** Remote Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Reid at 5:30pm.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

November 16, 2020

It was moved and seconded to adopt the minutes as presented; approved unanimously.

**PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET PRESENTATION**

Erwin Vidallon commented that out of the total proposed operating budget of \$115.3M for the biennium, Parks & Recreation represents approximately 46. This equates to about \$52.7 million for the biennium. That funding level will support about 134 Full-time career staff positions.

Mr. Vidallon noted that the total biennium budget of \$52.7M is further broken down between Parks & Recreation operations and Regional Parks & Attractions, which is the new consolidated enterprise fund that being formed. He also noted that Parks & Recreation as a department will be setting aside approximately \$1.6M for their respective operating reserves, intended to provide emergency funding during economic downturns as recently experienced. However, if economic conditions are treating as well and our financial position is healthy, there's an opportunity to use the reserves in a measured way.

Marina Becker then reviewed an organization chart for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Joe Brady was then introduced to speak about Regional Parks & Enterprise Operations

Mr. Brady reminded the Board , an enterprise fund is a type of proprietary fund in which the direct beneficiary pay for all costs of the fund through fees and memberships, and considered a best practice to promote and maintain long-term financial sustainability for a governmental

agency. Mr. Brady also noted that consolidating businesses, which serve a similar customer base or rely on similar internal services, together and expecting them not to exceed the revenues identified through an enterprise fund has its advantages. He commented that if the fund turns a profit, the revenue carries over to fund operations in the next fiscal year, and fees might decrease or the additional resources can be reinvested back into the property, operations, complex, or facility. Staff commented that these funds could be used for preventative maintenance or can be devoted to additional marketing, technology or other business support needs in order to continue to maximize the enterprise's bottom-line and not be reliant on general fund subsidies.

Mr. Brady continued by commenting that under the Regional Parks Enterprise Fund financing concept, all Regional Parks and facility operations will be managed as a business unit. Like ZEED, a dedicated amount of Pierce County sales tax will be directed to this regional operation—this will dedicate some resources from out-of-town visitors versus only Tacoma residents.

Marina Becker then highlighted the following as challenges moving into 21/22

- COVID Restrictions and Impacts
  - Uncertain & Unpredictable Times --- Must be Nimble, Flexible and Constantly Innovative
  - Safety is Highest Priority
  - Economic impacts
  - Serve shifting community needs
  - Increase in numbers of people experiencing homelessness
- Childcare – Critical for Recovery
  - Provide safe, accessible spaces for youth to engage in learning, social & emotional connections and recreation
  - COVID and post-COVID differences

Opportunities were then highlighted by Ms. Becker as follows:

- Renewed emphasis on safe/secure & green infrastructure and equitable access
  - Level of Services (LOS) study
  - Green School Yards
  - Expanded investment in park and facility safety/security
  - Park Access Enhancements
- Conservation & Sustainability
  - Asset management/preventative maintenance
  - Environmentally responsible maintenance equipment and best practices
  - Expand tree canopy focused on parks in historically underserved areas
- Future of Community Centers and Programs
  - Serve community needs in a safe and responsible manner
  - Offer pertinent and timely programs given restrictions and public comfort, utilize outdoor spaces and virtual platforms

- Serve shifting needs of community---Youth, Wellness Centers, Virtual Recreation Center, Needs of Membership

Joe Brady and Phedra Redifer, then addressed the departments work plan initiatives a follows:

- Safety
  - Develop a unified system to safeguard staff, visitors and community utilizing integrated strategies
- Park Maintenance & Operations
  - Perform routine maintenance and operations focused on safe and accessible parks, natural areas and facilities.
- Volunteer Recruitment and Retention
  - Develop partnerships with other organizations to enhance our volunteer recruitment and engagement to build advocacy and stewardship, for our parks, natural areas and programs.
- Focus on Planning, Infrastructure and Preventive Maintenance
  - Lead bold planning efforts to drive new economic development and connect MPT parks and facilities throughout Tacoma;
  - Continued emphasis on routine and preventative maintenance and infrastructure improvements
- Conservation Engagement and Environmental Responsibility
  - Provide programs and venues that connect people to conservation values and environmentally responsible practices.

Ms. Becker continued to highlight work plan initiatives and commented on the following:

- Focus on Youth
  - Deliver inclusive youth programs and services equitably to a diverse community.
- Work with alternative providers and partners to envision and expand scope of programs and service
  - Understand and meet community need using the most resourceful and effective means.
  - Collaboration with Pierce County to expand Specialized Recreation opportunities
- Homelessness
  - Develop and implement strategies in collaboration with other agencies and community organizations to support people experiencing homelessness.
  - Provide accessible and equitable programs and services to the diverse communities we serve
  - Develop recreational program opportunities and methods of delivery through a lens of safety and equity.
  - Remove barriers to ensure that everyone can access and enjoy parks, natural areas, facilities, services and programs.

A short discussion ensued about community center operations and safety openings as COVID continues.

Commissioner Pointer asked how lease tenants meeting their financial obligations to the District. Erwin Vidallon noted that the District is working through economic conditions with lease partners to make sure they can remain solid and recover.

Shon Sylvia commented that next steps include a ZEED Budget Presentation on November 23<sup>rd</sup> and second Public Hearing on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Budget adoption is scheduled for December 14<sup>th</sup>.

**OTHER**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, President Reid adjourned the meeting at 6:32p.m.

**APPROVED:**

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President

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Clerk

Submitted by:

Jennifer Bowman, Secretary