



**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
NOVEMBER 22, 2021**

PRESENT:

Erik Hanberg, President
Andrea Smith, Clerk
Tim Reid
Aaron Pointer
Jessie Baines Jr.

IN THE CHAIR: Erik Hanberg

PLACE: Metro Parks Tacoma Headquarters

STUDY SESSION WILDLIFE CHAMPIONS UPDATE

Craig Standridge was introduced. Mr. Standridge gave an overview of the Wildlife Champions program noting that the program exists to provide a collaborative opportunity with Metro Parks and the Tacoma Public School District to encourage empathy and stewardship for students through the engagement with local parks through a customized curriculum. Staff explained that at Arlington Elementary that over \$1,000,000 has been invested for the purpose of this program since 2017. It was further noted that an engaging new science curriculum was developed collaboratively with the school district and has been implemented through a gradual release co-teaching model. The program at Arlington Elementary has resulted in a comprehensive open-source toolkit that has been developed along with a significant and positive impact on the students that have had the opportunity to go through the program. Mr. Standridge commented that outcomes and impacts include increased students' empathy for animals and their level of stewardship towards nature, provided an opportunity for students K-3 to gain stronger connections to Oak Tree Park, and provided opportunities for students in grades 4-5 to significantly grow their empathy towards animals.

Stacey Luhring then commented on the core elements of the Wildlife Champions program which include exploring nature, building community, bringing new opportunities to all members of the school's community regardless of their background, and field experience gained through field trips to local parks and other animal focused organizations.

Liz Hines then spoke about the selection process used to choose the next school for the program. Ms. Hines commented about the screening process which included the Wildlife Champions team developing a potential school lists along with creating criteria based on goals of the program and needs of the community. The next step included exploration which entailed introductory meetings to Wildlife Champions and conversations that were held to determine to discover whether a school would be able to incorporate the program into their school culture in current curriculum. Ms. Hines also noted that the selection process included a commitment from the school to formalize a partnership along with determining the level of partner support needed based on the school's staffing, resources and potential barriers. Staff indicated that Lister

Elementary has been selected as the next site for the Wildlife Champions program. Factors for choosing Lister Elementary included student demographics, proximity and access to Metro Parks Tacoma natural spaces including walking time, safety and natural area quality, as well as school culture and curriculum. Next the Board was able to view a video that highlighted interviews with the Lister Elementary School staff including the school principal who spoke to their level of commitment and excitement for the program.

Commissioner Pointer inquired about the funding commitment by the TPS for this program. Staff noted that program is mainly funded through the grants received but TPS does sometimes contribute for transportation and some professional development of its staff.

Commissioner Reid asked how kids are chosen to participate at the school. Staff indicated that all students at the school get to participate in the program.

REGULAR MEETING

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

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS None

PRESIDENTS REPORT

President Hanberg commented that Zoolights will open this week.

STANDING COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Active Lifestyles & Community Wellness Advisory Council

Commissioner Pointer commented that the committee met on November 18th. At that meeting the council discussed their action plan for 2022, discussed the January advisory council summit, and heard about the plans for the improvements for the south pacific aquarium at the Zoo. The committee members also discussed their support for growing the specialized recreation program.

Arts & Heritage Advisory Council

Commissioner Smith commented that the council recently welcomed two new members. She further commented that the council plans to discuss their 2022 workplan at their December meeting.

Greater Metro Parks Foundation

Commissioner Smith commented that she attend the last GMPF Board meeting. At that meeting it was announced that the endowment balance is now at \$7M. The board also discussed capital art project opportunities.

Joint Municipal Action Committee

Commissioner Smith commented that at last Fridays JMAC meeting the summary report from the Summit of Sixty was discussed.

Business & Responsive Agency Advisory Council

Commissioner Baines commented that at the council's November meeting Joe Brady was in attendance to share information related to Meadow Park Golf Course. Additionally, the council was updated on upcoming policy review and the new time and attendance system module being implemented by the District.

Nature & Environment Advisory Council

Commissioner Reid stated that the council's November meeting the council received an update on Meadow Park Golf Course. He further commented that council has five new members. At their next meeting the council will discuss their 2022 workplan.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director, Shon Sylvia reported on the following:

- The District has received several emails over the weekend related to Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Gerry Oak Trees at South Park and signage and doggie bag dispensers at Blueberry Park; staff is communicating with those community members about their questions and concerns.
- The CIC meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 24th is canceled.
- Staff is planning for a November 29th COW meeting
- The following new employees were introduced: Josh Torgerson, Terry Czerwanka, Nikki Myers & Evan Smith

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Email comment received by Heidi Stephens:

APCC has been stating for quite some time that their fundraising is complete (they've secured the last amounts needed via \$1.5 million in government funding, so, they are not simply still in the fundraising stage, anymore -- they are moving forward with final architectural plans). Someone from Metro Parks should definitely be reaching-out to them now to make sure their design does not involve cutting of any trees (nor displacement of the historic gazebo, rose garden, stone fountain, rhododendron and rosemary bushes, but most importantly absolutely no loss of mature trees).

Also, I was very distressed to see one of the massive Garry Oaks cut in South Park. I knew it likely wasn't due to wind damage, but someone at the park said it had been tagged as "diseased"; however, from these photos (attached) that trunk appears completely solid. Garry Oaks are the state's only native oak tree and they take up to hundreds of years to grow, are drought resistant and strong. They also play a unique role in the urban ecosystem, providing critical upper canopy and floor habitat.

Only three percent of the original Garry oak population remains today, and we should be doing everything we can to save every tree. Replacing with a few new saplings will never make up for the loss of a mature tree such as this.

It's also very sad that tree was cut in such a way that its perfectly good wood isn't useable now for much of anything now. What a waste.

Lastly, which park is it having trees "removed for a new path"... I've never understood that (especially when 100+ year old trees were taken from South Park instead of just routing the

Water Ditch Trail a few vacant feet to the east). Please let me know which park this is being planned for now?

Email comment received from Andrew Moedhorst

I am a member of the South Tacoma Neighborhood Council. There was a report from MPT Staff about the trees surrounding the former community center. The comment referred to the Oaks as old growth. The trees are mature but they are much more. The Gerry Oaks are protected by Washington State and Federal Law. The removal of the trees would be an unfortunate violation of the protection decree.

I have taken photos and took measurements of all of the Oaks. They are all of significant age to fit the protection parameters

With the desired changes in the park the Oaks are not part of the structure. So the ownership of the trees will remain in the public property view.

I did see where some of the trees had been cut down . Such trees should be seen as protected.

Heidi Stephens commented that she thanked the Board for acknowledging the comments that she has sent via email and looked forward to follow up related to her concerns.

Tod Sharon commented that he was appearing before the Board to follow up on the deaccession of the Never Never Land Figurines. He also commented that he intended to speak at the November 8th Board meeting but the doors of the building were locked and he was not able to access the meeting. Mr. Sharon commented that MPT staff has provided him a copy of the deaccession policy but he feels that the Board actions are not in alignment with the policy. He specially pointed out that he needs more information about the role that the advisory council and the District's history & cultural resources manager played in the deaccessioning process.

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 22, 2021 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

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

CONSENT AGENDA

RESOLUTION NO. C71-21: REVISING DECEMBER 2021 MEETING SCHEDULE FOR BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION NO. C72-21: APPOINTING MEMBERS TO ACTIVE LIFESTYLES AND COMMUNITY WELLNESS ADVISORY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. C73-21: REAPPOINTING AND APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE NATURE & ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

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

New advisory council members were thanked and recognized by President Hanberg.

PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS None

RESOLUTION NO. P74-21: AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF GOODS AND SERVICES FOR METRO PARKS TACOMA

1. MCROBERTS SEAFOOD FOR VARIOUS SEAFOOD (ANIMAL FOOD) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$72,012.12

Commissioner Pointer moved to adopt the resolution seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Alan Varsik commented that this resolution approves an additional \$27,100.71 with this vendor bringing the total to \$72,012.12 which now requires Board approval. The purchase is for seafood for various species at the aquarium and the Rocky Shores exhibit.

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

PUBLIC WORKS PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. PW75-21: ZOOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN CONTRACT AWARD TO SH/R STUDIOS

Commissioner Pointer moved to adopt the resolution seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Debbie Terwilleger commented that this resolution was reviewed by the Capital Improvement Committee at their meeting on November 10, 2021 with the recommendation to forward the action on to the full board for approval. Ms. Terwilleger reminded the Board that this project includes the facilitation of workshops and site planning discussions with zoo staff and other stakeholders in order to develop a capital facilities plan for both Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium in NW Trek. She further noted the plan will provide a first look at the anticipated scope of future development including cost estimates permitting considerations, and concept sketches which can be used to begin more detailed physical planning, engineering, design, and permitting for future projects. The Board was also reminded that the capital facilities plan is part of the overall ZEED planning efforts that includes his strategic plan, capital facilities plan, business plan, and collections plan.

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

SINGLE READING RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. R76-21: ACCEPTING AND APPROPRIATING CITY OF TACOMA FUNDS FOR GAS STATION PARK AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF TACOMA FOR THE TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PROPERTY

Commissioner Pointer moved to adopt the resolution seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Debbie Terwilleger commented that this park was identified over two years ago to help the District meet its goal of a 10-minute level of service in the community. She further commented that outreach was done pre-COVID and a completed schematic design resulted. Staff also noted that a Department of Commerce grant has been secured to move forward in order to fund improvements to Gas Station Park. The Board was also reminded that the City has taken formal action to finalize this transfer at their October 26, 2021 City Council meeting.

Commissioner Pointer inquired about the existing playground equipment at the site. Project manager Kristi Evans explained that although the equipment is safe and usable it will be replaced, and the equipment will become property of the contractor as it is not safe to reinstall it at another site.

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

SECOND READINGS RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. RR69-21: AUTHORIZING GENERAL TAX LEVY OF REGULAR PROPERTY TAX FOR COLLECTION IN 2022

This resolution was moved and seconded at the November 8, 2021 Regular Board Meeting.

Being not additional comments, the question was called, and the resolution passed on a vote of 5-0.

RESOLUTION NO. RR70-21: AUTHORIZING EXCESS TAX LEVY FOR UNLIMITED TAX GENERAL OBLIGATION (UTGO) BOND REDEMPTION

This resolution was moved and seconded at the November 8, 2021 Regular Board Meeting.

Being not additional comments, the question was called, and the resolution passed on a vote of 5-0.

FIRST READING RESOLUTIONS None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS None

NEW BUSINESS None

BOARD COMMENTS

President Hanberg noted that the December 27th Board meeting is canceled.

Commissioner Rid asked staff to follow up with community members who commented at tonight's Board meeting.

ADJOURN

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45p.m.

APPROVED:

President

Clerk

Submitted by: Jennifer Bowman, Board Secretary