



**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
AUGUST 29, 2022**

PRESENT: Andrea Smith, President
Aaron Pointer, Clerk
Tim Reid
Rosie Ayala
Michael Liang

IN THE CHAIR: Andrea Smith

PLACE: MPT Headquarters 4702 S. 19th St.

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

August 15, 2022 COW Minutes

Commissioner Reid moved adoption of the minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Ayala and passed unanimously.

PARK BOARD BUDGET PRIORITIES

Tania Wink opened the meeting by reviewing the meeting agenda. She noted that the meeting discussion will be focused on reviewing guiding principles and policy direction that was set for the 21/22 budget, Board emphasis & advocacy, and JMAC/ collaborative projects & initiatives.

Board members were reminded of the 21/22 guiding principles and policy direction as follows:

- Racial Equity—Intentionally work towards overcoming systemic racism and increase our awareness of implicit bias within our institution, other public agencies and the community.
- Access & Inclusion—Improve access and proximity to parks and programs for all who live in Tacoma, with attention to engaging diverse income levels and race/ethnicities through our parks, facilities, services, infrastructure, and programs; attention shall be given to traditionally underserved populations with a focus on children.
- Engagement—By listening to community, achieve equity and inclusion in our parks, programs, facilities, decision-making and community engagement based on their feedback.
- Health & Wellness—Improve health outcomes and reduce health inequities for all who live in Tacoma; create safe spaces and programs that build a healthy community.

- Conservation—Advance environmental sustainability, livability and overall community resiliency by building a community for both current and future eco-friendly needs.
- Partnerships—Concentrate on economic sustainability by working collaboratively with other public agencies to avoid waste, duplication and inefficiencies; in partnership with community, work together to responsibly leverage and stretch public funds.

Debbie Russell commented these priorities were developed with the input of the community in 2020 and that staff plans to engage community in 23/24 budget prioritization as well. Board members engaged in discussion around the areas of equity, access and partnerships. Board members noted their comfort with the themes and priorities continuing into the next biennium. Commissioner Liang suggested there could be some slight shifts in how the priorities could be articulated as more is learned through the community engagement process. Staff noted that the online community budget survey is set to go live on September 12th.

President Smith requested that the theme of *welcoming parks* be added in as a high-level guiding principle.

Commissioner Liang stated that he would like to see the idea of treating all open space in the city as park space, the city in a park concept.

Commissioner Pointer stated he would like to be able to address income disparities through budget.

Staff and the Board then reviewed and engaged in conversation related to the following areas of emphasis and advocacy for the next biennium:

- Urban Forestry & Wildfire Prevention and Management- work with COT to support Tacoma's tree canopy, support the tree nursery program and develop a plan to prevent wildfires within our urban forests.
- Park Safety & Park Ranger Program- partner with the COT to develop a comprehensive community safety program that provides a multi-faceted approach to public safety and security in public spaces. Program will incorporate social workers in a visitor centric approach with non-commission park rangers, work in concert with Tacoma Police Department.
- Adaptive & Specialized Recreation Programs- continue to focus on students in the Tacoma Public Schools with a cognitive, sensory and/or physical disability and deliver an integrated and inclusive program during Beyond the Bell and Club Beyond. Additionally work with Pierce County and cities to deliver services for adults with disabilities within their neighborhoods.
- Community Hubs & Social Service Programs- work with partners to delivery preschool, family, adult and senior mission-led events, programs and services in neighborhoods to compliment k-8 youth programs and activities occurring afterschool at school locations.
- Conservation & Preservation- coordinate environmental education and conservation engagement activities in community; create a green sustainability plan; work on animal welfare and conservation policies.

- Strategic Planning, Feasibility & Potential Capital Development- position the following planning project with the community for feasibility or implementation
 - Comprehensive Park & Land Acquisition Plan
 - COT & MPT—one system + sustainable funding
 - Field House + Sports Complexes & Facilities
 - Point Defiance Park/Triangle Planning + Zoo master plan
 - Joint Maintenance Facility & Skill Centers
 - Swan Creek Regional Park
- Safe Well-Maintained Parks and Facilities- Comprehensively manage and maintain park asset and infrastructure to improve and ensure longevity of facilities and capital investments.

Commissioner Liang stressed that land acquisition remains important to him.

Commissioner Ayala noted that she would like to see work with smaller groups in the community beyond the outreach being done at community centers.

Commissioner Pointer highlighted his interest in continuing to employ local kids in MPT jobs. Mark Knowlden spoke about the role MPT can take in the community by investing and building resources that educate and grow future employees through partnerships.

Commissioner Ayala requested the baseline data that is gathered through the community budget outreach and surveying to assist with budget development.

Staff then spoke about the work plan initiatives being addressed and positioned to move forward in 23/24 via the Joint Municipal Action Committee including the following:

- Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (JEDI) - Reduce systemic racism, sexism, and other biases that harm our community in the areas of:
 - Childcare: Build a comprehensive system of childcare and Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO's) -- easily navigated by parents – that offers equitable and affordable arts, enrichment, science, nature, fitness, and sports programs.
 - Community Outreach: Improve and align community outreach and engagement to underserved communities.
- Community Wealth Building - Aid local entrepreneurism and wealth accumulation and reduce the reliance on competing over global corporate employers by addressing the following:
 - Local Business: Improve access to contracts for work with local governments, with an emphasis on addressing the historical underutilization of minority and women-owned business enterprises (MWBE).
 - Youth Employment: Improve and boost alignment and coordination of youth employment and apprenticeship pipelines.

- Public Health and Safety -Reduce vulnerability to health, wellness, and safety challenges by supporting the following:
 - Homelessness: Support Pierce County’s Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness, which aims to document the scale of need and design a system to achieve “functional zero” – a state where any person starting a new episode of homelessness has immediate access to shelter and a permanent housing intervention.
 - Vision Zero: Eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries by addressing safe routes to public amenities evaluating pedestrian and bike-friendly systems.

Discussion then ensued amongst Board members related to how best to continue to support and improve working with MWBEs in the local community.

Commissioner Liang noted that through the next biennium he would like to see some emphasis placed on increasing an MPT presence to downtown Tacoma. Shon Sylvia commented on the economic impacts of increased activation in that part of Tacoma.

Board members commented that a successful budget includes fairness, data driven decisions, and continuing to provide opportunities that are proven to be successful with park and program users.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, Commissioner Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

APPROVED:

President

Clerk

Submitted by:
Jennifer Bowman, Secretary