



**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
November 7, 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

October 17, 2022 COW Minutes

A clarification was made to page 2 of the minutes related to 2014 Bond funds left to be issued.

Commissioner Smith moved adoption of the minutes as revised; seconded & passed unanimously.

2023-2024 BUDGET DRIVERS, ASSUMPTIONS AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Debbie Russell opened the meeting by review the agenda and noting meeting discussion items.

Ms. Russell then reviewed the 2023-24 Budget timeline noting several milestones including opportunities for community input, workshops, public hearings and formal board meetings.

Sandra Eliason was then introduced to share details related to the community budget engagement and feedback. The Board was informed that outreach began in June and included engagement with over 3100 community members who completed a survey, attended a budget workshop, participated at in-person events such as senior outreach & Co-Create to Recreate events. Staff made note of the efforts to broaden outreach by having the survey available in seven languages. Ms. Eliason and Amy Johnson then reviewed several bar graphs that highlighted the following survey data:

- An average of 85% of those surveyed strongly agree or agree with all of the Board's draft priorities (access & inclusion, conservation, health & wellness, partnerships, racial equity)

- Well-maintained and safe parks and facilities was the most important initiative with 98%
- Other areas ranking high in importance included urban forestry and wildfire prevention, conservation & preservation, and park safety & ranger program.
- Barriers to access of the District facilities include access to information & communication
- Fees and transportation and ranked a little less important than in the past as MPT has addressed some of those barriers over the 21-22 biennium
- Over half of the survey responses agreed or strongly agreed with reducing mowing and hours of operation in order to provide more programming, free activities and events. in order to better serve children with disabilities and to provide programs and services within areas of the community that have limited access to parks.
- Sentiments were more evenly balanced regarding prioritizing free drop-in activities in parks and festivals and events over mowing and hours of operation. Respondents commented that they didn't want to choose one or the other – they wanted both – making it difficult to agree or disagree, which may explain why neutral was chosen more on these questions than others throughout the survey.
- A significant portion (23%-33%) of respondents were neutral in their feelings about reducing recreation programs for enhanced park operations. However, more than half favored doing so to keep bathrooms open in parks year-round and to provide additional resources for preventative maintenance to protect park assets.
- Strong support for Tacoma's public agencies to work together with Ensuring Safe Routes and Trail Connectivity being the most important
- Community Wealth Building rated least important of the five initiatives

Ms. Eliason then spoke about the in-person meetings that were held. At a public meeting with the Asian & Pacific Islander community participants expressed key themes related to increased safety, improved equity access, support local & MWBE business and additional emphasis on maintaining neighborhood parks. Ms. Eliason then commented on a public meeting conducted entirely in Spanish with the Latinx community. Key take aways reported by staff from that meeting included improved safety, conservation, language access needs, and increased opportunities for social services& community co-creation.

Staff will follow up with the Board later this week by providing survey data via an interactive Story map.

Chief Financial Officer, Tania Wink was then introduced. Ms. Wink commented that the budget is continuing to be developed by staff with the following financial drivers:

Property Tax:

- 2023-2024: Max 1.5% increase
- With Levy Lid Lift:
- Rate Restored to .75/\$1,000 in 2023

Sales Tax

- 3.5 % in 2023

- 3.0% in 2024

Earned Revenue

- Parks & Recreation
3.0% in 2023 & 2024
- Pt. Defiance Marina
7.5% in 2023
5.0% in 2024
- Meadow Park Golf Course
7.9% in 2023 & 2024
- ZEED
8% in 2023
5% in 2024
- Fund balance
5%

Ms. Wink then reviewed several graphs noting trends and projections related to the District's enterprise and general fund revenue and expense. Ms. Wink commented that certain assumptions were used to forecast major expense drivers. These assumptions are based on information provided by other governmental entities, consumer price index, contractual obligations, long-term planning, trend analysis and pertinent data from general research. Ms. Wink commented that the following are some of the key financial assumptions that are influencing the new biennium operating budget:

- General Inflation related to supplies, materials, services, contracts
Staff stated that with strong demand combined with ongoing supply issues, inflation has increased and remains high. According to the Washington State Economic & Revenue Forecast, Consumer price inflation of 9.1% outpaced national average of 8.2% in 2022. Increased operational and maintenance costs which are highly uncertain given recent price inflation for fuel, construction, and services.
- Personnel Costs -Staffing needs, job market, recruitment & retention, wage pressure, benefit costs, etc..
Wage increases in response to higher consumer inflation has kept overall inflation more persistent. Wages failing to keep up with rising prices. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that wages and salaries increased 6-8% in June 2022 when compared to June 2021 for public and private industries.
- Insurance Premiums
In the last 3 years, the WCIA released that it's seen an extraordinary increase in both WCIA's reinsurance and member claim costs, therefore, its Executive Committee approved to adopt an overall rate increase of 40% for 2023. Which for MPT, results in a 16% increase in 2023 and 8% increase in 2024

Ms. Wink then reviewed several financial tables providing details related to department specific operating budget.

Debbie Russell then commented on the capital expenditures assumptions as follows:

- Inflation, continued supply chain issues,
- Conditions changed from beginning of 2014 bond;
- Better integration with maintenance/asset management;
- Equity considerations; support for community connections; neighborhood planning; partnerships have shifted the way the District plans/implements;
- Planning & improvements to support the next bond
- Safety improvements--ADA

Ms. Russell then reviewed a financial table that showed the 2023-24 capital program summary detailed by major category and planned funding distribution within those categories.

Board members and staff then engaged in discussion related to finalize the guiding principles and policy direction based on community feedback, and budget drives discussed earlier in the meeting. The following were discussed:

Health, Wellness & Safety—Improve health outcomes and reduce health inequities for all who live in Tacoma; create safe spaces and programs that build a healthy community.

Conservation, Preservation & Sustainability—Protect the District’s environmental and built assets. Advance sustainability (environmental, social & environmental), livability, and overall community resiliency while balancing both current and future community needs.

Partnerships—Concentrate on economic sustainability by working collaboratively with other public agencies to avoid waste, duplication and inefficiencies; work together, in partnership with non-profit, business and grassroots community, to responsibly leverage and stretch public funds.

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 given to create welcoming opportunities for diverse income levels, ethnicities, and abilities to engage with community parks, zoos, facilities, services, infrastructure, and programs; attention shall be given to traditionally underserved populations with a focus on children.

Engagement—Collaborate with community to achieve equity and inclusion in our parks, programs, facilities and develop faith, trust, and relevance by aligning resources with

community needs. Continuously engage community to effectively respond to feedback and input in our decision-making.

Commissioner Liang commented that he would like to see the term *climate change* included in the Conservation principle. Commissioner Liang also commented that he feels racial equity should embed in all of the guiding principles. Commissioner Liang suggested a glossary of terms be included in the final budget book.

Commissioner Ayala suggested some review of the *access & inclusion and engagement principles* descriptions to provide some additional clarity and avoid repetition.

DISTRICT POLICY

Debbie Russell commented that briefly on the Districts Policy review process. She noted that staff is developing a policy review list and related schedule and plan to have that information to the Board by December 12th. Additionally, she commented that staff will be working on making approved district policies available on the website.

Staff commented that the following items prompts policy changes:

- New regulations & Mandates
- New or changed Board priorities
- Community needs

Ms. Russell also indicated that the following are Basic Policy Review Elements:

- Equity considerations (Health in all policies lens)
- Incorporating more inclusive language
- Removing procedures from body of the policy
- Need to reflect updated approaches

COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

Ms. Russell commented that a summary of proposed changes to the Comprehensive Financial Management Policy (Policy 100.011) were introduced at the October 24th Regular Board meeting during New Business.

Staff commented that the proposed changes include:

Section X. Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting Policy

- Adds more detailed language for accountability including expectations for reporting, monitoring, staff training, and timeliness
 - Developed in cooperation with the Washington State Auditor's office to improve transparency and assure that the Board and community have timely information about the District's financial management and position.
- Update with more inclusive language: replace "citizen" with "community"
 - Reflects the District's intent to serve everyone in our community, regardless of citizenship status.

ILLCIT DISCHARGE DETECTION AND ELIMINATION (IDDE) POLICY

Ms. Russell commented that a summary of this new proposed policy was given at the October 24th Regular Board meeting during New Business.

Staff commented that they are developing the policy for adoption as it is a required policy as part of Federal/State requirements to comply with S6.D.3- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination of the NPDES permit.

Erich Sachs commented that the policy will regulate discharges to MPT's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) and prohibit illicit discharges into the storm water system, including illicit connections, non-storm water discharges, spills, improperly disposing of hazardous materials, pet waste, and litter.

Board members noted they are supportive of continuing to review and refine these policies for future formal review and adoption.

OTHER

Shon Sylvia stated that staff is eager for the election results tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, Commissioner Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

APPROVED:

President

Clerk

Submitted by:

Jennifer Bowman, Secretary