



**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
April 29, 2024**

PRESENT: Andrea Smith
Tim Reid
Aaron Pointer
Rosie Ayala
Matthew Mauer

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

April 15, 2024 COW Minutes.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes be approved as presented; seconded and passed on a vote of 5-0.

DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN

Alisa O’Hanlon Regala introduced Austin Hochstetler and the meeting agenda was reviewed.

Alisa O’Hanlon Regala reminded the Commissioners of the process used in the plan development over the past year including trends analysis, community survey, data collection, outreach & engagement, outreach analysis, and strategies & consensus development.

Alisa O’Hanlon Regala stated that from the work done over the past year four strategic directions have emerged: People, Program, Space (destination), Space (journey). Ms. O’Hanlon Regala and Mr. Hochstetler then reported on the areas of focus within each of these strategic directions as follows:

People. Cultural Alignment

Alisa O’Hanlon Regala stated that this strategic direction contemplates how the District will address social isolation and connection, JEDAI, poverty, equitable community engagement, population distribution and demographic changes.

Performance measures include: workforce diversity, community engagement, sense of belonging.

Staff commented that the key policy shift/refinement being recommended as: Recruitment and internal succession are among strategies to be bolstered to develop a workforce at all strata that is reflective of the community.

There was brief conversation about how well the District is doing with creating a diverse workforce that mirrors the diversity of the community that is being served in Tacoma.

Conversation between staff and the Board ensued about the need to begin thinking and acting on placing some focus on older adult populations.

Program. Defining Our Core Services and Strategic Collaborations

Alisa O’Hanlon Regala stated that this strategic direction contemplates the comparative ratios of programming offered per mission area, the total cost of ownership of the infrastructure and the operation that supports programs and services, facilitative programming, and partnerships.

Performance measures include: enrollments, cost recovery targets.

Ms. O’Hanlon Regala spoke to the key policy shifts to be considered in this area as follows: Cost recovery philosophies are practical components of recreation planning and operations. Having cost recovery goals are inherently a good business practice to demonstrate financial transparency and meet organizational, and community, expectations. Cost recovery is applicable not only to recreation programming, but also to asset management. An approach such as Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) that more closely aligns facility/amenity lifecycle and capital costs with recovery of service provision costs may be advisable.

Space (Destination). Parks and Recreation Spaces as “Third Space” of Choice

Alisa O’Hanlon Regala stated that this strategic direction contemplates 10-minute walk coverage, youth mobility, youth outdoor and physical activity, level of service and availability of amenities and programs by mission area.

Performance measures include: neighborhood park usage, CHIP-in! or “friends” participation, sense of belonging.

Ms. O’Hanlon Regala spoke to the key policy shifts to be considered in this area as follows: Outreach and engagement activities have shed light on challenges associated with local ownership of local parks. A way to increase local engagement and activation is to reduce "indirect reduction" of using public spaces. Namely, this relates to changing the way we see and utilize space. This can be accomplished by creating more publicly accessible areas, changing rules and regulations, broadening park classifications (e.g., Neighborhood Parks), facilitating park Friends Groups, and enhancing the overall park experience via desired amenities, facilities, and programs. Will District continue to lean into community engagement, (to mean not just community comment and opinion) to cultivate our parks and recreation spaces as residents’ chosen “third” space.

Tacoma is a diverse community. Needs and experiences are different in different parts of the community. A diverse community warrants a comprehensive and multi-faceted or, in other words, equitable approach to level of service. Central to this idea is establishing level of service standards beyond population-based metrics alone. Implications for establishing an equitable levels of service can mean more investment in community engagement and more attention to conditions outside the boundaries of park and recreation spaces that can influence the recreation experience.

Staff also noted the need to perhaps look at broadening the current parks classification system used by the District.

Board members and staff also briefly discussed tax bases being used for specific programming based on the need of community.

Staff commented that thinking about level of service being more than just a 10-minute walk, but also about the quality of the amenities, and safe routes to get to these spaces.

Board members and staff then briefly talked about the philosophy of using all public spaces and waterfront property regardless of ownership. Staff mentioned the work being discussed at the MPT/COT Interlocal Coordinating Committee (ICC) as it relates to COT parcel being transferred to MPT.

Space (Journey). Mobilization for Connecting With and Enlivening Our Natural World

Alisa O’Hanlon Regala stated that this strategic direction contemplates conservation of natural areas, habitat conservation and connection to wildlife, tree canopy coverage, climate change impacts, and transformation of our mobility network with green corridors.

Performance measures include: trees planted, youth who spend time outside, wildlife advocacy, nature and environment enrollments.

Ms. O’Hanlon Regala spoke to the key policy shifts to be considered in this area as follows:

Public spaces are more than park spaces. When the entire public space network is activated, it can be means to a richer, more enlivened community that is better connected to each other and with the place they live. This vision is an overarching public space philosophy, not just a parks and recreation philosophy. Metro Parks can be the driver of that philosophy.

Ms. O’ Hanlon Regala then reviewed the remaining timeline for the adoption of this plan, noting that First Reading is scheduled for the June 10, 2024 Regular Park Board meeting.

OTHER

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, Commissioner Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

APPROVED:

President

Clerk

Submitted by:
Jennifer Bowman, Secretary