



**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
November 25, 2024**

PRESENT: Andrea Smith, President
Matthew Mauer, Clerk
Rosie Ayala
REMOTE: Aaron Pointer
Tim Reid

IN THE CHAIR: Andrea Smith

PLACE: Park District Headquarters, 4702 S 19th Street Tacoma, WA 98405

PUBLIC HEARING

- 2025-2026 DISTRICT BIENNIAL BUDGET

The Public Hearing was called to order at 5:30 pm.

Tania Wink opened the hearing by commenting on the community engagement through the development process including community workshops, Co-Create to Recreate Events and surveys.

A District organizational chart was then reviewed followed by a review of the FTE count in each department totaling 501.5 FTEs.

Ms. Wink commented that the District manages seven types of governmental funds. The General Fund is used for operating revenues and expenditures. Enterprise Funds cover operating revenues and expenditures for ZEED and Regional Parks Enterprise. The Capital Projects Fund supports the 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Plan. Internal Service Funds include those for Equipment & Fleet, Medical Self Insurance, and Property & Liability. The Debt Service Fund accounts for payments on Unlimited Tax General Obligation Bonds. A chart noting the percentage of each fund was then briefly reviewed.

Ms. Wink reviewed a chart highlighting the 2025-2026 Expenditure Assumptions for all funds. She presented several tables that provided a detailed overview of the District's operating budgets, including general funds, enterprise funds, debt service, and internal service funds. These tables offered a comprehensive snapshot of the district's financial allocations and projections, providing valuable insights into the planned expenditures for the upcoming budget.

Ms. Wink used several graphs to highlight the District's revenue sources, showing the percentage allocations within the budget. These graphs provided a clear breakdown of how revenue is distributed. At the request of Commissioner Mauer, Tania Wink provided more detailed information regarding the projected property tax increase

Debbie Russell discussed the continuation of several important capital projects currently in progress. One key focus is the replacement of aging infrastructure with a focus on equity to ensure that improvements benefit all communities. She also highlighted safety and accessibility enhancements as a priority, aiming to create more inclusive and secure environments for all. Additionally, Debbie Russell emphasized support for both the Strategic Plan and Climate Action Plan priorities, ensuring alignment with long-term goals. She also mentioned the 1% for Art Program, which allocates \$260,000 over the next three years to support public art initiatives. Lastly, Debbie Russell outlined the transition to a future Bond Program, setting the stage for more sustainable funding and development opportunities moving forward.

Several tables outlining the 25/26 CIP budget and project locations were reviewed by Ms. Russell.

Debbie Russell outlined several important priorities in the 6-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). One key focus is the completion of the 2014 UTGO Bond spending, ensuring that all allocated funds are fully utilized for their intended purposes. She emphasized the importance of addressing aging infrastructure through the Enterprise Asset Management System, which will help prioritize and manage critical maintenance and upgrades.

Public Testimony:

Janis Clark thanked Commissioner Mauer for attending her Veterans Day event earlier in the month and expressed appreciation for both Commissioner Mauer and Commissioner Reid's military service. She also commented that the city's decision to close senior centers is unacceptable.

A comment was made by a hearing attendee to consider implementing military and senior discounts.

REGULAR MEETING

The regular meeting of the Metropolitan Park District Board of Park Commissioners was called to order at 6:00 p.m. President Smith read a land acknowledgement.

President Smith noted that Commissioners Reid and Pointer were attending remotely.

Commissioner Mauer was appointed as acting clerk.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH PROCLAMATION

Following an introduction by Hollie Rogge, Commissioner Mauer read the proclamation into the record recognizing November 2024 as Native American Heritage Month, honoring the histories, cultures and continued struggle for justice of Native American people within our community, and committing to our continued partnership for a sustainable, equitable future.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

President Smith commented on recent Park Board Changes as Commissioners Pointer & Ayala will be leaving the Board next month: Commissioner Rosie Ayala: Elected to Pierce County Council. She will take over the seat held by Ryan Mello, former Park Board commissioner, now Pierce County Executive. Commissioner Ayala has been with the Park Board since 2021, playing a key role in rebuilding the system post-pandemic. Commissioner Aaron Pointer: Announced retirement after 24 years of service, starting in 2001. Commissioner Pointer has witnessed significant growth, including new parks, programs, and national recognitions.

President Smith then commented on the vacancy filling process:

Vacancies: 2 seats to be filled – Commissioner Pointer’s term ends December 10th, Commissioner Ayala’s on December 31st.

Application Process: Online application portal opened on November 19th, closing December 3rd. Applicants must submit a resume, brief questionnaire answers, and 2 letters of reference.

A special meeting on December 5th to review applications and shortlist finalists. Names will be announced that day.

Interviews for finalists will take place on December 9th.

A special meeting on December 20th will vote on selecting Commissioner Pointer's successor.

Timing: Commissioner Pointer’s replacement term expires end of 2025; they may run in 2025 for a 6-year term.

Commissioner Ayala’s seat process extends into 2025 with final vote on February 10th. The new commissioner may run in 2025 and 2027 for a full 6-year term.

President Smith commented that eligible community members are encouraged to apply to serve the community through the Park Board vacancies.

STANDING COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Arts & Heritage Advisory Council

Commissioner Ayala stated that at their last meeting the council discussed the cross committee meeting and future recruitments.

Nature & Environment Advisory Council

Commissioner Mauer commented that the council submitted a letter related to the District’s Climate Action Plan.

Zoo Liaison Committee

President Smith noted that at the November 18th meeting the agenda included updates on the Sea Star project, new births at Trek and grants that Trek is perusing,

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Shon Sylvia, Executive Director commented on the following:

- Alan Varsik was introduced to make new ZEED employee introductions

- Zoolights begins this Friday, November 29th through January 5th.
- Public Hearing # 2 on the 25/26 Budget Monday, December 2nd, 12 noon
- Two Special meetings are planned related to the Board Vacancy: December 5th, 6pm and December 20th 12 Noon

COMMUNITY COMMENTS None

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 28, 2024 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Commissioner Mauer moved to adopt the minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Pointer and passed on a vote of 4-0. (due to remote technical difficulties Commissioner Reid was unable to vote)

CONSENT AGENDA

RESOLUTION NO. C70-24: APPROVAL OF WARRANTS CLAIM FUND FOR OCTOBER 2024

RESOLUTION NO. C71-24: REAPPOINTING ROMNEY HABERLE AND LINDSAY WALKER TO THE NATURE & ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. C72-24: APPOINTING DANIEL VAUGHN TO THE BUSINESS & RESPONSIVE AGENCY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Commissioner Ayala moved to adopt the consent agenda as presented; seconded by Commissioner Mauer and passed on a vote of 4-0 (due to remote technical difficulties Commissioner Reid was unable to vote).

Board members thanked new advisory council members.

PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS None

PUBLIC WORKS PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS None

SINGLE READING RESOLUTIONS None

FIRST READING RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. RR73-24: ADOPTING THE 2025-2026 BIENNIAL BUDGET

Shon Sylvia provided an overview of the Preliminary Budget Document and the Budget Resolution. He noted that the MPT Operating Budget for the upcoming period is 18% above the 2023-24 Biennium, reflecting a significant increase in resources. Shon Sylvia emphasized the importance of focusing on revenue to expense through the Cost Recovery Policy, ensuring alignment with the district's 6-year program plans for long-term sustainability.

Mr. Sylvia also highlighted the need for research and feasibility projects to support future planning, which are included as part of the department's key priorities. Additionally, Shon Sylvia underscored the goal of enhancing a culture of collaboration across the organization, focusing on the integration of people, programs, places, and pathways to create a more cohesive and effective environment.

Mr. Sylvia commented on the budget allocations in the (Office of the Executive Director as follows: Marketing & Communications (MARCOM) receives \$6,935,602, while Asset Management/Major & Preventative Maintenance is allocated \$21,178,120. Community Safety & Park Security is set at \$4,270,624, and Volunteerism/Inclusive Workforce is budgeted for \$3,461,102.

Shon Sylvia provided an overview of several key initiatives and plans. One focus is the Community Safety/Park Security Plan & Execution, aimed at improving the safety and security of district parks and facilities. He also discussed the development of an Agency Awareness & Engagement Plan, which will help raise visibility and engagement with the community. Additionally, Shon Sylvia highlighted the upcoming brand roll-out, aimed at enhancing the district's identity and recognition.

Mr. Sylvia emphasized the importance of quarterly work plan updates, ensuring regular progress reports and transparency on key initiatives. He also stressed the commitment to inclusive workforce development, ensuring diversity and opportunity within the organization. To support long-term sustainability, he mentioned the need for sustainable funding and revenue development to maintain a unified, one-park system.

Furthermore, Shon Sylvia outlined the importance of conducting a comprehensive condition and geographic balance analysis of park assets, to ensure equitable distribution and optimal use of resources. Lastly, he discussed the 6-year program and operations action plans, designed to support district teams and provide a strategic framework for future success.

A District organizational chart was then reviewed followed by a review of the FTE count in each department totaling 501.5 FTEs.

Ms. Wink provided insights on the budget drivers and assumptions. She noted that general fund revenues are projected as follows: Property Tax at 6%, Sales Tax at 3%, and Earned Revenue at 43%. Within the enterprise funds, projected revenues are as follows: ZEED Sales Tax at 3%, ZEED Earned Revenue at 4.5%, Meadow Park Golf Course at 37%, and Point Defiance Marina at 33%.

At the request of Commissioner Mauer, Ms. Wink provided information on revenues to Foundation MOUS.

A chart highlighting the 2025-2026 Expenditures Assumptions – All Funds was reviewed by Ms. Wink. Tania Wink presented several tables providing an overview of the District's operating budgets. These tables included detailed information on general funds, enterprise funds, debt

service and internal service funds, offering a comprehensive view of the district's financial allocations and projections.

Mark Knowlden provided an overview of the workplan highlights, emphasizing several key priorities. First, there is a focus on enhancing youth sports and recreation opportunities to encourage greater participation in daily physical activity. He also highlighted the importance of refining strategic recreation plans to ensure they align with program and service delivery data. This will help improve models and methods for increasing diversity, equity, and fiscal stewardship.

Mark Knowlden stressed the need to prioritize safe parks, programs, and facilities by activating community spaces for neighborhood and broader community use. He also emphasized leading the workforce through active leadership and mentorship to foster employee development and a positive organizational structure. Finally, he noted the importance of increasing greenspace access and promoting stewardship efforts to better serve the community.

Mark Knowlden highlighted several strategic priorities focused on sustainability and growth. First, he emphasized the importance of providing programming through sustainable fee and rate structures to ensure long-term viability. He also stressed the need to continue institutionalizing park and facility maintenance as a core service, recognizing it as foundational for the agency's success.

Additionally, Mark Knowlden discussed the goal of generating revenue to support and expand departmental programs, services, and initiatives. He further emphasized the creation of communications and marketing deliverables aimed at directly supporting district programs and initiatives. Lastly, Mr. Knowlden underlined the importance of establishing the District's brand to retain existing customers and attract new ones, ensuring the continued growth and success of the organization.

Parks and Recreation Operating revenue and expense budget tables were then shown to the Board. At the request of Commissioner Ayala, Mr. Knowlden spoke to the earned revenue categories at the Pointe Defiance Marina,

Alan Varsik outlined several key priorities in the workplan. One major goal is to develop a Care and Protection Plan to enhance the overall care and safety of animals and facilities. Alan also emphasized the importance of developing a ZEED Community Collaboration Plan that aligns with District-wide efforts to foster stronger community ties.

Additionally, he highlighted advancing safety within ZEED practices, operations, and facilities as a top priority. Alan also mentioned the goal of strengthening community connection, improving animal care, and increasing guest engagement. Operational efficiency and effectiveness are another focus, along with efforts to boost revenue generation. Lastly, Alan

noted the importance of refining events to promote a sense of community belonging, awaken connections to wildlife, and improve marketing efforts.

ZEED Operating revenue and expense budget tables were then shown to the Board.

Debbie Russell outlined several key workplan priorities. First, she emphasized the importance of implementing newly developed strategic plans while supporting collaborative efforts with partners. She also highlighted the goal of developing community-inspired capital projects that reflect green practices, supporting sustainability for future generations.

Additionally, Debbie Russell stressed the need to integrate safety and security awareness throughout district planning. She noted the importance of sustaining public trust through timely, transparent communications and performance management. Ms. Russell also noted that the department aims to cultivate community connectivity and elevate cultural awareness to foster stronger relationships within the community. Other priorities noted by Ms. Russell include developing transparent, sustainable financial strategies and systems and fostering a healthy, vibrant work environment to ensure effective operations. Finally, she pointed out the need to strengthen community recognition of district programs and places, enhancing the visibility and impact of their work.

BAP Operating revenue and expense budget tables were then shown to the Board.

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Ms. Russell also highlighted efforts to support the MPT Climate Action Plan goals, integrating sustainability into future projects. She pointed out that several feature projects will fulfill strategic initiatives, such as corridors and connections, community sports parks, and addressing the needs of aging populations.

In addition, Debbie Russell emphasized the continuation of multi-agency project partnerships, focusing on operational efficiencies to maximize resources. She also mentioned the anticipated transfer of City of Tacoma park assets, which will need careful planning and coordination. Finally, Debbie Russell stressed the need to maintain flexibility in the CIP to respond to emergent needs, while also preparing for the passage of the next capital bond program to fund future district projects.

A projected 6-year CIP budget table was then reviewed. Board members thanks staff of their work on this budget.

Being no additional comments the resolution was moved to second reading at the December 9th regular board meeting.

SECOND READINGS RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. RR68-24: AUTHORIZING 2024 GENERAL TAX LEVY OF REGULAR PROPERTY TAX FOR COLLECTION IN 2025

A public hearing and first reading were held on October 28, 2024.

Being no additional comment, the question was called, and the resolution passed on a vote of 4-0 (due to remote technical difficulties Commissioner Reid was unable to vote).

RESOLUTION NO. RR69-24: AUTHORIZING EXCESS TAX LEVY FOR UNLIMITED TAX GENERAL OBLIGATION (UTGO) BOND REDEMPTION

A public hearing and first reading were held on October 28, 2024.

Being no additional comment, the question was called, and the resolution passed on a vote of 4-0 (due to remote technical difficulties Commissioner Reid was unable to vote).

NEW BUSINESS None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS None

BOARD COMMENTS

ADJOURN

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40p.m.

President

Clerk

Submitted by: Jennifer Bowman, Board Secretary