



**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MARCH 31, 2025**

PRESENT: Andrea Smith, President
Matthew Mauer, Vice President
Alisa Lee
Pete Reyes

EXCUSED: Carla Santorno

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

March 3, COW Minutes

It was moved and seconded that the minutes be approved as presented; seconded and passed unanimously.

POINT DEFIANCE LOOP TRAIL PROJECT PHASE II

Mr. Jungman provided an overview of several capital projects, including the Point Defiance Loop Trail Phase II and the Fort Nisqually Clerk's House replacement, both of which are scheduled for construction contract awards by the CIC on April 2. He also provided updates on a recently completed emergency repair at the Point Defiance Marina and shared insights into broader park planning efforts.

Mr. Jungman explained that the emergency repair at the Point Defiance Marina addressed a failed timber bulkhead in front of Anthony's restaurant. It was noted that the damage was initially hidden beneath concrete but was fast-tracked to prevent further shoreline erosion and protect essential utilities. Despite the complexities of permitting, the repair was completed on time before the fish window closed in mid-February, with Anthony's remaining open, except for a brief closure of its main entrance.

Mr. Jungman commented that the new Clerk's House at Fort Nisqually will replace the 1935 structure with a building designed after the historic Montgomery House. The facility, used by over 180 volunteers, will double in size. The \$2 million project, funded by the 2014 UTGO bond

and a heritage grant, will meet both historical accuracy and modern construction standards, including prevailing wage requirements and hazardous material abatement.

Mr. Jungman also discussed an upcoming project at the Point Defiance ferry terminal, where improvements will include a new staff restroom to address accessibility challenges, electrical upgrades, and a covered ticketing area to improve the customer experience. Construction, fully funded by Washington State with a project value between \$2-3 million, is scheduled to begin in winter 2025. The Board was informed that the construction will have minimal impact on vehicle flow or park access.

Mr. Jungman next provided an update on the Point Defiance Loop Trail Phase II, a project that originated from the 2013 Park Program Plan, the 2015 Master Plan, and a successful 2016 RCO grant. He explained that while the trail was initially envisioned as an outer loop, the design has evolved to an inner loop that minimizes environmental impacts while enhancing safety and connectivity. This revised design will separate pedestrians and cyclists from vehicle traffic and includes a new spur to Owen Beach. Additionally, vehicle lanes will be narrowed to naturally slow drivers. Mr. Jungman emphasized that this final phase of the project fulfills the commitments outlined in the master plan and improves access to key park destinations, including the Zoo & Aquarium, Pagoda, and Japanese Garden.

Mr. Jungman went on to describe the landscape buffer, which will incorporate horizontal and vertical separation through the use of logs, boulders, and plantings to better guide drivers. To illustrate the need for these improvements, Mr. Jungman referenced photos from Animal Loop Road, showing pedestrians walking in the middle of the road and cyclists in the right-hand lane. He highlighted the importance of enhancing safety, particularly for children who regularly walk through the park.

Mr. Jungman also noted that the construction will impact the area for approximately one year, but efforts are underway to increase bus routes to improve access. The sidewalk will be placed on the left side of Animal Loop Road alongside the zoo's fence line, with a dedicated bike path included.

Regarding the project timeline, Mr. Jungman confirmed that Phase 1 was completed in 2023, and Phase II is scheduled to begin in May 2025, which will extend the bike path to Owen Beach. As part of this phase, part of 5 Mile Drive will be closed for safety reasons due to the scope of the civil work, but detour routes will ensure continued access to all park attractions. He also mentioned that there are long-term plans for potential road changes, including converting the bottom road into a two-way street, though this would require additional traffic studies.

REIMAGINE MEADOW PARK GOLF COURSE PROJECT

Joe Brady expressed gratitude for leading the Reimagine Meadow Park project since its inception in March 2023, highlighting the involvement of Advisory Councils and Commissioners. He shared recent findings on cash flow and revenue bonds, key to funding the

project, and emphasized the goal of maintaining the park as a community asset, especially for kids and families, with partners like the First Tee playing a central role.

Mr. Brady explained that the project aims for fiscal sustainability, introducing a new funding approach for the district. It is viewed as a national precedent for municipal golf, blending entertainment and traditional golf markets. He outlined major components, including a two-tier driving range, a lighted golf course, and a three-hole developmental course. The project is expected to generate approximately \$4.8 million in net annual revenue post-construction. He also discussed the revenue bond process and the importance of securing investors for the project's long-term success.

Board members were informed that philanthropic components include a seed grant from the PGA for the developmental course, with plans to raise additional funds. Mr. Brady expressed confidence in the project's financial outlook, noting conservative revenue projections and aggressive cost assumptions. He emphasized the need for timely funding decisions, as the first bond payment is due in October this year to maintain the project's timeline, aiming for phase one completion by April-May 2027.

Mr. Brady then provided an update on phase one, which includes a new entertainment center, restaurant, clubhouse, parking lot, and utilities. Phase two, including the Williams 9 component, will follow. He raised the question of whether to fund Williams 9 through voter-approved bonds or the district's debt capacity, stressing that both options are financially interconnected. If the bond measure is pursued, it must pass by April 2027 to stay on schedule.

Regarding the 3-hole developmental course, Mr. Brady highlighted the need to secure philanthropic funding by the first quarter of 2027. Early discussions with organizations like the PGA of America and the National Links Trust suggest that raising \$3 million for the project is feasible. Mr. Brady further noted that conversations with the First Tee of South Puget Sound are underway to launch a local capital campaign.

Staff then discussed the funding strategy, considering both bid-build and design-build methods. Jim Duggan of Parametrix emphasized the importance of an external review of financial projections and cash flow assumptions, which must be completed within the next two months. The procurement process for the design-build contractor can proceed while the funding plan is finalized, and flexibility is built into the process in case the bond measure does not move forward.

The Board discussed whether to pursue a Limited Tax General Obligation (LTGO) bond, which requires no voter approval and has a lower tax impact, or a voter-approved bond. They also considered the timing of bond issuance and project phasing, with further exploration of the LTGO option planned. Mr. Brady and staff next provided an update on the project's financial structure, noting that the cash flow follows a typical "bell curve," with costs peaking during construction. They explained that the cash flow has been carefully structured to ensure that funds

are available up to three months in advance of expenses. Mr. Brady emphasized that the driving range and championship 18 holes are expected to generate significant revenue, even if other parts of the project, such as Williams 9, experience delays. He also mentioned that while the pro forma assumes a 5% growth rate, the actual growth is closer to 10-15%, reflecting the current economic environment. With this conservative approach, the project is expected to maintain a favorable revenue ratio, despite some areas experiencing lower volume.

Mr. Brady emphasized that the project should be funded through an enterprise fund, with users contributing rather than general taxpayers. He also noted that the selection of Jim Duggan as the owner's advisor has introduced new delivery methods for capital projects, which could benefit future bond measures.

Staff commented that from a design perspective, the driving range location has been adjusted to minimize disruption, with environmental factors and tree preservation in mind. Additionally, stormwater from the city of Tacoma may be used to supplement on-site ponds, offering a sustainable irrigation solution. It was noted that the project's timing aligns with infrastructure projects planned by both the city and Pierce County.

It was clarified that the revenue bond must be tied to operational assets that generate revenue, such as the parking lot. This requirement means that the full \$92 million cannot be covered at once, as some aspects of the project won't generate immediate returns. However, the phased approach is expected to ensure long-term sustainability.

The discussion concluded with a commitment to continue refining the plans and ensuring proper documentation for approval.

OTHER

ADJOURNMENT

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

APPROVED:

President

Clerk

Submitted by:

Jennifer Bowman, Secretary