

**CITY OF BELLEVUE
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday
November 14, 2023
6:00 p.m.

Via Hybrid

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Clark, Vice-Chair Clima; Boardmembers, Kronoff, Trescases¹, Valverde²

BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT: Boardmembers Chou, Hamilton

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Stokes

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Shelley Brittingham, Pam Fehrman, Jammie Kingham, Curtis Kukal, Camron Parker, Mariam Sarwary, Michael Shiosaki, Colin Walker, Ryan Walker

OTHERS PRESENT: Larry LaPlant, Alex Tsimerman

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:**

Chair Clark called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. A quorum was present.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Boardmember Clima to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Boardmember Clima to approve the October 10, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.

Boardmembers requested a correction to the spelling of Boardmember Chou's name on page 3, Item 7, last paragraph.

At the question, motion carried unanimously (4-0) to approve the meeting minutes as corrected.

¹ Arrived at 6:30 p.m.

² Arrived at 6:09 p.m.

4. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

Chair Clark reviewed the guidelines for Oral Communications.

Larry LaPlant

Larry LaPlant expressed displeasure with the Wildwood Off-Leash Dog Park that opened in June; stating that the park is a nuisance with the park usage drastically changing, no parking, odor, mess, dog owners not abiding by park usage hours, and many other problems, including failure to meet the criteria for off-leash dog areas as stated in the Pop-up Dog Off-Leash Pilot Program document. Mr. LaPlant asked that the Wildwood Off-Leash Dog Park be eliminated as a long-term dog park solution.

Alex Tsimerman

Alex Tsimerman expressed dissatisfaction with the government.

5. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Michael Shiosaki, Parks & Community Services Director, provided the following report:

- Former Boardmember Dave Hamilton resigned from his position on the Board, since he was recently elected to City Council.
- The name recommendation for the new neighborhood park in Bridle Trails will go before Council on December 4, 2023.
- A Meydenbauer Bay Park expansion handout was distributed. There will be several pop-up opportunities to provide feedback for this phase of the project.
- The Bellevue Botanical Garden d'Lights celebration runs from November 25-December 31, 2023.

6. **CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:**

Councilmember Stokes said that a replacement will be made to fill Dave Hamilton's vacant Board position.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Kronoff looks forward to the Weona Park update; Boardmember Clima enjoyed the Arbor Day tree planting event at Bannerwood Park; and Boardmember Valverde looks forward to the Bellevue Botanical Garden d'Lights event.

8. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

Chair Clark encouraged Boardmembers to attend the Bellevue Botanical Garden d’Lights event. He also looks forward to progress on Ashwood Park.

9. **BOARDMEMBER/COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:**

No report.

10. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Natural Resources Division - Weowna Park Restoration**

Curtis Kukal, Park Ranger, Parks & Community Services Department, and Jammie Kingham, Environmental Programs Supervisor, Parks & Community Services Department, provided an overview of the Weowna Park restoration project. Since 2021, the Natural Resource Division of Bellevue Parks & Community Services has engaged Bellevue Naturalist volunteers, Well K.E.P.T. (Kids Environmental Project Training) teen interns, department staff, contract services, and WCC (Washington Conservation Corps) crewmembers to enhance irreplaceable old-growth forest resources at Weowna Park.

Ranger Kukal said that Bellevue Naturalist volunteers have been central to the forest enhancement work at Weowna Park. To date, 50 Bellevue Naturalists have given 346 hours at two restoration areas in Weowna Park. Their work has focused on manually treating several species of noxious weeds in the park, with additional herbicide application support from staff and WCC crews.

As of fall 2023, the volunteers have completed restoration treatments on approximately 7.3 acres of Weowna Park in areas with substantial old-growth trees. Ranger Kukal provided background information on old-growth forest resources within Weowna Park, explained restoration treatment techniques associated with this project, and showed short videos of wildlife utilizing the recently restored areas.

Discussion:

- The program is incredible, volunteers are passionate, instructors are knowledgeable, and Rangers are amazing!
- Efforts are appreciated.
- It is great that Boardmembers continue to participate in the Naturalist program.
- How many people are in the class each session? *Response: approximately 15-20 people on average since the program began*
- This is a great opportunity for the community and Parks & Community Services Boardmembers.
- Staff and Council should visit the project site.

- How long will the efforts last and how can it be kept at 100%? *Response: the next phase is maintenance and monitoring. The goal is to achieve a Level 1 resiliency within the forest.*

B. Recreation Program Plan Update

Shelley Brittingham, Assistant Director and Ryan Walker, Senior Planner, Parks & Community Services, are in the process of updating one of the Parks Department's long-range policy documents, the Recreation Program Plan. First developed in the late 1990s, the Recreation Program Plan guides the department's investment in recreation programming. The Plan iterates the vision for recreation programming in the city and establishes goals, strategies, and actions to implement that vision.

The Plan is a required document set forth by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), under which Bellevue Parks & Community Services is an accredited agency. Through recently updated CAPRA accreditation requirements, the Recreation Program Plan shall be updated every 2-3 years (the prior standard was about every 5 years).

The current Plan dates from 2020 and was updated significantly at that time, including extensive community outreach. The 2023 update is seen as an interim update. To meet accreditation standards, the update will be complete by the end of 2023. The core tenets of the current Plan remain relevant. This update provides an opportunity to assess progress and consider pertinent changes given trends in the last few years. Changes, as discussed at prior Board meetings, are focused on the implementation actions, with consideration of those completed since 2020 or those that need to be revised or added based on trends in recreation programming and in the city.

The Parks & Community Services Board was introduced to the Recreation Program Plan Update at the July 2023 meeting. At that meeting, discussion with the Board focused on Plan goals, strategies, and actions as well as the department recreation services broadly and changes since 2020. Proposed edits to implementation actions were reviewed at the October Board meeting.

As part of this Plan update, various staff reviewed the document and a workshop was held. Outreach was conducted at meetings of the Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network, Bellevue Network on Aging, and, most recently, with Youth Link Board. Youth Link members expressed continued interest in enhancing program accessibility, particularly around cost and transportation, and ensuring that gathering spaces for teens and young adults are available throughout parks and recreation facilities. Minor edits were made based on this feedback, Parks Board input in October, and final staff review.

The following is a list of implementation action edits:

- Strategy 1A - Evaluate and improve department programs, systems, and resources to ensure that recreational programs and community services are diverse, equitable, and accessible in development and delivery.

Proposed Addition/Action 8 - Continue to provide and regularly evaluate additional options for free or low-cost programs.

- Strategy 1B - Connect with new audiences through expanded outreach and communication efforts.

Action 2 - Where need exists, translate program and registration materials to languages represented in Bellevue other than English. Prioritize languages spoken by those with limited English proficiency.

Proposed Revision/Action 2 - Ensure compliance with language access requirements in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act by translating program information, forms, and registration materials to languages represented in Bellevue, where documents are deemed vital or a request is made. Continue to increase equitable access by incrementally translating additional items.

Discussion:

- Appreciate all of the feedback, particularly from the youth.
- In several of the feedback avenues, there isn't always a solution. Were there any suggestions around improving transportation gaps? *Response: The Parks & Open Space Systems Plan touches on transportation and coordination with transportation plans. It needs to be a collaborative effort to enhance the goal of increasing transportation access.*
- On page 42, "enhance the city's partnership to communicate"...what needs to be added to include other school districts? *Response: Bellevue School District is the primary focus because that's the district where the vast majority of students in Bellevue attend. There is a placeholder to determine if there is room for other districts in the future. This will need more ground work with other districts to determine additional opportunities.*
- On page 14, Figure 1, what are the private parks and beaches? *Response: This includes facilities such as private golf courses, Vasa Park, Tam O'Shanter Park, Spring District, and a variety of small, non-city managed facilities.*
- There are big picture metrics that get reported annually. The city-wide budget survey helps validate the information, along with other surveys and program evaluations. Need to establish a reporting frequency.
- Would like an inventory of all private parks that have a public use (mapping, connection, etc.). May want to consider taking advantage of these publicly accessible private properties of which many people are unaware. *Response: Opportunities should be evaluated understanding that publicly accessible privately maintained parks and plazas makes up a relatively small fraction of the city's overall parks and open spaces.*

Motion by Boardmember Trescases and second by Boardmember Kronoff to endorse ~~recommend that City Council approve~~ the 2023 Parks & Community Services Recreation Program Plan, as presented. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

12. **PROPOSED AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:**

Camron Parker said that the January meeting agenda will include:

- Quarterly memo to Council
- Comprehensive Plan Update
- Continuation of Program Presentations: Northwest Arts Center

13. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. Parks CIP Project Status Report
- B. Wilburton Vision Implementation Engagement Plan

14. **WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The December meeting is canceled. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held January 9, 2024.

At 7:56 p.m., Chair Clark declared the meeting adjourned.