

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

Tuesday
April 17, 2024
6:00 p.m.

Via Hybrid

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Clark, Vice-Chair Clima; Boardmembers Chianglin, Chou, Kronoff, Trescases, Valverde¹

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Hamilton

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Ruth Blaw, Toni Esparza, Pamela Fehrman, Camron Parker, Mariam Sarwary, Michael Shiosaki, Jenny Zheng

OTHERS PRESENT: Heidi Dean, Betsi Hummer, Court Olson, Craig Spiezle, Alex Tsimerman,

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

Chair Clark called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Boardmember Trescases and second by Vice-Chair Clima to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Boardmember Chou to approve the March 12, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

4. **ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Chair Clark reviewed the guidelines for Oral Communications (Ordinance 6752).

Craig Spiezle

Craig Spiezle discussed the future of Ashwood Park. The remarks stem from the April 3, 2024 meeting about the parks survey. It is crucial to grasp the initial sentiments expressed by the community, which is a preference for maintaining the park as an open

¹ Via Zoom.

green space and not building a community center. At the April 3rd meeting, questions arose about the park's intended function, current usage patterns, and budget allocation. Residents emphasized the need for transparency, suggesting workshops to explore various amenities and their associated costs to inform decision-making processes.

Court Olson

Court Olson's Neighborhood Block Watch Group is in agreement about a previous proposal that was submitted to the city regarding Airfield Park. The Block Watch Group does not object to the plan improvements in the park and the activities suggested but have suggestions to reduce the impact. Therefore, all Boardmembers are invited to walk the property to discuss a proposed alternative.

Heidi Dean

Heidi Dean said that the Newport Hills Community Club is in the process of planning summer events at Newport Hills Woodlawn Park. An ice cream social was held at the park last summer, yet there were issues with the event. With the design of the park, the people space is at the very back of the park with a long/narrow entry lane. Because the dog park was built at the front of the park, all of the parking is taken up by people driving in from outside of the neighborhood to use the regional dog park, which makes it difficult for the neighbors to go to the neighborhood events.

Heidi Dean requested resolution regarding the parking issues at Newport Hills Woodlawn Park for the upcoming neighborhood event.

Alex Tsimmerman

Alex Tsimmerman expressed dissatisfaction with the city's public comment rules and government in general.

Betsi Hummer

Betsi Hummer said that developing parks often comes with opposition (e.g., when Robsinwood Park was first developed). Community engagement and sighting parks is difficult. An example of this is the public outreach process for Ashwood Park, which was awful. People were not heard. The process was indefensible. Bellevue needs to do better.

5. **CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:**

Councilmember Hamilton provided the following report:

- Welcome to the newest Parks & Community Services Boardmember Steve Chianglin.
- Boardmember Chou was recently reappointed to the Parks & Community Services Board.
- Upcoming Council work includes: Comprehensive Plan, Budget, Bike Infrastructure.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Michael Shiosaki, Parks & Community Services Director, discussed some of the upcoming Parks Department events. Staff will also look into the agreement with the Newport Hills Community for their community event, and follow-up.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Trescases said that Bellevue Rotary is partnering with the city for a lithium battery recycling event at Bellevue Downtown Park. Also discussed was the active wildlife in Bellevue neighborhoods.

Boardmember Chou provided highlights from a journey set to visit all of Bellevue's parks. A suggestion was made to include narrative information on the park signs to describe the park name, the year the park was established, and provide the park address.

Vice-Chair Clima completed a recent Bellevue Naturalist program pulling ivy at Weowna Park. Vice-Chair Clima attended a native plant sale at Bellevue Botanical Garden, as well as the Ashwood Park community meeting. It was a passionate meeting with a lot of people in attendance. Lastly, Vice-Chair Clima asked staff to help resolve the parking issue at Newport Hills Woodlawn Park.

Boardmember Kronoff visited the Coal Creek Natural Area and Holi Celebration.

Boardmember Chianglin gave kudos to staff for the efficient welcome as a new Boardmember.

Boardmember Valverde discussed some upcoming events.

Chair Clark attended the Holi Celebration in addition to attending the Ashwood Park community meeting. It was a difficult meeting. Some people at the meeting wanted to be heard. Recurring theme was a concern that the 1990 Master Plan has more inertia than it actually does. There's been an issue at Downtown Park for quite some time with off-leash dogs. It's also a problem at several other parks, including Ashwood Park. There is an enforcement gap, specifically in the downtown area, for off-leash use.

8. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **2025-2026 City Budget Process Overview**

Jenny Zheng, Fiscal Manager, provided an overview of the city's budget process and the Board's role in the upcoming 2025-2034 Capital Investment Program budget.

Key milestones in the budget process include:

- Department Budget Proposals due to the Budget Office by April 30.

- Proposal review throughout the summer.
- City Manager's Preliminary Budget Proposal in September.
- The City Council's adoption of the final budget by November 19.

The Parks Board's role is to act as advisors to the City Council.

Discussion:

- In previous years, the Parks Department's budget items have been strategically tied to the Council Strategic Priorities. Would like this to occur for this budget process.
- Send materials well in advance of the meeting for review.
- Need to synthesize a cohesive recommendation.
- Need awareness on how and where the levy dollars fit within the budget.

B. Human Services Needs Update

Toni Esparza, Assistant Director, and Ruth Blaw, Human Services Manager, said that every two years, Human Services conducts an extensive Human Services Needs Assessment to obtain a comprehensive picture of the human services needs and issues affecting Bellevue residents. The Human Services Needs Update provides data that is used by the Human Services Commission to inform their funding recommendations to Council. The Needs Update is also used by community-based agencies and their boards, resident groups, city staff, staff in other local jurisdictions, and faith communities for planning purposes.

The 2023-2024 Human Services Needs Update identifies the following critical needs, with the data demonstrating disproportionate impacts on marginalized communities in most areas:

- Housing and Homelessness.
- Food Security and Financial Assistance.
- Health and Well-being.
- Violence Prevention and Survivor Support and Advocacy.
- Education and Employment.
- Hate, Discrimination, and Bias.
- Services for Older Adults.
- Services for Individuals Living with a Disability.

Discussion

- Thanks for changing the way the homeless population is counted. Are there efforts to make the current measurement regional? *Response: Need sub-regional data, specifically for Bellevue, from King County.*
- Is there anything particular that can target the Hispanic community? *Response: Community members say that they have difficulty accessing resources in their language. This is a contributor to homelessness if these resources are not available.*
- There was a general discussion about city-level investments in human services, as well as one-time funding in response to the pandemic.

- Language access is a growing factor in the community. Racial inequities present important considerations as well.
- Has Artificial Intelligence been utilized to assist with language barriers?
Response: AI is being used more and more. However, iteration is critical. There are many other factors to language barriers.

5 minute break

C. Pop-up Off-Leash Area Pilot Report

Pamela Fehrman, Capital Projects Manager, presented an overview of the 2023-2024 Pop-Up Dog Off-Leash Pilot Program. The following information was shared: current off-leash area status, an overview of the program, community feedback, recommendations for conversion of off-leash facilities to permanency, and site improvements for the four pop-up off-leash sites. The site selection criteria were also discussed. The following parks are recommended to become permanent dog parks:

- Crossroads Community Park.
- Wilburton Hill Park.
- Wildwood Park.
- City Hall.

Boardmembers discussed the need for pop-up dog parks throughout the community and the need for enforcement of proper dog etiquette.

Motion by Boardmember Valverde and second by Vice-Chair Clima to extend the meeting until 8:45 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Discussion:

- How can we address some of the community feedback received regarding Wildwood Park? *Response: The park will be altered to a smaller footprint and reshaped.*
- Will the park be utilized as a revenue source? *Response: The dog parks are not intended to be a revenue source.*
- Concerned about the limited number of responses for the Wildwood Park survey.
- Differing opinions regarding Downtown Park as a site for a dog park.

D. Bylaw Amendment Approval

The proposed bylaw amendment changes the meeting date to the third Wednesday of each month.

Motion by Boardmember Trescases and second by Boardmember Chou to adopt the updated Parks & Community Services Board Bylaws, substantially in the form presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

E. Approval of First Quarter 2024 Report to Council

Boardmembers reviewed the First Quarter 2024 Report and Communication to Council that was included in the Board packet.

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Boardmember Trescases to approve the First Quarter 2024 Report and Communication to Council substantially in the form presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

9. **NEW BUSINESS:**

The June meeting will be a retreat held at the Bellevue Municipal Golf Course to continue working on the board's CIP budget recommendations. More details on the agenda will be sent out in the coming weeks.

10. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held May 15, 2024 at the Bellevue Golf Course.

At 8:43 p.m., Chair Clark declared the meeting adjourned.