

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

Wednesday
October 15, 2025
6:00 p.m.

Via Hybrid

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Clima, Vice-Chair Valverde; Boardmembers Chianglin, Chou, Drever, Kronoff

BOARDMEMBER ABSENT: Boardmember Clark

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Dave Hamilton

STAFF PRESENT: Betsy Anderson, Toni Esparza, Mariam Sarwary, Michael Shiosaki, Ryan Walker

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

Chair Clima called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Vice-Chair Valverde to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Drever and second by Boardmember Chou to approve the September 17, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

4. **ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

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

Alex Tsimmerman began comments stating an opinion that people with double citizenship cannot work for government. Tsimmerman believes that there are two Bellevue Councilmembers that have dual citizenship. Tsimmerman was given three warnings by the Chair to speak on a topic within the duties of the Parks & Community Services Board and was then asked to leave after refusing to comply and disrupting the meeting.

5. **CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:**

Councilmember Hamilton thanked Chair Clima for managing the disruption during Public Comments, and stated that the City of Bellevue should consider follow-up actions, including the potential exclusion of persistently disruptive individuals. Councilmember Hamilton then provided a report on recent Council-related activities.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Michael Shiosaki, Director, reported on the department's national reaccreditation. Bellevue Parks & Community Services once again achieved accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), earning a perfect score. The department has maintained accreditation for 20 years, making Bellevue one of only three accredited agencies in Washington State and one of 231 nationally. Staff credited Assistant Director Toni Esparza for leadership in the complex, multi-year reaccreditation process. The accreditation process involved hundreds of documents, internal audits, and a virtual site visit during which reviewers interviewed staff and assessed whether Bellevue's policies were actively implemented. Recognition was also given to Craig Fritz for work establishing the Community Court. Mr. Shiosaki also promoted the city's food and hygiene supply drive in response to ongoing community need and highlighted two upcoming community-facing events: Día de los Muertos at Crossroads Community Center and Youth Link Gumbo Night.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Chou celebrated the launch of the new Bellevue edition of Monopoly, and praised the Parks & Community Services newsletter. Boardmember Chou suggested that the Board receive a presentation on marketing, specifically regarding newsletter production methods and impact measurement strategies.

Boardmember Drever expressed plans to purchase the Monopoly game, attend Arbor Day and Gumbo Night, and continue visiting parks throughout Bellevue.

Vice-Chair Valverde commended the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair for strong attendance, an expanded selection of vendors, and consistently popular pony rides. Vice-Chair Valverde also raised a seasonal safety consideration, recommending that public communications highlight which parks feature lighting to support safe play for children after school hours.

Boardmember Kronoff reported on a site visit to Phantom Lake with staff to evaluate paddleboard access. The visit clarified visitor needs, environmental protections, and permitting constraints related to shoreline improvements. Boardmember Kronoff also noted the strong community and cultural engagement at Festival del Maiz and announced plans to participate in the Crossroads cleanup event.

Boardmember Chianglin reviewed online information about Bellevue parks and expressed interest in researching and documenting the historical background of park names, particularly those named after individuals.

Chair Clima attended the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair, and announced plans to attend Arbor Day and Gumbo Night. Chair Clima expressed appreciation to staff for organizing inclusive and family-oriented community events.

8. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Parks & Community Services Accreditation**

Assistant Director Toni Esparza provided a detailed presentation on the accreditation process. The presentation explained that the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) endorsement is a voluntary national standard evaluating departments against 154 best-practice criteria, encompassing planning, financial stewardship, safety, maintenance cycles, inclusive programming, and community engagement. Bellevue received initial accreditation in 2005 and has achieved reaccreditation every five years since, earning a perfect score during both the current and previous cycle. The 2025 reaccreditation effort required more than two years of preparation, over 150 pages of narrative content, and more than 750 separate pieces of supporting documentation, culminating in a multi-day virtual site visit conducted in March 2025. Reviewers expressed strong approval for the integration and consistency of departmental practices, the emphasis placed on safety and inclusion, and the depth of staff expertise across areas such as playground inspections, maintenance standards, public outreach, and service delivery.

Accreditation was described as both a reflection of and a reinforcement for a culture of continuous improvement and accountability. Ongoing expectations include completion of annual reports, adaptation to newly updated CAPRA standards, and maintenance of documentation in real time to avoid end-of-cycle time constraints.

Boardmembers congratulated staff and inquired about the influence of Bellevue's practices on other cities, the relationship of community services to recreation and parks within the accreditation framework, the origins of the accreditation requirement, and potential financial or liability benefits. Councilmember Hamilton emphasized the political significance of accreditation as evidence of responsible stewardship of parks funding and as support for Bellevue's "City in a Park" identity, demonstrating to residents and visitors that the community provides high-quality, safe, and well-managed public spaces.

B. **Park Naming Process and Guidelines**

Senior Planner Betsy Anderson presented information on Bellevue's park naming policy and process. The presentation began with a restatement of the City of Bellevue's naming policy (Council Resolution 10151), which authorizes naming of parks and facilities after neighborhood or geographic areas, natural features, historical figures or names of historical or cultural

significance, and individuals or groups who have made a significant contribution to the park system and/or to Bellevue. An additional requirement, adopted in 2022, specifies that naming should reflect citywide values such as diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The presentation included an overview of the current naming system, noting that most Bellevue park names are derived from geography or natural features, while relatively few honor women, Indigenous communities, or other historically underrepresented groups. Current community naming efforts were described as producing many strong suggestions, but sometimes the popularity of naming parks for geographic and natural features has resulted in repetition of names or portions of names. It would also be helpful for staff and the Board to have additional research and historical context provided for name suggestions, particularly when individuals are proposed for recognition.

Staff proposed additional guidelines to support the naming process and better implement the city's park naming policy. Recommendations include requiring community members to submit background information explaining proposed names; conducting proactive cultural and historical research, including consultation with affected or connected communities such as tribal representatives; providing the Parks & Community Services Board with more comprehensive background materials prior to deliberation; and establishing special guidelines for names honoring individuals, such as verification of contributions, obtaining family consent, and preventing confusion with unrelated individuals with similar names.

Additional topics raised included handling of non-English or Indigenous names in terms of spelling, pronunciation, and signage translation; reducing confusion caused by repeated naming patterns; and defining conditions under which a park might be renamed, such as outdated naming conventions or lack of alignment with community values.

Boardmembers expressed appreciation for community involvement in the naming process and emphasized maintaining meaningful public participation. Boardmembers requested earlier access to contextual information—ideally included in Board packet—along with pronunciation guidance, on-site interpretive signage, and web-based explanations of personal or culturally significant names. The discussion also highlighted the need for clearer internal naming conventions for categories such as “mini park” versus “neighborhood park.”

Interest was expressed in communicating the availability of alternative recognition options, including plaques or benches, to honor individuals when dedicating an entire park may not be appropriate. Several Boardmembers also encouraged beginning development of a structured, criteria-based renaming procedure to prepare for potential future needs, even in the absence of immediate renaming plans.

9. **NEW BUSINESS:**

The November Board meeting will be the last regular meeting of the year and is expected to include a report on the 2022 levy and possibly a follow-up item on naming guidelines.

10. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held on November 19, 2025.

At 7:40 p.m. Chair Clima declared the meeting adjourned.