

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

Wednesday
January 21, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Via Hybrid

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

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Ruth Blaw, Bridgette Larsen, Camron Parker, 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 Clark and second by Boardmember Chou to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Vice-Chair Valverde and second by Boardmember Kronoff to approve the November 19, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

4. **ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

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

Three speakers addressed the Board regarding a proposal to develop an asphalt bike park in Bellevue. The speakers described asphalt bike parks as paved, professionally designed facilities that are usable year-round, accessible to riders of all ages and abilities, and compatible with bikes, scooters, skateboards, and adaptive mobility devices. Benefits cited included increased youth recreation, community connectivity, inclusivity, reduced maintenance needs compared to dirt tracks, and the potential to attract visitors from neighboring cities. Potential locations and preliminary cost ranges were referenced, and the speakers encouraged the City to further explore the proposal.

Boardmembers expressed appreciation for the presentation and requested that staff provide future information regarding asphalt bike parks.

No additional speakers came forward either in person or online.

5. **CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:**

None.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

A. **Parks CIP Project Status Report**

Director Michael Shiosaki announced that the meeting marked the final Parks & Community Services Board meeting prior to retirement, concluding nearly 37 years of service in the parks profession. Remarks included appreciation for Board volunteer service, thoughtful engagement, and the community perspective provided to departmental work. Reflections were shared regarding the long-term impact of parks, trails, natural areas, and related projects completed during the career.

Boardmembers provided remarks recognizing Director Shiosaki's leadership, dedication, technical expertise, and contributions to Bellevue's park system, including trails, natural areas, and the Bellevue Japanese Garden. Appreciation was expressed for mentorship, collaboration, and service to the community.

Director Shiosaki announced that Deputy Director Shelley McVein would serve as Acting Director beginning February 1, 2026.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Drever extended New Year greetings to the Board and expressed enthusiasm for continued progress in 2026. Additional remarks noted a period of family gatherings over the holidays and readiness to resume Board work in the coming year.

Boardmember Clark reported observing a noticeable reduction in off-leash dog activity at Ashwood Park, including improved compliance with leash requirements during recent visits. While no specific cause was identified, the observation was noted as a positive trend.

Boardmember Chou shared reflections on holiday activities, including hosting out-of-town guests and attending Garden d'Lights at Bellevue Botanical Garden. Feedback from visitors was described as highly positive and reinforced pride in Bellevue's park system as a destination comparable to larger metropolitan offerings. Additional comments included observations regarding park lighting availability during winter months and appreciation for Parks & Community Services programming. Interest was expressed regarding potential City-hosted World Cup viewing events, with reference to regional efforts in neighboring jurisdictions.

Director Shiosaki responded to questions regarding World Cup-related activities, noting that Bellevue is not designated as an official FIFA event location due to venue and infrastructure requirements. However, anticipated regional impacts were discussed, including increased hotel occupancy, team accommodations within Bellevue, and interdepartmental City planning efforts related to the event.

Vice-Chair Valverde expressed appreciation for Garden d’Lights passes and shared observations regarding winter park usage by families. Remarks included an informal review of park lighting policies and an expressed interest in further understanding evening park accessibility during non-summer months.

Boardmember Chianglin reported use of the Bellevue-themed Monopoly game during the holiday period and shared a New Year resolution inspired by visiting every park in Bellevue. Observations included using digital tools to research park history, with particular interest in Robinswood Park’s origins. Appreciation was expressed for the accessibility of historical park information and for Director Shiosaki’s mentorship during Board service.

Boardmember Kronoff shared reflections from conversations with neighbors during the holidays, noting strong community pride in the diversity and breadth of Bellevue’s park system. Comments highlighted that many residents were unaware of the full list of parks available online until recently and expressed appreciation for improved access to centralized park information.

Chair Clima commented on the oral communications received earlier in the meeting, noting particular interest in the asphalt bike park proposal. Appreciation was expressed for Garden d’Lights tickets and the public’s enthusiastic engagement with the event. Additional remarks included personal use of local trails near Woodlawn Park and encouragement for continued enjoyment of Bellevue’s trail system.

8. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Parks & Community Services Board Bylaw Amendment Action**

Assistant Director Camron Parker presented the Parks & Community Services Board bylaw amendments for formal action, following detailed review and discussion at the November meeting. Staff explained that Board bylaws require separation between presentation and voting, necessitating the return of the item for formal action. During final preparation, staff identified a clerical discrepancy in which the redlined amendments included in the meeting packet had been applied to a prior version of the bylaws rather than the most current version adopted in April 2024, which established the Board’s meeting date on the third Wednesday of each month.

Staff outlined a structured two-step motion process to correct the discrepancy while preserving all substantive amendments previously reviewed. The substantive amendments clarified Boardmember term lengths, confirmed a two-term service limit, established a required two-year separation before additional service on any board or commission, and aligned Board procedures

with updated City Council rules. Procedural revisions included extending meeting-exclusion periods related to oral communications violations and modifying the appeal process to be heard by the City Council.

Boardmembers asked clarifying questions regarding the procedural steps required to address the error, including sequencing of motions, voting order, and documentation requirements. Staff confirmed that adoption of the amendment would ensure that all approved changes would apply to the current bylaws without altering previously adopted meeting schedule provisions.

Motion by Vice-Chair Valverde and second by Boardmember Chianglin to approve the Parks & Community Services Board Bylaw Amendment substantially in the form presented.

Motion by Boardmember Drever and second by Boardmember Kronoff to amend the Parks & Community Services Board Bylaw Amendment specifying that the redlined edits be applied to the most current version of the bylaws. Motion carried unanimously (7-0) to approve the amendment to the main motion.

At the question, motion carried unanimously (7-0) to approve the main motion as amended, substantially in the form presented.

B. Program Marketing and Communications

Bridgette Larsen, Parks Marketing Coordinator, delivered a comprehensive overview of Parks & Community Services marketing and communications efforts, focusing on how community members are informed about programs, events, and park resources. The presentation identified three primary outreach tools: the Activity Guide, the monthly e-newsletter, and social media platforms. Emphasis was placed on accessibility, clarity, engagement metrics, and community connection.

The redesigned Activity Guide was described as a program brochure organized by age group and activity type, replacing the previous facility-based structure. Staff explained that the redesign was intended to improve usability, help residents identify programs aligned with interests, and encourage discovery of facilities that may be unfamiliar. Enhancements included updated visuals featuring program participants and staff, clearer terminology, improved translation compatibility, and prominently displayed financial assistance and inclusion information. Both print and digital versions were discussed, with the digital guide offering keyword search capability and direct links to the registration system. Distribution was expanded to community centers, City facilities, Bellevue School District locations, and the Bellevue Library system.

The monthly e-newsletter was presented as a key digital engagement tool, delivering program updates, registration reminders, and park highlights directly to subscribers. Staff shared analytics demonstrating strong engagement, including significant subscriber growth, high open rates, and consistent click-through activity. These metrics were described as valuable indicators of community interest and as tools for refining future content.

Social media was discussed as a visual and educational means of engagement, showcasing park amenities, wildlife, safety information, and community participation. Staff described governance structures for social media channels, including contributor training and content review processes. Board discussion addressed engagement, accessibility and content vetting. Boardmembers expressed appreciation for the clarity, inclusivity, and user-focused design of current outreach materials.

C. Human Services Needs Update

Ruth Blaw, Human Services Manager, presented the 2025 Human Services Needs Update, a biennial report intended to assess resident needs and guide City investment in human services infrastructure. The presentation provided demographic context, noting Bellevue's population growth, cultural diversity, linguistic complexity, aging population, and increasing economic pressures. Data collection methods were outlined, including community surveys, provider surveys, focus groups, and subject matter expert interviews, along with challenges encountered during the data-collection period related to community mistrust and external political conditions.

Four cross-cutting themes emerged across all data sources: cultural and linguistic barriers, access challenges, provider capacity strain, and stigma and mistrust. Staff emphasized the compounding effects of federal funding reductions on individuals and service providers, including elimination of programs, reduced operating hours, staffing shortages, and transportation limitations. Populations most affected were identified as older adults, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, low-income households, and unhoused individuals.

Nine areas of need were reviewed in detail: shelter and housing stability, financial assistance, food security and basic needs, safety from violence, behavioral health, childcare and early learning, medical and dental access, navigation, legal and other supportive services, and fostering well-being in the face of bias, hate, and discrimination. Three areas—financial assistance, food security, and shelter—were identified as critical survival needs under current conditions. Statistical trends were presented related to homelessness, housing cost burden, food insecurity, childcare costs, domestic violence, behavioral health access, and medical service gaps.

Board discussion explored interpretation of housing affordability data, distinctions between cost burden and eligibility for affordable housing, and pressures facing working families. Additional discussion addressed food bank capacity, refugee access to federal benefits, volunteer engagement, utility shutoffs, and barriers to accessing services. Staff provided clarification regarding funding sources, City investment levels, and recent operational updates, including continuation of safe parking services under modified conditions. Boardmembers expressed appreciation for the depth of analysis and emphasized the relevance of the findings to parks, recreation, and community-building efforts.

D. September - December 2025 Report and Communication to Council

Camron Parker presented the September–December 2025 quarterly report to City Council, highlighting Board activities including the Eastgate Commons naming, levy updates, accreditation achievements, and informational presentations.

Motion by Boardmember Kronoff and second by Boardmember Chou to transmit the 4Q25 Report and Communication to Council as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7–0).

9. NEW BUSINESS:

Staff previewed the February 2026 meeting agenda, including the kickoff of the BelRed Park master planning process. Due to mid-winter school break, Boardmembers Clark, Chianglin, and Drever indicated plans for remote participation.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Clima adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Parks & Community Services Board meeting will be held on February 18, 2026.