

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

Tuesday
February 8, 2022
6:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Hamilton, Boardmembers Clark, Kumar, Synn, Trescases

BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT: Vice-Chair Unger, Boardmember Giampetro

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Councilmembers Stokes, Zahn

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Toni Esparza, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker, Mariam Sarwary, Michael Shiosaki, Ryan Walker, Brad Nonaka, Pamela Fehrman

OTHERS PRESENT: Heidi Dean, , Steve Fantle, William Liao, Ursel Kammereck-Jones, Grant Keeney, Susan Pappalardo, Riha Vaidya

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

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

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hamilton at 6:00 p.m.

Chair Hamilton announced that there are a few procedural items that need to be addressed. He explained that because in-person meetings are prohibited by the Governor's emergency order concerning the Open Public Meetings Act, the Board will be holding its meetings remotely for an unknown period of time. Chair Hamilton reminded Boardmembers that the Board's Bylaws regarding remote participation and the order of business have been suspended until such time as the Board is no longer holding its meetings remotely.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Boardmember Synn and second by Boardmember Clark to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Kumar and second by Boardmember Clark to approve the January 11, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

4. **WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

Riha Vaidya

Ms. Vaidya is a resident of the Woodcreek condo community located on the corner of 140th Ave. and Main St. Over the past year, Ms. Vaidya has contacted the Parks Department about maintaining vegetation, specifically trimming some of the tall trees on the trail near Odle Middle School and Main Street. She was informed that the trail was maintained by the school district. However, there is older documentation identifying the maintenance of the trail is a shared responsibility between the community and school district. Ms. Vaidya said that the city has previously assisted with limbing some of the taller trees along the trail because the school doesn't have the equipment to perform the work. Until May, 2020, there used to be a City of Bellevue trail marker and wooden gates at the trail entrance; both of these items have been removed. Ms. Vaidya would like clarity on who should maintain the trail and/or if the city will help limb some of the trees.

Steve Fantle

Bellevue Green and Clean is an environmental conservation organization organized by Steve Fantle. Mr. Fantle said that he started the Bellevue Green and Clean Group as a way to give back to the community and encourage others to do the same by building community around environmental stewardship. Bellevue has a significant litter problem and the rapid growth of city has resulted in a multitude of litter. Weekly clean up events since last April have collected over 2,200 pounds of litter. Mr. Fantle said that Bellevue Green and Clean cannot address the litter problem alone and is leading a campaign to request that the City Council create and Adopt-a-Street program. With this program, residents can partner with government, businesses, civic, and faith organizations and schools to work towards a common goal of a greener and cleaner place to live, work, and play. Anyone can participate in the Adopt-a-Street program. Mr. Fantle discussed some of the other communities that already have a successful Adopt-a-Street program.

Since litter and litter control are not mentioned in the Environmental Stewardship Plan, Mr. Fantle said that Bellevue is not leading or following the clean-up efforts.

Heidi Dean

Ms. Dean expressed concern about the Parks & Open Space System Plan because there isn't anything mentioned about the development of additional off-leash dog areas around the city. This is needed per the 2009 off-leash study. Also, one of the things suggested by Parks Boardmembers during the park planning for Newport Hills in 2019 was including off-leashed areas in the upcoming Parks & Open Space System Plan Update. There have been many posts on the city's Facebook page about people trying to enjoy parks and then the dog owners using the parks for off-leash recreation. If the Parks Board does not bring the need for additional off-leash areas forward then Newport Hills Woodlawn Park, who has had to take the brunt of providing off-leash areas for the city, along with Robinswood, will continue to be crowded.

Ms. Dean also expressed concern with the Newport NEP rollout meeting last week. During this meeting, she called attention to the radical differences between what was presented to the Parks Board and City Council, versus what is being constructed at Newport Hills Woodlawn Park. She encouraged Parks Boardmembers to visit the park. In particular, the back section that is extremely sloped and terraced eliminating the potential for neighborhood gatherings. There are also contradictions about the parking spots that were supposed to be in the Plan.

William Liao

With the imbalance between badminton's popularity vs. availability in Bellevue, Mr. Liao made the following requests:

- Make it a priority for SBCC to bring back Monday evening badminton, and make best efforts to add new drop-in times during weekday evenings and weekends (non-work hours).
- Incorporate badminton into the "Bellevue Parks & Open Space System Plan 2022", especially under the Capital Project Objectives. As stated in the 2022 plan, Bellevue has 37 tennis courts, plus 3 community centers that offer dedicated drop-in indoor pickleball. Yet, working residents can only play badminton for 2 non-working hours each week, and only at SBCC.

Mr. Parker read the following email submitted by Jeanie Marquardon:

I moved to Newport Hills the winter of 1980 with my husband and two young children. When I wanted to take my girls to a park we would get in the car and drive out of the neighborhood; there were no play areas we could walk to and at the time, and our budget didn't allow us to buy any play equipment. I was very pleased to learn that the property Bellevue purchased for a park was going to be developed and attended the meeting held at the Newport Hills Swim and Tennis Club to learn of design options.

I was disappointed to see the property had a very significant portion dedicated to an off-leash area for dogs. I also attended a City Council meeting where the board went before the city to present a plan for the park. During the public comment period, many spoke of the "dog park". When it was my turn I chose to call it the Newport Hills Neighborhood Park to reflect what I thought was going to be a gathering place for people of all ages and not just dogs and their owners.

At the City Council meeting, information about the growth of Bellevue's businesses, the new residents that would be moving in to follow the new jobs, and those new residents with dogs were brought up. I hope the configuration of the Newport Hills Park is not affected by the pressure to provide off-leash areas for Bellevue residents in general. It does appear that the Parks Department has changed the plan that had been approved, adding a significant amount of parking spaces among other changes. The space dedicated to what seems to be eleven unanticipated parking spaces really encroaches on the limited open space. Who authorized those changes and why?

I'm concerned that input for the park is being accepted from those who do not reside in Newport Hills. This property was meant to be a neighborhood park. The delay in development allowed the property to be used solely as an off leash area. But it was never intended for that. Please don't eliminate space for people to gather so that non-residents have a place to let their dogs run off leash and listen to the residents who have been waiting for a gathering space so long overdue.

Finally, the Spring District in Bellevue is undergoing a large re-development (understatement of the day). I ask you, are they going to have a neighborhood park and will it serve residents with dogs and have parking spaces available for those not residing there?

Please let residents of Newport Hills enjoy this small space together and don't assign open space to accommodate those that don't reside there who want to make it the dog park.

Mr. Parker read the following email submitted by Gary and Melissa Danberg:

We wish to go on record as objecting to design changes to the Newport Hills Woodland Park plan after the proposed final design was approved by the Council and the Board. Specifically, downsizing the amount of open meeting space for the neighborhood by increasing dog park size, the addition of more street parking spaces than was originally approved, and we also object to this process allowing members of adjacent communities (i.e., Bellevue, Renton, Eastgate, etc.) to provide input to the Board to suit their desires to use our neighborhood park as their own. Please refer to page 43 of the updated Parks & Open Space System Plan Update, Neighborhood Parks versus Community Parks, and what those should look like.

5. **COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL:**

Chair Hamilton explained that the Council Liaison role changes every two years. Councilmember Zahn was recently appointed to the Transportation Commission so her term with the Parks Board has ended. Parks Boardmembers expressed their appreciation to Councilmember Zahn for her contributions to the Parks Board.

Chair Hamilton introduced the new Council Liaison, Councilmember Stokes, to the Parks Board. Councilmember Stokes is a former Parks Boardmember. Councilmember Stokes discussed some of the projects that he worked on during his tenure on the Board.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Shiosaki expressed his appreciation to Councilmember Zahn and welcomed Councilmember Stokes back to the Parks Board. He also thanked Ryan Walker and Camron Parker for their thorough work on the Parks & Open Space System Plan.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmembers expressed their enthusiasm to complete the upcoming Parks & Open Space System Plan update.

Boardmember Trescases recently enjoyed Weowna Park. She also requested additional information about the Odle Trail situation and adopt-a-street programs that was discussed during Public Comments.

Councilmember Stokes expressed his appreciation to Councilmember Zahn for all of her work with the Parks Board.

8. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

No report.

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

No reports.

10. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Parks & Open Space System Plan 2022 Update**

Ryan Walker, Senior Planner, reminded Boardmembers that Parks & Community Services is in the process of updating the Parks & Open Space System Plan, which is one of the long-range policy planning documents for the Department. The current plan was last updated in 2016 and is on a six-year schedule for renewal and adoption by the City Council.

Mr. Walker said that the current draft of the Parks & Open Space System Plan includes edits and additions from public and staff input, as well as changes in the city over the past few years. Formatting of the Plan is yet to come.

Mr. Walker reviewed the following sections of the Plan, including the key elements and any significant changes since the last meeting:

- Introduction
- Bellevue, A City in A Park
- Policy Framework
- Planning for the Future
- Capital Project Objectives
 - Open Space, Greenways, Wildlife Corridors and Trails

- Park Facilities
- Active Recreation Facilities
- Urban Parks Systems
- Waterfront Access
- Partnership Opportunities
- Historic, Cultural, and Art Resources
- Maintenance, Renovation, and Security
- Financing
- Conclusion and appendices

The presentation concluded with next steps.

Discussion:

- In regards to the section on Ashwood Park, it appears that there are different parameters with the redesign specific to the entrance. Is this a change or has this always been the case? *Response: this section stayed fairly similar to the past versions. When designing a park, the areas surrounding the park are also considered. The area south of the library and near the plaza would stay as-is.*
- Thank you for highlighting the many areas for off-leash dog parks.
- Appreciate the equity criteria being added.
- Staff did an outstanding job of gathering the information for the Plan update.

Motion by Boardmember Synn and second by Boardmember Trescases to recommend to the City Council approval of the 2022 update to the Bellevue Parks & Open Space System Plan. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Mr. Walker said that status updates will be provided as the Parks & Open Space System Plan is presented to City Council.

B. Department Division Presentations: Bellevue Probation

Brad Nonaka, Probation Manager, explained that the Parks & Community Services Department takes on a holistic philosophy where there is a continuum of services that supports the whole person and community. As an extension to that philosophy, Probation subscribes to the ideal that every resident has a place, providing interventions to the community members at what is often a low point in their lives.

Mr. Nonaka said that the Bellevue Probation Division supervises over 1,000 adult misdemeanor cases annually with services that range from misdemeanor probation supervision to client programs and jail alternatives. The division has served the City of Bellevue for over 40 years. Mr. Nonaka noted that the Probation Division is committed to monitoring adult misdemeanor clients to ensure completion of court ordered sanctions, the probation division also provides robust programming in an accessible format to all referred clients.

Mr. Nonaka described the job duties in the Probation Division. He said that the probation officers and program coordinators are up to date with modern approaches to supervision, which includes trauma informed care, harm reduction strategies and medication assisted therapies, and motivational interviewing.

Due to the pandemic, Mr. Nonaka said that the program has been altered to fit the current environment. Many programs were temporarily halted as they required a classroom setting. However, there needs to be a balance of staff and participants with the ability to effectively deliver material, while maintaining its integrity.

Discussion:

- How did kids become aware of the Alive at 25 Program? *Response: Typically, it is someone that is referred by the court system. However, there may be a possibility to offer the class externally.*
- Do the surrounding cities have similar programs? *Response: the City of Kirkland has their own Probation Department; King County runs Renton's Court and their probation referrals report to the Issaquah County District Court. Bellevue's program allows the city to be more responsive to the community.*
- What is the thought process behind the fees charged? *Response: a lot of it is cost recovery. Want to be able to provide equitable services.*
- How much do the fees account for each year? *Response: Less than half of the total budget.*
- Are there partnerships for the programs? *Response: Yes, there are many partnerships, particularly for the curriculum. Also looking for partner organizations to help with other programs.*

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

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

Mr. Parker said that the following items will be included in the March meeting agenda:

- City's upcoming budget process.
- Youth Link Program Virtual Event – Unity Through Diversity (March 4, 2022).
- Appointment for Boardmembers to work on Letter to Council.

These minutes are in DRAFT form until approved by the Parks & Community Services Board.

13. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. Parks CIP Project Status Report
- B. 2022 Youth Link Program Virtual Event – Unity Through Diversity

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Hamilton adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.