

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

Tuesday  
May 11, 2021  
6:00 p.m.

*Via Zoom*

**BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Trescases, Vice-Chair Hamilton, Boardmembers Clark, Kumar, Synn, Unger

**BOARDMEMBER ABSENT:** Boardmember Heath

**COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT:** Councilmember Zahn

**PARKS STAFF PRESENT:** Pam Fehrman, Nancy Harvey, Brian Landau (Utilities Department), Shelley McVein, Camron Parker, Michael Shiosaki, Jerry Shuster (Utilities Department), Christy Stangland, Ryan Walker

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Grant Keeney, Michelle Kline (Human Services Commission), Nancy Nelson

**MINUTES TAKER:** Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

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

Chair Trescases announced that there are a few procedural items that need to be addressed. She 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 Trescases 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 Kumar and second by Boardmember Clark to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion by Vice-Chair Hamilton and second by Boardmember Kumar to approve the April 13, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

4. **WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

Nancy Nelson  
BYT Foundation

Ms. Nelson reported that the Bellevue Youth Theatre has been able have a successful day camp during Bellevue School District's spring break. This was the first program since last year and ended with successful streaming of the event. The BYT Foundation purchased new streaming equipment due to the pandemic. Soon, friends and family will be able to purchase tickets for live events. The *Mad Hatter's Tea Party* is the next production. Ms. Nelson said that the BYT is a tremendous asset to the community.

5. **COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL:**

Councilmember Zahn provided the following report:

- Council received the Parks Board quarterly update.
- The three year priorities were recently adopted by Council. The tagline remained the same: "Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength. We embrace the future while respecting our past." Three guiding principles were also added that relate to the following: 1) equitable community; 2) innovation; and 3) environmental sustainability.
- Council received an update on the Arts and Culture program.
- The *Hate Has No Home Here* campaign was launched last month.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Shiosaki discussed the following:

- Recreational programming—registrations began the beginning of May for day camps. Approximately 900 people have signed up. There are 34 participants in the upcoming *Mad Hatter's Tea Party*, a Bellevue Youth Theatre production. The live stream performance will be on May 28 and 29, 2021. Tickets are available for Boardmembers. Staff is continuing to work with partners for Crossroads Community Center. Other facilities have resumed indoor rentals, as well as ballfields and outdoor picnic sites.
- Naming of the new Newport Hills neighborhood park—After much discussion, Council decided not to approve the recommended name from the Parks Board for the new Newport Hills park. Council had specific direction regarding the park's name. Per Council's direction, parks should not include people's names in the park naming process; consider using a location place

name (i.e., Newport) within the name; seek local or neighborhood input on the name.

- Progress of Downtown Park's NE Gateway project—work will be complete by June 1, 2021. Then, additional improvements will be conducted later this summer. The art piece will be placed in late August. A grand opening event will be held in the fall, hopefully in person.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Vice-Chair Hamilton has been in contact with Highland Community Center. He also visited the Downtown Park's NE Gateway entrance and looks forward to seeing the impact of this gateway on the community.

Boardmember Kumar visited many parks throughout Bellevue. She continues her Master Naturalist work as well.

Boardmember Synn visited the Downtown Park's NE Gateway entrance. He looks forward to the opening celebration.

Boardmember Clark also visited the Downtown Park's NE Gateway entrance, in addition to visiting several other parks. He called attention to Ashwood Park where he noted that off-leash dogs have been of concern.

Boardmember Unger is eager for the youth summer camps and programs to resume.

There was a general discussion about off-leash dogs and the problems throughout City parks.

8. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

Chair Trescases echoed Boardmember Unger's comments about the ease of youth summer program registration as well as the program offerings.

Councilmember Zahn read a Commendation for Boardmember Heath to thank him for serving on the Parks Board. Boardmember Heath's term will end this month.

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

No reports.

10. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Watershed Management Plan Update**

Brian Landau, Utilities Planning Manager in the Engineering Division, and Jerry Shuster, Utilities Senior Stormwater Engineer, provided an overview of the Watershed Management Plan.

Mr. Shuster stressed the magnitude of the project covering the entire City and every drop of rainwater that falls on the City. It touches many departments in the City, besides Utilities. The Utilities Department is working with Transportation, Development Services, Planning, Community Development, and Parks & Community Services. With this said, the goal of the Watershed Management Plan is to improve the health of Bellevue's streams, which have been impacted by urban development.

Mr. Shuster said that a watershed is an area of land that drains to a common waterbody—it could be a wetland, a stream, or a lake. Changes to these land areas, such as removing trees and creating hard surfaces, can have adverse impacts on streams. To improve the stream health, the land needs to be better managed; most actions proposed in the Watershed Management Plan will be in the upper watersheds, and some will be in and around the streams. Mr. Shuster said that improving streams takes knowledge of what flows into it as well as what is adjacent to it—hence the watershed management approach.

For the Watershed Management Plan, Mr. Shuster explained that the City has been divided into four major watersheds:

- Tributary drainages to Lake Washington
- Tributary drainages to Lake Sammamish
- Greater Kelsey Creek Watershed and
- Coal Creek Watershed

Boardmember Kumar asked if the City is working with King County on the watershed improvement efforts, since the pollutants come from many other places outside of Bellevue. Mr. Shuster clarified that the City is working with other entities as much as possible.

Boardmember Clark asked about specific impacts from increasing density in Downtown Bellevue and the Spring District. Mr. Shuster explained that they are in the early stages of the project so there isn't a particular focus area. The list of priorities will be identified before any work begins.

The objectives of the plan to help achieve the goal of improving stream health include:

- Optimize the stormwater fund and other City and private investments to improve stream health over the next 20 years. The plan will help Utilities and other departments get the greatest return on investments by targeting investments in the watersheds that have the greatest chance to improve.
- Prioritize actions to improve stream health more quickly than the City's current approach (the current approach is only to regulate new and some redevelopment) to move the needle on stream health, retrofitting roads with no

stormwater controls or treatment, and working with developers on greener solutions for new and redevelopment projects.

- Propose to develop and/or change policies and regulations to allow for successful plan implementation.

Past projects between the Utilities and Parks Departments benefiting streams include:

- SW corner of Bel-Red and NE 148<sup>th</sup> Street
- Lakemont Community Park
- Coal Creek
- Lake Hills

Mr. Shuster said that determining how urbanization has impacted streams is another guiding element for the Urbanization Impact Model. This basically means converting forests, meadows and farmland into most of what you see in Bellevue today: roads, homes and businesses.

Mr. Shuster discussed some of the major consequences or stressors from urbanization. If these stressors go completely unmanaged, it will lead to decreases in aquatic habitat and aquatic communities. Major stressors include: changes in flows, rainwater runs off hard surfaces like roofs and roads a lot faster than forests or meadows; too much runoff too fast can negatively impact streams channel erosion and destruction of aquatic habitat. In addition, pollutants from roads and lawns wash into streams largely untreated. Recent studies indicate that chemicals from tire wear from vehicles negatively impact Coho salmon in urban streams.

The areas adjacent to streams, called the riparian area, play a very important role in stream health. Mr. Shuster explained that cutting vegetation or altering the banks of a stream is detrimental to stream health. Another major consequence of urbanization is fish passage barriers from inadequate road culverts or other instream barriers.

Mr. Shuster said that currently, some of the negative impacts have been managed, but the streams are indicating more needs to be done. The Urbanization Impact Model shows where specific management tool targets are needed.

The Watershed Management Plan framework is the roadmap to guide through the major elements of the project. First, the stream assessment data will be used as well as other data about the watershed to assess the watersheds and identify factors that are limiting stream health. Mr. Shuster said that next is the prioritization of watersheds for improvement, with public input.

Mr. Shuster explained that most of the recommended fixes for stream health will be on the land that drains to the stream, but some fixes like barrier removal and riparian corridor improvement will be in or next to the stream. The Utilities Department will be looking for opportunities to partner with other City departments such as Parks, Transportation, Community Development and Development Services or potentially with developers, on projects, or programs that address stream health.

Mr. Shuster said that next in the process is to develop the Watershed Improvement Plans to address stream health issues throughout the City, and get public input again to develop the

Watershed Management Plan (a pared down version of the watershed improvement plans to prioritize investments based on public input and projected funding).

Mr. Shuster provided an overview of the open streams condition assessment, assessment and prioritization of watersheds, and the toolbox, opportunities and risks, including some of the public engagement process. He said that prioritization is necessary because there are limited resources available and the focus should be on the highest priority. Initially, one might think the most impaired streams should be priority #1, since they need the most help. However, the Department of Ecology guidance states that the City should start with those areas with low or moderate impairment. These areas are expected to benefit more quickly from management actions compared to those highly impaired areas. With this in mind, Mr. Shuster said that a methodology will be developed for classifying watersheds into the following groups for prioritization:

- Improve—these are areas of focus. Those areas that show low to moderate impairment, where meaningful improvement can be made relatively quickly – which generally means 5-10 years after implementation.
- Protect—this is for areas in “relatively” good shape, compared to others in the City, and that should be protected from further degradation, possibly with more stringent regulations.
- Sustain—these areas are the most impaired, and the most difficult to improve. The City will continue to enforce current regulations in these areas and, eventually, these areas will move up the list for improvement.

Mr. Shuster discussed the prioritization process for watersheds. In order to rank the watersheds so they can be assigned categories (improve, protect, sustain), each will be given a “conceptual model score.” The four metrics for this scoring are surrogate for the four major stressors: change in flows, streamside alterations, pollutants, and instream physical barriers. Mr. Shuster said that a Geographic Information System or GIS-based mapping procedure with existing data to generate these conceptual model scores has been created. Once the conceptual model scores are identified, staff knowledge of streams and input from the public will help create the prioritization map for the entire City. Mr. Shuster said that a project this large is one where the public voice should be heard.

Mr. Shuster said that a toolbox is used to address stressors (limiting factors). The toolbox is a collection of actions to remedy the negative effects of urbanization. These tools fall into four major categories: projects, programs, policies, and maintenance practices.

This project also provides an opportunity to improve coordination among other City planning efforts that will create synergy among the plans, which include the Environmental Stewardship Initiative, Parks and Open Space Plan, and the Transportation Mobility Implementation Plan. Mr. Shuster added that this will allow for better coordinated projects city-wide that incorporate multiple benefits that can include stream health.

Mr. Shuster highlighted some of the major milestones between now and the end of the project. The Watershed Management Plan is expected to be complete by the end of 2022.

Vice-Chair Hamilton asked about the public engagement portion of the update, which will start next month. He stressed the importance of this process. Vice-Chair Hamilton also asked about the Coal Creek Watershed assessment. Mr. Shuster explained that Coal Creek has been impacted by coal mining and development.

Boardmember Clark asked if it might be difficult to keep up with mitigation efforts and current development efforts. Mr. Shuster explained that stormwater regulations have changed over the past several years so Bellevue is always trying to keep up with the new regulations. However, current regulations still aren't adequate. The storm drainage system needs to be retrofitted with current technology. In addition, most of the Downtown stormwater during large rain events goes into Lake Washington, rather than Meydenbauer Creek. There are opportunities to require more water quality treatment in the Downtown area. Mr. Landau added that some cities that are trying to address stormwater issues have creative programs to mitigate stormwater.

Boardmember Clark asked if the water flow is mainly exposed above ground or under. Mr. Shuster clarified that the water is mostly street runoff that is discharged in stormwater drains that convey it underground and then discharge it to surface waters.

Boardmember Kumar asked if there is a list of streams and their rankings for improvement. Mr. Shuster wasn't certain but estimated that Coal Creek and Lewis Creek are near the top of the list, while Meydenbauer and Sturdevant Creeks are near the bottom. Mr. Shuster also discussed the process for retrofitting pipes.

Boardmember Synn asked if there are any policing methods utilized for water quality issues. Mr. Shuster explained that the Utilities Department is required under the state permit to evaluate discharge concerns and if necessary cite people. Boardmember Synn asked if Bellevue has had many violations. Both Mr. Shuster and Mr. Landau aren't aware of findings or citation information. The Utilities Department Operations & Maintenance section would have that information. Mr. Shiosaki added that the Bel-Red area is an area of focus and opportunity for improvements.

Councilmember Zahn said that a Bel-Red Lookback is scheduled in the near future. Council is also evaluating some of the land use codes for some local creeks. Councilmember Zahn asked if stormwater management and compliance requirements are typically posted. Ms. Shuster said that the City is required to post an annual report for the Department of Ecology each year.

Ms. Shuster discussed some of Bellevue's stream watersheds. Mr. Landau added that Bellevue has a great opportunity to control how the stream health can be governed to improve the water quality in Lake Washington and ultimately Puget Sound. Improving Bellevue streams will have a regional benefit. He added that most of the projects in the CIP are aimed at improving fish habitat, stream channels, removing fish passage barriers, reducing flooding and improving water quality. Mr. Shuster said that the Utilities Department is involved with the Bel-Red Lookback and Wilburton planning efforts. He also discussed some of the challenges with daylighting streams, as well as the challenges with some of the processes to make improvements.

## B. Human Services Needs Update

Ms. Stangland explained that the Human Services Needs Update is a biennial report that looks at the needs of Bellevue residents and explores how to leverage the community's resources most effectively. The information will ultimately guide the Human Services Commission's funding recommendations for 2023-2024. The report includes a compilation of quantitative and qualitative data from a wide variety of sources. The update is an analysis of health and human services trends and issues that affect the quality of life of Bellevue residents. It addresses how the City can best prepare for changes in human services in a quickly changing environment.

Ms. Stangland clarified that not only does the Needs Update help the Human Services Commission, it also provides information for other City departments, community groups, faith communities, agencies and regional planning efforts. This helps with funding the community needs.

The following is a list of areas of focus for the Needs Update:

- Community Profile
- Housing Stability and Food Security
- Supportive Relationships within Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities
- A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence and Abuse
- Health Care to be as Physically and Mentally Fit as Possible
- Education and Job Skills to Help Individuals Reach Their Full Potential
- Specific Populations: Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Refugees and Immigrants, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans
- Special Focus Area: Covid-19

Ms. Stangland summarized the various methods that are used to gather information for the Needs Update. Due to Covid-19, many of the traditional methods for data collection needed to be adjusted. She also provided an overview of the timeline for the 2023-2024 Human Services Needs Update.

Michelle Kline, Human Services Commission Chair, stressed the importance of the Human Services Needs Update. She highlighted some of the ways that the Needs Update is used by the Commission.

### Discussion:

- How does the \$4.1M funding compare to other municipalities? *Response: The goal of the City Council has been to get to 2% of the general fund—Bellevue is close.*
- Is a funding recommendation included in the report? *Response: Recommendations are made on where the funding should go and recommendations are made if increased funding is needed. Other funding sources were also highlighted.*
- Impressive work that goes into the Needs Update.



- Do other cities have similar programs within their community and conduct their own Needs Update. *Response: The cities of Issaquah and Sammamish conduct Needs Updates. Both entities had consultants conduct the Needs Update. The City of Redmond has a Human Services Plan. Bellevue shares data with other jurisdictions to assist with serving the broader community/East King County.*
- With the significant increase in population Downtown and the challenges that come with Covid-19 (i.e., isolation), what resources were increased? *Response: Direct services are not provided from Bellevue. However, various community partners help serve the community (i.e., Bellevue Network on Aging). There has been additional funding made available due to Covid-19 (i.e., CARES Act).*
- How has Bellevue focused on homelessness? *Response: This is an area that the City has been investing in. The City also hired a homeless outreach employee to assist with serving the homeless community.*
- Has Bellevue considered purchasing hotels or offering tiny houses for the homeless population? *Response: King County has provided assistance for motel rooms and some staffing. The Eastside cities have worked together to fill the gaps in staffing. There isn't a specific model that fits everyone's needs.*
- How will you consider responses to current social justice issues (i.e., Black Lives Matter, Anti-Asian sentiment, etc.)? *Response: Over the past two funding cycles the efforts have increased in the focus of equity. Race will also be identified in each of the subjects and the disproportionalities. There are some limitations based upon the applications received.*
- Would like race and equity to be a priority for the City and the Needs Update.
- Has Bellevue considered a streamlined application process? *Response: There is currently a standard application with supplemental information. The process was streamlined several years ago.*

Councilmember Zahn commented that staff will provide spending recommendations for the money from HB 1590 and the already allocated \$1.8M. There are specific guidelines on how the money can be spent (i.e., housing with case management and services).

**Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Vice-Chair Hamilton to extend the meeting until 9:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

Boardmember Unger expressed confusion about the direction from City Council regarding the park naming process for Newport Park. Councilmember Zahn clarified that the process was disappointing because the Parks Board did exactly what was asked, including community feedback and research. Overall, Council does not support the criteria for naming a park after a person or historical place/name. Because the park is a neighborhood park, Council prefers that part of the park name include reference to the geographical location of the park. Councilmember

Zahn stressed that this was not part of the original criteria. Once this process is complete, a revised set of criteria should be presented to Council for approval.

Chair Trescases said that the issue of not naming a park after a person was brought up several times within Council's discussion. Therefore, the criterion needs to be changed. There were also similar deliberations that the Parks Board conducted. There are a number of parks that are named after school sites, similar to the name the Board originally selected and Ringdall Junior High School.

Vice-Chair Hamilton was impressed with the seriousness in which Council conducted the discussion about the park naming. He also commended Councilmember Zahn for her involvement in the process. Vice-Chair Hamilton also expressed his appreciation to Chair Trescases for being part of the discussion and process.

Boardmember Clark expressed his disappointment in the process but also appreciates the Council's time and deliberation. He asked if Council knew of the methodology behind the recommendation. Chair Trescases discussed the presentation that was provided to Council and the rationale for the recommendation.

Boardmembers concurred that the names should be reconsidered and then a mailing should be sent to the community to gain input on the revised list of recommended names.

Boardmember Unger asked why the Board has to go back to the community for feedback, since feedback was already obtained. Chair Trescases discussed some of the recommendations from Council on how to phrase names and recommendations. Council also wants only the neighboring community to the park surveyed, since it is a neighborhood park. Councilmember Zahn added that there were a few name recommendations that didn't come from community members. Mr. Shiosaki added that the original survey was not restricted to only people living near the park. He said that the goal is to bring this back to the Parks Board in July.

Councilmember Zahn asked if the community as a whole should be included in a park naming if it is a neighborhood park. Boardmember Synn said that if the criteria are changed, then there needs to be validity and structure for the change communicated to the community. Mr. Shiosaki clarified that the policy is not being changed at this point; the direction from Council is being considered for new naming options. A revised policy will be discussed at a later time. Mr. Shiosaki clarified that a list of suggested names will be presented to the neighboring community members for consideration.

Vice-Chair Hamilton expressed his concern for community members and the messaging of the reevaluation of the name. Councilmember Zahn hopes that some of the names that were presented during the first survey, with the exception of people's names, are included in the next survey. Councilmember Zahn suggested that the final list of recommended names be sent to Boardmembers for consideration. Councilmember Zahn also reminded Boardmembers that Council would prefer "Newport" be included in the park name. Boardmember Synn asked if there is a specific area of Newport that the park is associated with that can be considered with the

name considerations. Boardmember Clark suggested that the recommended names for the survey be presented to the Parks Board, prior to sending the survey to community members.

**Motion by Boardmember Unger and second by Boardmember Clark to extend the meeting until 9:02 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

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

The following items were suggested for future meeting agendas:

- List of potential name recommendations for Newport Park
- Board Officer Elections

13. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. Parks CIP Project Status Report
- B. Emails re Newport Hills park naming

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Boardmember Synn to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**