

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

Tuesday
October 13, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

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

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Zahn

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Shelley Brittingham, Pam Fehrman, Nancy Harvey, Ken Kroeger, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker, Michael Shiosaki

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

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

2. **TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF BYLAWS**

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. In addition, the Bylaws concerning the Board's process for accepting communication from the public will need to be suspended temporarily.

Chair Trescases clarified that the preamble to the Board's Bylaws provides that if the Bylaws do not address a procedure such as rule suspension, then the Board may rely on the City Council's Rules of Procedure, Resolution 8928. Section 13 of Resolution 8928 allows a City Council procedural rule to be temporarily suspended. When suspension is requested and no objection offered, then Chair Trescases (Chair of the Parks & Community Services Board) may announce the rule as suspended.

Motion by Vice-Chair Hamilton and second by Boardmember Unger to approve suspension for the October 13, 2020 meeting only, the provisions in Article VI and Article VII of the Board's Bylaws concerning oral communications from the public and to allow

for public comment to be provided in writing and read during the Parks & Community Services Board meeting. Motion carried unanimously (7-0)

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

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

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Kumar and second by Boardmember Clark to approve the September 10, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

5. **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mr. Parker called attention to the written communications that were forwarded to Boardmembers from Mr. Plummer and Mr. Schrag. He also read the following written communication that was submitted after the Board packet was published:

Peter Marshall
Bellevue, WA 98007

“I am writing in support of the letters you received at your September meeting from Neil Hines and David Kappler. They eloquently described the case for Bellevue's consideration of acquiring the property connecting Coal Creek and Cougar Mountain natural areas near the Red Town Trailhead. Our local chapter of Eastside Audubon has submitted letters to the City of Bellevue in support of the Save Coal Creek organization. In addition to the proposed site's natural habitat and recreational values, it would preserve historic features that are very rare in today's east side communities. Please keep us informed of further developments.”

6. **COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL:**

Councilmember Zahn provided the following report:

- Bellevue signed onto the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration agreement.
- The Environmental Stewardship document was recently published.
- City Council explored the results of a requested cross-cultural programming study.
- Progress is being made on the NE 12th Street multipurpose path, which is for both bicycles and pedestrians.
- A Neighborhood Area Planning briefing was provided to Council.

- The NE Gateway construction project at Downtown Park is making good progress.

Chair Trescases asked if any of the large trees in the NE 12th Street multipurpose path were able to be preserved. Ms. Fehrman provided an overview of some of the trees that are being impacted from this project. She explained that if trees are removed, they will either be transplanted or other trees will be planted within the park.

7. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Shiosaki provided the following report:

- Bellevue successfully completed the virtual site visit for the reaccreditation process for CAPRA. There are 151 standards to meet. Bellevue was approved on all 151 standards, which is a great accomplishment.
- Bellevue reopened play areas and sports courts—these were closed a few months ago due to COVID-19. The reopening came with additional signage for social distancing.
- Irmina Lumbad was recently hired to fill the vacant Fiscal Manager position. She will begin her role on November 9, 2020.
- The City Manager will present the budget to Council on October 19, 2020, which begins the official review. The Parks Board CIP letter will be provided to Council after the City Manager's initial presentation.

Vice-Chair Hamilton congratulated staff on their hard work with the CAPRA reaccreditation process. Other Boardmembers echoed Vice-Chair Hamilton's sentiments.

8. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Vice-Chair Hamilton enjoyed the following parks over the past month:

- Wilburton Hill Park
- Duff property
- Downtown Park project

Boardmember Kumar provided the following report:

- The Tree Tour is complete and on the City's website.
- Great to see play areas reopen.
- Visited Lake Hills area—surprised at the overflow of the lake on the pathway on the northern and western sides of the lake.

Boardmember Synn observed the Culp rally at Downtown Park.

Boardmember Clark provided the following report:

- Glad the play areas are open, particularly at Downtown Park
- Encouraged Boardmembers to download the Goose Chase Scavenger Hunt App
- Visited Hidden Valley Park
- Visited Ashwood Park
- Visited Spring District

Boardmember Unger enjoyed the following parks over the past month:

- Surrey Downs Park
- Hidden Valley Park
- Bellevue Botanical Gardens

Boardmember Unger asked when the 112th and Main Street Park naming process will begin. Mr. Parker explained that this park will be available prior to light rail operation. This is a City of Bellevue park and will eventually go through the City's naming process.

9. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

Chair Trescases walked the trails at Larsen Lake and was amazed by the number of people enjoying the trail.

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

No reports.

11. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Bellevue Aquatic Center Feasibility Update**

Mr. Shiosaki said the update of the feasibility study included a review of three program options including estimated capital and operating costs, cost recovery performance, and economic impacts. He provided background information regarding local and regional aquatic facilities, noting that the King County Forward Thrust bond in 1968 constructed 16 swimming pools. The SPLASH (Swimming Pools for Leisure, Active Sports, and Health) organization was established in 2006 to promote the creation of an aquatics center, and the City's original Aquatic Feasibility Study was completed in 2009. However, further efforts were deferred due to the recession.

Splash Forward formed in 2017 due to a renewed interest in developing an aquatic center. In 2018, King County initiated a regional aquatics study involving Bellevue, Kirkland, and Redmond. At that time, the Bellevue City Council authorized a memorandum of understanding (MOU) committing to exploring the feasibility of a regional approach to developing aquatics facilities on the Eastside. Mr. Shiosaki said the study confirmed the demand for aquatics

facilities and suggested one, larger regional facility as well as two to three smaller community or neighborhood pools. He recalled that, last October, staff presented a preliminary review of the three options to Council. The final feasibility update was presented to City Council in August, 2020.

Mr. Kroeger noted the high demand for aquatic facilities on the Eastside, including for competitive events. Students must often travel outside of their communities for swim meets. Mr. Kroeger said the King County Aquatic Center in Federal Way is the only competitive 50-meter pool in the region.

Mr. Kroeger said the feasibility study update analyzes a number of factors including technical and operating issues, economic impacts, and financing options. Three program options were created to be able to compare and evaluate the opportunities. Mr. Kroeger said the options are based on previous discussions with Council. The cost estimates for each option are in today's dollars and are structured assuming that the City both builds and operates the facility.

Mr. Kroeger described Option 1, Dual School/Club Meets. It includes a standard 50-meter competition pool, program pool, leisure and recreation pool, and a cardio-fitness component. Under Option 1, the City's wellness and therapy programs will remain at the current aquatic center. The estimated capital cost for the 94,000 square foot facility is \$70 million. The cost recovery model suggests a recovery of 72 percent of the costs. Mr. Kroeger noted that it is near impossible to obtain 100 percent cost recovery.

Option 2, Conference/District meets, includes a 66-meter competition pool, program pool, leisure and recreation pool, wellness and therapy pool, and a larger cardio-fitness component. The estimated capital costs of the proposed 121,000 square foot facility total \$89 million, and cost recovery is estimated at 82 percent. Under this option, all wellness and therapy programs would be moved to the new facility, and the current Bellevue Aquatic Center would be repurposed for non-aquatic use.

Mr. Kroeger said that Option 3, Invitational Meets, includes a 50-meter competition pool, program pool, leisure and recreation pool, wellness and therapy pool, deep water tank, gym and running track, and cardio-fitness area. This option was developed through discussions with Bellevue College to understand their organizational needs. The estimated capital cost of the 162,000 square foot facility is \$110 million, with an anticipated cost recovery rate of 77 percent. Mr. Kroeger said Option 3 has the greatest amount of flexibility and increased options for both aquatic and dry side amenities. Mr. Kroeger clarified that this center would be a companion to the King County Aquatic Center, not a competitor.

Mr. Kroeger presented a map depicting the primary service area (Bellevue city limits), secondary service area (Kingsgate, Carnation, SeaTac, and Lake Washington), and tertiary service area (Mill Creek and Puget Sound) based on the distance people are typically willing to travel to an aquatic facility. Four sites were initially identified as potential sites for the aquatic center: Lincoln Center, Marymoor Park, Airfield Park, and Bellevue College. None of these options require property acquisition. Mr. Kroeger said additional topics not covered by the feasibility study include environmental remediation, structured parking, and any property complications.

Mr. Kroeger said the potential annual economic impact of a regional aquatic center is estimated at \$6.4 million to \$8.4 million. The incremental tax revenue impact for the City is estimated at \$84,000 per year. He noted potential partners including aquatics advocacy groups (e.g., Splash Forward), Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, King County, City of Kirkland, City of Redmond, wellness and health care professionals, and corporate sponsors. Multiple funding sources will be considered including property tax levies, the formation of a Metropolitan Park District or Public Facilities District, park impact fees, lodging tax revenues, state and local grants, and other partnerships and fundraising.

Mr. Shiosaki shared Council feedback received at the August 3, 2020 Council meeting. This included general support for the proposed approach, including financial analysis and partnership models. Staff was asked to explore the future of the Bellevue Aquatic Center/Odle Pool and return to Council with the following staff recommendations:

- Site
- Program
- Refined financial statement
- Potential partnerships and operational model

Boardmember Clark asked if the area around Airfield Park is underserved with parks. Mr. Parker called attention to various parks surrounding Airfield Park that serve the community, including Robinswood Park. Airfield Park is a viable option for an aquatic facility. Ms. Fehrman provided further details about Airfield Park

Boardmember Kumar called attention to Mr. Plummer's letter regarding life cycle cost estimates that are not factored into the study. She wondered if this would be a consideration going forward. Ms. Fehrman explained that as the project goes forward there will be more detailed financial information. At this point, it is a high level feasibility study.

Boardmember Kumar asked how the levy is impacted if Airfield Park is selected for the aquatic center. Ms. Fehrman explained that if Airfield Park is selected, a new Master Plan would need to be conducted. However, an aquatic center does not preclude a ballfield or other park elements. Boardmember Kumar also asked if staff has identified a repurpose for the Bellevue Aquatic Center. Mr. Kroeger said that this has not yet been determined.

Boardmember Unger asked for clarification on the next steps and the likelihood of moving forward. Mr. Shiosaki said that the next steps are to narrow the focus for a specific site and then seek Council direction.

Vice-Chair Hamilton asked for clarification regarding Council's expectations for the Parks Board's role in the aquatic center process. Mr. Shiosaki explained that it is still early in the process. If the preferred site is Airfield Park, there will be another review of the master plan for this site, which Council may ask the Parks Board to conduct. However, he cautioned that there are a lot of steps between now and the project being funded.

Vice-Chair Hamilton asked what has been done to assess public opinion for the project. Mr. Kroeger said that during the informational gathering stage of the project staff met with various user groups, which SPLASH Forward was instrumental in helping to bring everyone together. He added that the region's needs are so great that everyone is supportive of the magnitude and size of aquatic center that Bellevue is considering. Mr. Kroeger stated that a public outreach process would be conducted during the next phase of the project.

Besides funding, Vice-Chair Hamilton asked staff to identify the additional hurdles for the aquatic center project. Mr. Shiosaki responded that the additional operating cost is of consideration. Mr. Kroeger added that the actual governing structure of the center will also be a critical aspect of the project.

Chair Trescases asked if the next steps also include a transportation analysis and a master planning process for the park. Mr. Shiosaki said that the key next steps will be to identify a specific site. Then, the potential impacts of the project can be evaluated. Chair Trescases stressed the importance of including the broader community in the discussions.

Boardmember Unger would like the aquatic center to include swim lessons for elementary aged kids.

B. Recreation Programming and Facilities Update

Ms. Brittingham discussed the Parks Department's recreation programming and facilities status, particularly during COVID-19.

Ms. Brittingham reported that the parks and trails have remained open during COVID-19. She added that the physical and emotional health benefits of being outdoors has become even more valuable during the pandemic. Ballfields, picnic shelters, sports courts, and playgrounds initially closed in March to help contain the spread of COVID-19. In addition, all events and programs were suspended. Although closed to the public, Highland and North Bellevue Community Centers were open for first responders. Since their initial closings in March, the Bellevue Golf Course, Robinswood Tennis Center, and the Bellevue Aquatic Center have re-opened, and ballfields have been made available for scheduling purposes following the Safe Start Washington guidelines. Six swim beaches were open this summer and staffed by Aquatics Center lifeguards. Playgrounds and sports courts have also re-opened. Staff is currently working on developing facility reopening plans for community centers and other recreation facilities, and producing virtual programs for the community.

Boardmembers expressed their appreciation for the presentation and the City being able to adapt to virtual programs so easily.

Vice-Chair Hamilton asked if there are plans to keep some of the programs virtual once things can return to normal. Ms. Brittingham said continuing some of the virtual programs will be important, particularly for people who may not be able to access community centers or recreation facilities. The normal communication channels will be used to inform community members about these opportunities.

Boardmember Clark asked if there are any fundamentally different types of measure that may need to be taken if the pandemic continues into the latter part of next year. Ms. Brittingham said that the program planning teams will continue to evaluate program offerings and make adjustments as needed.

Ms. Brittingham discussed some of the modifications that will be implemented as facilities reopen.

Chair Trescases asked if there are any restrictions with rental usage that should be considered during the reopening phase. Ms. Brittingham explained that some of the Safe Start guidelines stipulate facility capacity requirements. In addition, the facility rental team has been evaluating the Safe Start guidelines to determine what the City will require.

12. **NEW BUSINESS:**

Boardmember Clark reminded Boardmembers about the subcommittee formed to provide quarterly Council communications. He suggested that the quarterly communications occur on the first of the month in the quarterly reports with the month prior as a brainstorming session with the Parks Board. Boardmember Clark noted that the content would include accomplishments; deviations from the action plan; plan of action for upcoming quarter; ask Council for opportunities that the Parks Board can assist with. Ideally, the report would be one page or less.

Boardmember Unger asked Councilmember Zahn if she thinks the quarterly reports to Council would be helpful. Councilmember Zahn asked if the Bylaws and Codes are up to date since other Boards and Commissions typically do not provide this information. She would like to discuss the overall reporting process with staff before a final decision is made. Councilmember Zahn said that the Council agenda is typically extremely full so liaison reports aren't typically conducted until there is something specific that needs to be addressed.

Chair Trescases explained that a few times per year there have been Oral Communications from Boards/Commissions to City Council. She likes the idea of quarterly reporting but also wants to be sure it aligns with how much Council expects to hear from the Parks Board. Since Council already receives a significant amount of information in writing, Chair Trescases suggested that the Parks Board present the report during Council's Oral Communications. She also doesn't want to duplicate staff efforts from things that they may already report on to Council.

Vice-Chair Hamilton thinks that the communications to Council are valuable and it is also identified in the Board Bylaws. He wants to keep the Boards priorities in front of Council, in an appropriate way.

Councilmember Zahn recommended that Chair Trescases and Mr. Shiosaki meet with her to discuss the best venue for the communication. She wants to make sure that any information included in a report is presented with the Code and Bylaws in mind. Chair Trescases suggested

that Boardmember Clark and Vice-Chair Hamilton also be included in the meeting. Mr. Parker clarified that a Council communication would need to be a collaborative venture between Parks Board and staff.

Boardmember Clark asked staff when the Board will see action relating to the Spring District. Mr. Parker explained that there is an initiative under the Community Development Department that will drive this process (Bel-Red Look Back). This would provide an opportunity to participate in a review on what has occurred in the Bel-Red area over the past several years (i.e., policies, land use codes, etc.). Boardmember Clark asked if there are specific community feedback opportunities in the near future. Mr. Parker said that there isn't anything in the near future but parks, trails, streams, etc. will be part of the look back and there will be opportunities for community feedback.

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

The following discussion items were suggested for future meeting agendas:

- Grand Connection Update
- Naming of Newport Hills Park

14. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. Parks CIP Project Status Report
- B. 2020 Summer Park Ranger Program
- C. Correspondence

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Boardmember Unger and second by Vice-Chair Hamilton to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).