

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

Tuesday
April 13, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

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

BOARDMEMBER ABSENT: Vice-Chair Hamilton

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Zahn

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Nancy Harvey, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker Marie Jensen (Transportation), Tim Kariel (Transportation),

OTHERS PRESENT: Grant Keeney, Jagan Nemani

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 Unger and second by Boardmember Synn to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Kumar and second by Boardmember Clark to approve the March 9, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

4. **WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

Jagan Nemani

Mr. Nemani said that cricket is one of the fastest growing sports in the nation. Although cricket is one of the fastest growing sports in the region (over 2,000), there aren't proper courts available. Cricket courts are typically AstroTurf. Mr. Nemani requested that proper cricket courts be built at Marymoor Park so kids can improve their skills and compete at various tournaments throughout the country.

5. **COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL:**

Councilmember Zahn provided the following report:

- Congratulations to Chair Trescases who was unanimously reappointed to the Parks Board by Council.
- Council received an update from the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society. The BBGS is anxious to get back to in-person activities.
- Council approved Phase 3 of the Cross-Cultural Facilities Feasibility Study.
- The quarterly update has begun on the Environmental Stewardship Plan.
- Council received an update on the upcoming Bests Starts for Kids levy. The levy was approved by King County voters in 2015 and expires at the end of this year. King County is proposing a renewal levy to continue the work of the original levy.
- A Neighborhood Area Planning Program: Great Neighborhoods in Northwest Bellevue and Northeast Bellevue memo was included in the Board packet, which was highlighted.
- She is looking forward to Sound Transit completion so Mercer Slough access can reopen.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Ms. McVein said that staff is working hard to reopen many of the park facilities. She highlighted some of the community centers and the current offerings—none of the programs are drop-in, due to pandemic restrictions. Registration for youth summer programs will begin on May 1, 2021. Staff is also evaluating options for outdoor activities.

The Human Services Needs Update will be presented to Council on April 19, 2021. This is updated on a biennial basis. It will then be presented to the Parks Board in the next few months.

Ms. McVein said that the Parks Board recommended Borghild Ringdall Neighborhood Park name will be presented to Council in May.

Lastly, Ms. McVein announced that since Boardmember Heath's term is ending, recruitment to fill his vacant Board position has begun.

Boardmember Unger expressed her appreciation to staff for offering the youth summer programs and being creative on ways to reopen facilities. She also asked if full-day and extended care programs are being offered. Ms. McVein discussed some of the requirements for in-person youth programs and confirmed that both half-day and full-day programs are being offered.

Boardmember Clark called attention to the Meydenbauer Bay Park Phase II design process. The initial objective of the Meydenbauer Bay Park Phase II Design project will be to determine the scope of master plan work to be included in Phase II. Staff is looking forward to working with the community to inform the next steps towards realizing the Meydenbauer Bay Park Master Plan, and implementation principles. Public engagement is anticipated to begin in late 2021 or early 2022. Ms. McVein confirmed that there will be elements for the Parks Board's involvement during Phase II.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Kumar visited many parks throughout Bellevue. She provided kudos to City staff for accommodating the state's pandemic guidelines and regulations to keep as many programs open as possible.

Boardmember Clark showed a picture of the Union S High School Memorial Arch in Downtown Park. He also commended the progress of the NE Gateway Project.

Boardmember Unger visited Mercer Slough and enjoyed the privacy that the park offers.

8. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

Chair Trescases expressed her enthusiasm for the Union S High School Memorial Arch in Downtown Park. She discussed the historical significance of the arch and the importance to the community. Chair Trescases also visited Meydenbauer Bay Park.

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

No reports.

10. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **East Link Update**

Tim Kariel, Transportation Department, provided an update on the progress of the East Link light rail project. This multi-billion-dollar project is being administered by Sound Transit and passes through the Cities of Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, and Redmond. The project enters Bellevue at what used to be the South Bellevue Park and Ride.

Mr. Kariel said that construction began in 2016, and the major civil contracts are anticipated to end in spring and summer of this year. The subsequent phase will be the installation of electrical, communications, and safety systems. During the systems phase, the City will be less involved because impacts to roads, parks, and utilities will be significantly less. Following the systems phase will be testing, when trains are run throughout the alignment, which will begin in mid-2022. The testing phase will verify all systems are functioning properly and will give Sound Transit's operators, maintenance staff, and security personnel an opportunity to become familiar with the new alignment. Revenue service is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2023.

Mr. Kariel provided an overview of the following transit stations:

- **South Bellevue Station**
This station is elevated and is adjacent to a new 1,500 stall parking garage. The station will take the place of the 550 stall South Bellevue Park and Ride and will be a regional transit hub with many bus lines serving the station. The Mercer Slough Nature Park trail system will adjoin the station, and the parking garage includes a Mercer Slough viewing platform. The garage will open in September of 2021 for Park and Ride users to access Metro and Sound Transit bus routes.
- **Winters House and Blueberry Farm Stand**
The light rail guideway runs within a trench close to the historic Winters House. Prior to construction, the house was carefully protected, and vibration monitors were installed to ensure that the house would not be damaged. In 2020 the most impactful civil work was completed, and the dust shield was removed. The contractor and the Parks Department will perform the final walk-through in the coming months to assess impacts to the house during construction; however, the house was inspected monthly by the City and no significant damage has been reported. The blueberry farm retail building project is being managed by the City's Parks Department and it is currently in the design stage. The Winters House and the blueberry farm stand are scheduled to open to the public in 2023.
- **New Park at Main Street**
Mr. Kariel showed a rendering of the new park at Main Street. The light rail alignment along 112th Avenue NE runs adjacent to Surrey Downs Park. The park has been reconfigured, with access from the Surrey Downs neighborhood

rather than from 112th Avenue. As compensation for the lost park area, Sound Transit is constructing a new park at the corner of 112th Avenue and Main Street. The park will feature pedestrian and bicycle paths, and serves as a pedestrian connection between the neighborhood, light rail, and downtown Bellevue. The park is currently under construction and will be handed over to the City in mid-2021.

There was a general discussion regarding traffic mitigation for the new park at Main Street.

Boardmember Clark asked for further clarification regarding some of the design elements between the new park at Main Street and the nearby houses. Mr. Kariel discussed some of the connection and mitigation efforts between the neighborhood and the park. Mr. Parker clarified that the access is designed for ADA grades so there will be a few of switch-backs to accommodate the elevation of the park.

Boardmember Kumar requested clarification for the rail system near the Winters House, which Mr. Kariel described. Boardmember Kumar expressed concern about debris that may increase from the rail system and potentially damage the Winters House. Mr. Kariel does not anticipate this being a problem.

Councilmember Zahn asked if the Mercer Slough trail will be contiguous once the light rail opens. Mr. Parker confirmed that the loop will be reopened in a slightly different route; however, it will be a full loop. He added that some of the existing blueberry farms will be utilized for the trail system.

Councilmember Zahn asked if a naming process for the new park at Main Street will be conducted by the Parks Board. Mr. Parker confirmed that the process will be similar to previous park naming processes. Councilmember Zahn asked who decides the name for the park. Mr. Parker clarified that this process is typically open to the public.

Boardmember Synn asked how many cars are on the trains—Mr. Kariel clarified that there are typically two-car trains. However, the system can also accommodate a four-car train. The service is approximately every 10 minutes. Boardmember Synn also asked if the new park at Main Street planning efforts provides special consideration for safety when accessing the park. Mr. Kariel said that after the design phase Main Street was part of the bicycle plan so the sidewalk adjacent to Main Street will be quite wide.

Chair Trescases commented that extensive vibration studies have been conducted in regards to the Winters House during the construction phase. The conclusion was that construction had potential impacts. However, the daily train runs aren't expected to cause any damage. Mr. Parker added that monitoring equipment will remain in the Winters House for an extended period of time. Chair Trescases expressed concern about the hazards of turning in/out of the Winters House driveway and hopes that mitigation efforts are added.

Mr. Parker discussed some of the functions of the Winters House after it reopens and the blueberry field access.

B. Draft First Quarter 2021 Report and Communication to Council

Boardmember Clark called attention to the draft First Quarter 2021 Report and Communication to Council. He noted that many of the items tie together with Council's priorities.

Boardmember Clark expressed his appreciation to Mr. Parker for drafting the communication.

Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Boardmember Kumar to approve the First Quarter 2021 Report and Communication to Council as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

11. NEW BUSINESS:

Boardmember Clark requested clarification regarding the "BTC property" in Redmond. Mr. Parker provided clarification about this property. Boardmember Clark also asked where Ashwood Park falls on the list of priorities. Mr. Parker said that the priorities are reviewed periodically. The Meydenbauer Bay Phase II project is also a major significant project that impacts the timing of Ashwood Park. Given vacancies of key positions in this and other City departments involved, the City Manager's Office has delayed the Ashwood Park master plan update. Boardmember Clark called attention to the email correspondence included in the Board packet that referenced the ever growing senior population in this area so maybe this can influence the prioritization process.

Boardmember Kumar asked if there are other groups involved in determining what happens to Ashwood Park. Mr. Parker highlighted some of the neighboring businesses that may be included in some of the discussions: library and Kids Quest Museum, along with other neighboring properties. Ms. McVein added that there is an adopted Master Plan for the site, which will be the starting point for the project. She clarified that adjustments may need to be made to the plan but it's the starting point. Boardmember Kumar asked if Mr. Schrag has been notified about all of the different elements of the planning process. Mr. McVein responded that staff has been in communication with Mr. Schrag.

Boardmember Unger requested clarification about the authority over Marymoor Park, particularly in regards to the area referenced during Oral Communications. Ms. McVein clarified that there is a small section in the northeast corner of the park that Bellevue leases—currently ballfields. There is a lot of complexity related to the ownership of the park. There is a section at the park that is undeveloped and would take a lot of coordination with multiple agencies in order to move forward. The comments received during Oral Communications will feed into the Parks & Open Space Systems Plan about community needs.

Boardmember Clark said that it would be helpful to get data about the demands on the various programs (i.e., cricket, baseball, soccer, etc.)—number of participants per program, supply available, etc. so options can be evaluated.

Chair Trescases commented that the Parks Board has brought up development of Ashwood Park often and there is a community desire to have a process. She asked if there is something the Parks Board can do to make Ashwood Park a priority. She added that the City owes it to the community to complete the Ashwood Park Master Plan and develop the park.

Councilmember Zahn shared that one of the items Council discussed at the recent retreat is the amount of work that needs to be done for Ashwood Park, from a planning perspective. The challenge is trying to fit everything within the current resources. In addition, there have been many needs identified (i.e., dog parks) that are of consideration. There is also continued growth throughout the City and emphasis on affordable housing and trying to have more affordable housing near transit. Mr. Parker clarified that the Parks & Open Space System Plan Update will commence later in the year. Councilmember Zahn suggested that a Parks Board Retreat be planned, when the pandemic permits, so many of these issues can be discussed.

Boardmember Synn asked if security will be added to the new park at Main Street. Mr. Parker discussed some of the security efforts and monitoring for the park, some of which are yet to be confirmed. Boardmember Synn stressed that public safety for the park is a concern, particularly since there is a tunnel near the park.

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

The following items were suggested for future meeting agendas:

- Planning process on Watershed Management with the Utilities Department
- Human Services Needs Update kickoff

Chair Trescases also requested that the presentation schedule outline be included in next month's board packet.

Councilmember Zahn acknowledged that Earth Day is next week. She encouraged everyone to plant a tree.

13. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. Parks CIP Project Status Report
- B. Neighborhood Area Planning Program: Great Neighborhoods in Northwest Bellevue and Northeast Bellevue
- C. Email re Bellevue Aquatic Center
- D. Email re Ashwood Park 3-24-21

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Boardmember Unger and second by Boardmember Clark to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).