

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

Tuesday
April 20, 2022
6:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Hamilton; Vice-Chair Clark; Boardmembers Kumar, Synn¹, Trescases

BOARDMEMBER ABSENT: Boardmember Giampetro

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Stokes

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Shelley Brittingham, Pam Fehrman, Irmina Lumbad, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker, Mariam Sarwary, Michael Shiosaki, Ryan Walker

OTHERS PRESENT: Kate Nesse (Community Development Department)

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. 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 Kumar and second by Boardmember Synn to approve the April 20, 2022 Parks & Community Services Board meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

¹ Joined the Zoom at 6:20 p.m.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Vice-Chair Clark and second by Boardmember Kumar to approve the March 8, 2022 Parks & Community Services Board meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

4. **WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

Camron Parker read the following email from Lisa Ritchie:

I have lived in Bellevue for over a decade. My husband and I are the parents of two children with very significant disabilities. Over the years, my children have attended the Highland Center's adaptive summer camps. This is actually the only camp in the area that I have found that is able to accommodate my children's very high level of needs and something that has been a significant help to our family in years past.

The adaptive camps were canceled for the summers of 2020 and 2021 due to COVID. Please address my three areas of concern:

1) Where are the Adaptive Camps?

On Friday April 1, 2022, Bellevue Parks & Recreation Department emailed a 32-page brochure on summer camps. It did not include anything about adaptive summer camps and I verified that they won't be running special needs camps due to "staffing problems". Contrast this with for instance the Seattle Parks Department that clearly states an accommodation plan for their recreation programs, ran their adaptive camps partially last summer, and will fully run their adaptive camps this coming 2022 summer.

2) Why Doesn't the Equal Opportunity statement include disability?

In addition, the Equal Opportunity statement in the summer camps brochure says that "The City of Bellevue assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex...be excluded from participation...or be otherwise subjected to discrimination". There is nothing stated about including or not discriminating against people with disabilities or special needs (which is also the law) except to say that they can file an ADA complaint. I find this to be incredibly unwelcoming to those with disabilities.

3) So Ironic that Autism Run funds are going to camp scholarships!

I also just noticed that the City of Bellevue's website states that:

"Bellevue's All in for Autism 10K and 5K in-person runs return to downtown the morning of Sunday, April 24, with proceeds going toward Bellevue's Kinderling Center, Washington Autism Alliance and the City of Bellevue's Youth Camp Scholarship fund."

How is this possible that the city is taking money from a disability run to fund camps that are only for kids without special needs?

During the pandemic, I often heard the story that we may all be in the same storm, but we're in different boats. I naively believed that the community understood that families with special needs kids were some of the people riding the rafts that were falling apart. I'm truly in shock that the city is not interested in being equitable towards some of its most vulnerable citizens.

5. **COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL:**

Councilmember Stokes reported that the city has solicited applications to fill the vacant Board positions; and thanked outgoing Boardmembers for their service.

Councilmember Stokes provided highlights from the recent City Council meeting.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Michael Shiosaki, Parks & Community Services Director, discussed the following items:

- City Hall and other city facilities fully opened on April 4, 2022.
- The Kelsey Creek Farm Sheep Shearing event will be held on April 30, 2022.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Kumar enjoyed walking dogs in various Bellevue parks.

Boardmember Trescases recently visited the Bellevue Aquatic Center and other Bellevue Parks, noting that visiting the aquatic center was a good reminder of how desperately the city needs another aquatic facility.

Vice-Chair Clark enjoyed many of Bellevue's parks over the past month, discussed some of the parks that were enjoyed in Spokane, and requested an update on the Newport Hills Woodlawn Park project.

8. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

Chair Hamilton visited Newport Hills Woodlawn Park and remarked on the construction project that is underway at the park.

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

No report.

10. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Comprehensive Plan Update**

Kate Nesse, Senior Planner, explained that the Comprehensive Plan is a requirement under the Growth Management Act, and the Comprehensive Plan captures the city's vision for the future of Bellevue, sets policy that directs city actions and decisions, and guides capital investments. The plan covers a 20-year horizon through the year 2044, and includes a vision statement, and chapters (aka 'elements').

The Comprehensive Plan is arranged into two volumes – Volume 1 includes: vision, narrative, goals and supporting policies for each element. Volume 2 includes the subarea and neighborhood plans. There is also a map of land uses.

The Comprehensive Plan is being updated to reflect the current community and address regional requirements. The plan also needs to be updated to align with Council's updated vision and priorities. An important component of the update is planning for the growth targets within a 20-year period.

Kate Nesse noted that the Comprehensive Plan Update focuses on three areas: growing housing to meet the needs of all types of households and stages of life; strengthening our environmental sustainability and climate resilience; and making Bellevue a more equitable city.

With the update, a large increase in housing units is expected in order to balance the anticipated job growth. The periodic update process will look at what kind of housing this may be and where it fits in.

Because housing is needed at a variety of types, affordability levels, and sizes, a multi-pronged approach is needed. The community engagement will help define this approach, which needs to include both dense housing that may be focused in mixed-use centers and "missing middle" housing that may be introduced throughout the city.

The community engagement strategy includes the following:

- Equitable engagement – direct mailed survey to all households, COAs, mix of in-person and virtual
- Strategy teams to get key stakeholder and lived experience
- Translation and multi-lingual outreach

Kate Nesse noted that the engagement plan is built around gathering input from four different streams, which include:

- General Public – engagement from anyone who chooses to participate. Robust outreach will be used to build awareness of the planning process and invite people to participate.

- Strategy Team and Working Groups – structured opportunity to hear from key voices and stakeholders from the business community, developers, neighborhood leaders, equity leaders, non-profits, and others who have important subject matter expertise, perspectives, and lived experience the planning team needs to hear from.
- Boards and Commissions – planned briefings and engagement with the city’s various boards and commissions to get feedback and input on relevant Comprehensive Plan elements.
- Comments via Public Hearings – there will also be times when interested parties may submit formal comments via the legislative process.

Engagement with these streams will happen in an interactive process where the planning team goes out to collect input, processes that input, and shares results with the public, stakeholders, and others for further feedback. All of this feedback will inform the draft of the Comprehensive Plan, which will eventually go to the Planning Commission and City Council over the course of multiple study sessions in late 2023 and early 2024.

The Parks & Community Services Board is directed to be involved in reviewing and updating the Parks, Recreation and Open Space element and policies related to parks and recreation issues.

Vice-Chair Clark asked if the outreach event at Stevenson Elementary can be forwarded to Boardmembers.

B. Parks Long-Term Funding Strategy

Michael Shiosaki provided an overview of the timeline for the parks long-term funding strategy. The Bellevue City Council has an adopted 2021-2023 priority to “advance a parks funding strategy, including consideration of new funding sources for operations, maintenance and construction” (Council Priority #9). At their meeting on March 7, the City Council asked staff to provide more information on two possible funding strategies, a future voter-approved initiative, and parks impact fees. An initial report back on these strategies occurred at the Council’s regular meeting on April 18.

Michael Shiosaki said that the Parks Board’s feedback will help Council determine if a bond or levy is desired and the additional details for a voter initiative. The deadline to submit information on the ballot is August 2, 2022.

Council asked the Parks Board to proceed with information gathering for a voter initiative and confirm the community priorities.

Discussion: Open Space, Greenways, Wildlife Corridors & Trails

- Do we have numbers/statistics to guide the Board to determine how often open spaces, greenways, and wildlife corridors and trails are used (i.e., if there was a three-mile stretch of trail what metrics are used to measure the usage on that particular trail)? *Response: Currently, this detailed data is unavailable. However, there is a frequency of use question on the parks survey that is self-reported. Overall, users reported that the trail system was the most widely used system.*
- With the state of current real estate and development, acquisition is critical and should be a priority.
- What is the current funding available? Is the excise tax based upon a housing unit? How are condos impacted? *Response: REET is a certain percentage of the value.*
- Green space is great but green space that can be appreciated is better so trail elements and connectivity are important.

Discussion: Park Facilities

- First two bullets (neighborhood park acquisition and development and improving undeveloped sites) should be the top priorities, but all are important. Specifically, Factoria, Bel-Red area, Ashwood Park/downtown, and an aquatic center
- Has thought been given to phasing efforts for development? *Response: yes. This is a particular strategy that has been used (i.e., Chapin property, Downtown Park, Meydenbauer Bay Park are all examples of phased development).*
- Acquiring land should be a higher priority than development.
- It would be helpful to understand the city's current undeveloped sites.

Discussion: Active Recreation

- Aquatic center should be a priority.
- All of these items are a top priority.

Discussion: Urban Park Systems

- Based upon the amount of individuals that are expected to move into Bellevue, parks overall need to be a top priority, specifically the Spring District and Wilburton.
- The allocated funds seem low.
- Need to acquire more acreage.
- Ashwood Park should be a top priority.
- Factoria seems more of an urban area, rather than neighborhood.
- Need active park spaces in urban areas.
- The Urban Park System overall should be top priority. These are all critically important.

- The Council funding session highlighted the fees collected for the Bel-Red and downtown areas. However, when comparing these two there is quite a difference. *Response: The Bel-Red system has been in place since 2008 or 2009. The Downtown code changed approximately 2-3 years ago. The fee in lieu option hasn't been as popular as originally thought.*

Discussion: Waterfront Access

- The Meydenbauer Bay Park needs all phases complete.
- The property on Lake Sammamish needs to be completed/developed.
- Question whether it would be advisable to delay the Meydenbauer project to complete other projects that can be completed more timely.
- Would like to see the Meydenbauer project completed, particularly due to commitments that were made to the community.
- The Grand Connection should be separate from the final phase at Meydenbauer Bay Park.
- The Grand Connection might be better appropriated to the Urban Park System category.
- Are any revenue opportunities being excluded? *Response: need to look at new ideas for creating revenue.*

Discussion: Partnership Opportunities

- Within the City of Bellevue, Bellevue Parks is the only department that takes care of historic building preservation. Taking care of what we have is critical. Historic building preservation should be a priority.
- Need to identify partnership opportunities.
- Many funding sources are easily identified.
- Are there current historic buildings that are not being supported? *Response: Yes, but the city doesn't have a historic preservation ordinance. Therefore, properties can't technically be designated locally as historic.*

In regards to retiring the existing levy. What does this mean? *Response: the existing levy would end early and funds would only be collected from the new levy.*

C. Parks Board Approval of First Quarter 2022 Report and Communication to Council

Motion by Vice-Chair Clark and second by Boardmember Synn to approve the First Quarter 2022 Report and Communication to Council, substantially in the form presented. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

11. NEW BUSINESS:

None.

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

Proposed agenda items for the next Board meeting:

- Parks Long-Term Funding Strategy

13. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. Parks CIP Project Status Report
- B. Sheep Shearing at Kelsey Creek Farm

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Hamilton adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.