

Minutes  
Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee  
January 22, 2007

**Committee Members Present:** Doug Dunham, Vice-chair, Alan Alabastro, Lisa Chun, Don Harper, Jeff Hou, Cheryl Klinker, Joyce Moty, Alec Stephens

**Staff:** Ken Bounds, Superintendent; Carol Everson; Susan Golub; Donald Harris; Catherine Anstett; Kelly Davidson, Arts and Cultural Affairs

**Committee Business:** The meeting agenda was approved, as were the minutes from the October 23, 2006 meeting.

**Public Comments:** There were none.

**Arts Program Update**

Kelly Davidson, the Public Arts Project Manager in the City's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, presented a slide show to update the Committee on the latest Pro Parks Levy funded art projects. Background on the program can be found on the public art page of the Arts and Cultural Affairs web site at:

<http://www.seattle.gov/Arts/publications/publicart/default.asp>.

Completed art projects shown on Ms. Davidson's slides included:

- Bergen Place in Ballard;
- Mineral Springs in Northgate;
- Colonnade Park in Eastlake; and
- Pratt Park in the Central Area.

Planned projects were described for:

- Westcrest Park in Southwest Seattle
- South Lake Union;
- Jefferson Park on Beacon Hill; and
- The Denny Pit park (to be renamed) on Queen Anne.

Committee members asked Ms. Davidson about the process that was used to select the artists for the projects. Ms. Davidson responded that artists were selected through a competitive process. The Committee also asked to be informed regarding future public meetings for the Dexter Pit park project. Ms Davidson assured the Committee they would receive notice of the public meetings.

**Acquisition Project Update**

Catherine Anstett presented a slide show highlighting Levy Acquisition progress to date:

- 41.3 acres have been purchased in the first 6 years of the Levy;
- 23 additional acres are in planning, negotiation or closing;
- Leveraged dollars have significantly increased acquisition funding: the Levy provided \$31.8 million for acquisition and \$21 million has been added through leveraged funding from the State, County and City;
- In the Neighborhood Parks category, of the 18 projects named in the Levy, 15 have been completed or are in closing, with 20 acres purchased;
- In the Green Spaces category, 18.7 acres have been purchased; and
- The Opportunity Fund provided \$5.8 million for acquisition: 9 projects have been completed and 5 are in planning or negotiation.

Donald Harris thanked Catherine for her work, noting that she had a role in each of the acquisition projects shown on the slide. Doug Dunham commented that it was rewarding to see so many acquisitions completed. Joyce Moty suggested sharing the acquisition slide show with the greater community and thanked staff for the good work.

**Budget Briefing**

Carol Everson, Parks Finance Division Director, presented a budget update to inform the Committee of final actions by the City Council on the 2007-08 budget. She first described the Capital Improvement Program budget highlights. For the two year 2007-08 budget the total CIP amount is \$96.5 million. This amount is just \$3.8 million less than the 2005-06 CIP budget. This is significant because the 07-08 budget reflects the end of the Community Center Levy and the winding down of the Pro Parks Levy. Passage of the transportation levy in November 2006 has freed up some CIP funds to be allocated for park projects that would have otherwise gone to transportation projects.

Some 2007-08 CIP funds are earmarked for debt financed projects:

Zoo Garage	\$18.3 million
Northgate Urban Center Park Acquisition	\$6.5 million
Magnuson Building 27 Renovation	\$7 million

Debt service for these projects is \$9.3 million for the biennium.

Other CIP highlights include:

Department of Parks and Recreation CIP Highlights

Center City Parks renovations	\$2.9 million	Most is for Freeway park
Urban Forest Management Plan implementation	\$2 million	For tree replacement and invasive removal
Ballfield Lighting Replacements and Turf Conversions	\$10.5 million	Replacement lights at various fields, turf replacement at Queen Anne Bowl, and conversion from sand to synthetic at Miller
Repair of Lakewood and Leschi moorages	\$2 million	Improvements needed for safety and will enable reopening closed sections of the marinas
Utility Conservation	\$776,000	Funds energy saving projects
Asset Management	\$21.5 million	Improvements to aging infrastructure according to priorities in our asset management plan
Community initiated projects	\$1.7	Highpoint Neighborhood Center, Danny Woo Community Gardens, Colman Shelter House, Gas Works West Entry, Longfellow Creek Trail restoration, Ravenna Eckstein Park Play Area, Wawona Preservation
Pro Parks Projects	\$11.9 million	Funding for 48 projects
Woodland Park Zoo Annual Major Maintenance	\$1.2 million	This obligation ends in 2007
Golf course improvements	\$955,000	This funding comes from golf course revenue which will be reinvested in courses

Doug Dunham asked about the turf replacement at Queen Anne Bowl. Superintendent Bounds responded that the Bowl was one of the first artificial turf fields in the country and it is worn out. The manufacturer is giving us the replacement at their cost, since this was their first field. The new material is expected to last longer than the original due to product improvements.

Mr. Stephens asked why there was such a large difference in the ballfield category between 2007 (\$2,228,000) and 2008 (\$8,142,000). Superintendent Bounds responded that often with a two year budget the first year funds are used for planning and design with the more costly construction occurring in the second year.

Regarding the Utility Conservation funds, Ms. Everson stated that this funding will implement energy saving projects at Magnuson, the Aquarium and a swimming pool. In the operating budget we are funding a Utility Conservation Manager with Pro Parks Levy funds and with funding assistance from Puget Sound Energy and Seattle City Light.

Mr. Dunham asked what changes the City Council made to Parks CIP. Superintendent Bounds responded that the Council conditioned the University District acquisition funds

with a statement that Parks should look at acquiring the entire site, including the building, if the school district surpluses the property. In addition, the Council provided funding for synthetic turf for the ballfields at Jefferson Park and additional funds for Counterbalance Park on Queen Anne.

Ms. Everson reviewed Parks 2007-08 Operating Budget which \$117.5 million in 2007 and \$122.5 million in 2008. Changes made to the Mayors budget by the City Council totaled approximately \$2.3 million in reduction, including:

- Council cut 4<sup>th</sup> Tree Crew – (\$836,288)
- Council cut Graffiti Removal – (\$285,541)
- Council cut Rangers and Police Contract for Center City Parks – (\$1,362,977)
- Council cut GF support for new facilities – (\$594,830)
- Council cut electricity budget (related to cut in rates) – (\$60,000)
- Council eliminated Mayor’s cut to youth athletic fees – \$199,950
- Council added 3 nights to late night recreation program – \$408,376

Responding to a Committee member question, Superintendent Bounds stated that the 4<sup>th</sup> Tree Crew proposed by the Mayor would have brought the Department’s pruning schedule to approximately once every 10 years; with our current staff capacity trees are pruned once every 18 years. The industry standard is 7 to 8 years.

Ms. Moty asked about graffiti removal and the impact of the Council cutting funds for that program. Superintendent Bounds replied that with only one crew Parks removes graffiti within 2 days in approximately 75% of cases. The Mayor’s proposed funding would have taken the two day removal rate to 100%. Without the funds, we will stay at about the same rate of 2 day removal, unless the amount of graffiti gets much worse.

Mr. Stephens asked about Parks proposal to start using some General Fund money to support new facilities costs before the end of the Levy, so that the funds can spread over more years. Ms. Everson responded that the Council partially approved this approach, removing all of the General Fund support in 2007 (\$526,000), but leaving it untouched in 2008.

### **Membership**

Regarding Committee members whose terms are scheduled to end in February, Russ Brubaker, a City Council appointee, and Philippe Jeoffroy, a Mayoral appointee, have decided not to renew their terms, so will be leaving the Committee. Russ got a new position which demands more of his time, and Philippe wanted more time with his baby. Joyce Moty and Cheryl Klinker, both City Council appointees, will be reappointed by Councilmember Della. Doug Dunham, a Mayoral appointee is also up for reappointment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.