

PARKS COMMISSION
Thursday, March 16, 2014
Portland Public Services
5:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Commission Members: Diane Davison, Ralph Carmona, Steve Morgenstein, Jeff Scher, Michael Mertaugh (on behalf of Cynthia Loebenstein), Dory Richards Waxman, John Coyne

City Staff: Troy Moon, Melissa Graffam, Anita LaChance, Jen Thompson, Rick Knowland, Mark Rees, Mike Bobinsky

Guests: Anne Pringle, Nathan Smith

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes February 2014

Ralph Carmona made the motion to approve the meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Jeff Scher. Motion passed 6-0.

Special Funding for Parks

Anne Pringle talked to the Commission about the work that the Green Spaces Coalition (GSC). Part of this work is working with The Trust for Public Land (TPL). The TPL works with municipalities for special funding for parks. GSC has met with the City Manager's office with a proposal for the city to work with TPL on a feasibility study. The study would take about six (6) weeks. They would identify options, such as what is allowed and the fiscal capacity. It also looks at voting patterns (who/when voters turn out to vote). The City Manager's office is looking into this proposal. The Parks Commission's role in this would be to help identify options. More information will be given once available.

Citizens' Initiative (Further Information)

Nathan Smith spoke to the Commission about the citizen's initiative, his personal/professional work with the parks. He was hired by the Rockbridge Group to work with the City Council on the land purchase of Congress Square. In the past he has worked with Portland Trail, Land Bank Commission and the Friends of the Parks (now called the Parks Commission). He talked about if it is the desire to protect the parks from city councils in the future; it needs to be done as a charter change. It was also mentioned that the referendum is not a permanent solution. After five (5) years the referendum can be reversed and the land could be sold. City Manager, Mark Rees mentioned that it is the councils goal to strengthen the Parks Commission and do to a study of city-owned property.