

**Peaks Island Council
April 2013 Meeting Minutes (Approved)**

Wednesday, April 24, 2013 at 6:30pm
MacVane Community Center

Present: Ted Kelleher (Treasurer), Cheryl Miner (Vice-Chair), Mary Anne Mitchell, Marjorie Phyfe, Mike Sylvester (Chair), Jimal Thundershield

Excused: Eric Eaton

Also Present: Mike Murray (Island Liaison), Sally Deluca (Parks and Rec), Ethan Owens (Parks and Rec)

I. Call to Order

Chair Sylvester called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. He invoked a moment of silence for the human casualties of the Boston marathon attack.

II. Roll Call

Councilor Kelleher moved to excuse the absence of Councilor Eaton. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phyfe and passed unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes

Kelleher moved that the March meetings minutes be approved as revised by Phyfe. Councilor Thundershield seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IV. Parks & Rec: Skateboard Park

Sylvester invited staff from the Parks and Rec Dept. (who also attended a PIC meeting last fall) to attend this meeting also, so the PIC can consider further whether and how to pursue a skateboard park on Peaks. Councilor Mitchell asked Parks and Rec Director, Sally Deluca, about the financial and fundraising details for the new mainland skateboard park behind West School. Deluca summarized these as: staff time; \$320,000 for the actual skatepark (not including changes to surroundings), \$265,000 of which was for the concrete; \$75,000 from the City for the land. Deluca also mentioned various sources of small grants and donations from public and private sources. By contrast, the City built a wooden skatepark on Marginal Way that lasted 10 years for a cost of \$15,000 (half of which was paid for by a local company to relocate skateboarders away from their property). Deluca later noted that the Marginal Way skatepark was built on a site that already had lights and asphalt base, noting serious safety concerns with that type of base.

The community planning process and timeline for the new mainland skateboard park was discussed in length. Parks and Rec staff person Ethan Owens, also present, noted that it took two years just to decide where park was going to be located due to a NIMBY (not in my backyard) dynamic within the City. Owens also noted that a new skatepark on the island would clearly not need to be as large.

Councilors received public comment on the skatepark. Responses varied and included several comments in favor of a skatepark. Jenni Yasi spoke in favor of recreation but asked that the Council consider a neighborhood planning process to identify recreational needs before making a decision on a skatepark. She noted significant support for a skateboard park as part of the community survey in 2002, but mentioned that a teen center (never created) had even more support in that survey. Sylvester read a letter of support from Roseanne Walsh, the mother of a local youth who supports a skateboard park on the island. In response to a question about City support for a Peaks skatepark, Mike Murray responded that it would have to be put into CIP plan, and that the year of funding would be up to the city council and city manager.

Councilor commented on the skatepark. Miner and Sylvester and Mitchell indicated support. Kelleher asked if the City would have to build it if it were located at Trott-Littlejohn. Deluca said yes, it would have to go through city planning process. Deluca indicated that she felt that a Peaks Island Skate Park Committee would need to be established in order to consider the idea further. **Kelleher moved that a Peaks Island Skate Park Committee be formed in order to pursue the establishment of a new skatepark on Peaks Island. The motion was seconded by Phyfe and passed unanimously.** At a later point in the meeting, **Thundershield volunteered to chair the skatepark committee.**

V. Public Safety: Police Report

Officer Cindy Taylor responded to questions. Mitchell asked about where records of incidents are kept. Taylor responded they are kept in town and most can be found on the Peaks blog on the Portland Police Dept. website (not in blog if deemed inappropriate by the supervisor). Officer Taylor reported a recent mini crime spree including 5 car robberies. She asked that islanders not keep their keys in their cars. Taylor then summarized rules for summer traffic downfront: **Memorial Day to Labor Day, cars cannot go past the cross walk (near Jones Landing) while the ferry is docked. Vehicles may not be left unattended during that time frame also.** Officer Taylor clarified two points: police cannot ban individuals from the island (however, the residence and movement of individuals can be restricted by a judge); **dogs must be on leash if on public land (except if in a dog park) and “voice control” does not count.**

VI. Trott-Littlejohn Park/Community Survey

Community member Jenni Yasi provided a history of the area know as Trott-Littlejohn Park, where conflicting public and private uses of the space have characterized at least the period since 1980 to the present. Reported uses over the years have included: dump site, rock crushing/gravel pit, animal graveyard, and woodland trail with flowers. Yasi presented the PIC with two main concerns: 1) current use of the area by City contractors that raise safety concerns (e.g. inadequately labeled dangerous explosives being stored on site); 2) that the PIC not commit to a certain use of this area before conducting a community survey upon which to base its plans. Yasi asked that a committee be formed to look at not just a skatepark but recreation more generally. (Note: Sylvester excused himself from the meeting at 7:30pm due to travel obligations. Miner took over facilitation.)

Public comment on this item focused on the skatepark instead of on Yasi's concerns. The President of PILP (Peaks Island Land Preserve, upon whose land the current skatepark is located) commented that he had met with Deluca 6 months ago, and while enthusiastic, she was very clear that as soon as it goes to the planning committee, requirements will be added and the price will rise. He suggested pursuing the skatepark on a scale and budget that fits the island.

Yasi expressed concern that public comment was not focused on the current agenda item, but rather had returned to the skatepark. Mitchell mentioned that the PEAT (Peaks Environmental Action Team) grant with the Island Fellow includes conducting a needs assessment. Maggie Small, the Island Fellow, suggested that that skatepark and the community survey be considered two separate items.

Kelleher suggested that a call be put out to all community members in order to solicit people to serve on the skatepark committee. Thundershield was elected Chair and Chris Hoppin and Sue Ellen Roberts volunteered to serve on the committee. All three committed to finding skateboarders to serve with them.

Small accepted volunteers from members of the public in attendance to work with her on the community survey, including Caron Chess and Elizabeth Capone-Henriquez. Mitchell suggested Small put a call out to the listserv to solicit expertise from islanders. Small asked for a **point person from the PIC and Miner volunteered.**

Aviva Golan, island resident, expressed concern about how people without email and internet access can receive information from the PIC generally. Mitchell suggested that if the PIC Secretary position becomes a paid position, that person could ensure that the minutes from these meetings are available at library and senior center.

VII. Chairperson's Report

A. Committee Updates/Appointments

1. Neighborhood Advisory Committee – Chris Hoppin

Hoppin reported about an upcoming opportunity for curbside brush cleanup for trees up to 1 foot in diameter on June 17th. There is an application process and he asked for help getting the word out. Hoppin also reported that he has 7 volunteers for the island video project and a committee of 8 people.

B. Budget

Mitchell noted that the remaining unspent money needs to be allocated before the City takes it back if not spent by June 30th. Kelleher will find out from Mike Murray how much money is left.

C. Other

1. Environmental Update – Mary Anne Mitchell

Mitchell provided some environmental updates, including on planting trees and Earth Day. She reported that the Peaks Island School wants to do a public video-recorded presentation on invasive species. It was suggested that a separate, special PIC meeting be held and publicized well in advance.

2. PIC Agenda

Kelleher suggested the PIC schedule a council workshop to talk about what its meeting agendas should be over the next 4-6 months. Mitchell agreed and also mentioned the need to plan out when city officials visit.

Councilor Kelleher moved that the draft meeting agenda for council meetings be circulated to all council members 7 days before the meeting and be circulated to public 5 days before meeting. The motion was seconded by Phyfe and passed unanimously.

Thundershield excused himself from the meeting at 8pm in order to receive a call from his son. He announced that his son Daniel is scheduled to return home to the island soon after service in the Marine Corps.

VIII. Next Meeting – May 22, 2013

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.