City of Portland
Portland Disability Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2017

Bill Campbell, Jr., Chair of the Committee convened the meeting of the Portland Disability Advisory Committee (PDAC).

- **Sign in**
  - *In attendance:* Bud Buzzell, Haley Pass, Karen Perry, Bill Campbell, Jr., Ken Shapiro, James Devine, Lisette Belanger, Jessica Russell, Derek O'Brien, Simon Thompson, Kayla Moore, Mike Conkright, Alizah Brandwein, Jill Johanning, Karen McPhee, Mandy Levine
  - *Absent Committee members*: John LeMieux, Steve Leighton, Michelle Ames

- **Minutes of the November 1, 2017 meeting.** Bud Buzzell moved to approve the minutes of the November 1st meeting and Ken Shapiro seconded. The remaining committee members in attendance voted unanimously to accept the minutes. No corrections were noted.

- **Guest speaker, Simon Thompson, Portland Parks Conservancy:**
  - Simon Thompson joined us to provide an overview of what the Portland Parks Conservancy is – a public/private partnership with the City to raise additional funds to enhance and sustain our local parks. He explained that, working hand-in-hand with the City of Portland, the Conservancy is working to create a private foundation to support Portland's parks. To date, the Conservancy has been supported by a Portland-based philanthropist.
  - There are currently 66 parks in the City, and 85% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park. Portland's parks are generally in good shape but long-term funding issues remain. The Parks Commission requested $2.5 M

from the City for capital improvements and received half of the requested amount, which ultimately stifles creative programming that we could otherwise be doing in the park and engagement with the spaces.

- The Conservancy created a steering committee and determined that the conservancy's main focuses will be issues of equity and access, which are defined broadly and not specifically to any one demographic. They want to discuss what can we do to encourage the parks being used and have spoken with immigrant and refugee populations and neighborhoods off of the peninsula, where there's less discussion of park space. They're hopeful that the grant making practices they are using will be fruitful.
- Congress Square Park is a great example of what can be done when citizens get involved; it has an active Friends group, like several others in the City, and hopefully the Conservancy would hopefully support the Friends groups, which know what's best for the neighborhood.
- Simon distinguished the Conservancy from Portland Trails, which is a nonprofit that actually acquires and owns some of the City's trails. The Conservancy, however, will not be acquiring land and rather will focus on supporting the parks that the City already owns. The Conservancy will help fill in gaps that the City may not be able to fund, in conjunction with City priorities.
- Derek O'Brien shared his concern that bricks, while looking nice, will not weather well over time. He's encouraged to see the sidewalks being replaced but not by the material being utilized, and recommends using concrete sidewalks, which will be more accessible for those who use it and will last longer.
- Mike Conkright shared that there are other solutions that can be used that look like brick but are not brick. In South Portland, for example, they tar the sidewalk and while still wet, they paint it and provide it a brick-like look but a non-slippery surface.
- In the next couple of months, the Conservancy will be hiring an Executive Director and will create a public website.
- Simon Thompson shared his contact information: 838-7147, simon@portlandparksconservancy.org

- **Brainstorming of new initiatives for the PDAC**

    - **Disability Parade:** Bud Buzzell raised the idea of the Committee organizing a disability parade that groups and individuals with

disabilities could participate in, perhaps stretching from Congress Square Park to Monument Square. The steps he envisioned this entailing would be creating flyers, talking to the editor of the Portland Press Herald, inviting City Councilors, and speaking with the Police Department about having the road cleared for the parade.

    - A discussion was held about the PDAC participating in already-existing parades, such as the Pride Parade (which already has a presence from the disabled veterans community), or military parades held on Memorial or Veterans Day. The Committee could create a banner and help provide the disabled community a more visible presence, including highlighting the different types of disability that individuals may self-identify with. If the PDAC pursues this, someone will want to reach out to the organizer of the particular parade.

- **Homeless Persons Annual Memorial Vigil**: James Devine shared that at approximately 4:30 pm on 12/21/17, which is winter solstice, people will gather at Preble Street and march to Monument Square to read the names of homeless people who have died over the past year. See https://www.preblestreet.org/in-the-news/portlands-homeless-persons-annual-memorial-vigil/

- **Hearing loop technology update**

    - Mandy Levine shared that was given a tutorial on the hearing loop technology available in the City Council Chambers, which is currently underutilized. The City currently owns four receivers along with 4 amplifying earpieces that clip over the user's ear and 2 inductive loops, which are utilized by individuals wearing hearing aids. These receivers are connected to the microphones in the Chamber. Mandy is working with the Communications Director to increase signage and awareness to meeting attendees about the opportunity to utilize this technology.

- **Closed captioning update**

    - Mandy Levine shared the draft letter (attached) that she prepared and City Manager Jon Jennings has approved, and welcomed feedback and suggested revisions from the Committee. She asked attendees to review the letter and to provide any and all feedback via email or at the next PDAC meeting. The

Communications Director is preparing a catchier palm card that will be distributed to area businesses contemporaneously with the letter.

- Upcoming meeting dates, all from 11 am to 12 pm in Room 24 in the basement of City Hall: 1/3/18, 2/7/18, 3/7/18, 4/4/18, 5/2/18, 6/13/18 (***has been moved to Room 24 in the basement of City Hall)**; 7/11/18, 8/1/18, 9/5/18, 10/3/18, 11/7/18, 12/5/18

- **Adjournment**: the meeting concluded at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mandy Levine

City of Portland Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Specialist