



Commission Members:

Chair Jaime Parker, Vice Chair Jon Kachmar, Marie Gray, Zack Anchors, Eleanor Sears, Beth Rabbitt, Stephen Bentsen, Michael Catania, Cheri Musgrave Katie Mears and City Councilor Victoria Pelletier. **Staff:** Alex Marshall, Thomas Nickerson.

Not present: Stephen Bensten

City of Portland Parks Commission Agenda

August 4th, 2022

5:00 PM

On August 4th 2022 5:00 pm, the Portland Parks Commission held a meeting using Zoom.

I. Call to Order -

II. General Citizen Comment Period (5 min)

I - George Rheault - Please update commission members, some folks are still on. Please address the Deering Oaks issues. Please also include equity concerns within Portland. Tree planting could use a city map listing, so the public will know where the trees are located. Contractors are required to plant a tree per new unit. Some neighborhoods are tree-poor and those trees are not being provided to the areas that need them the most. Planning board rules do not require those trees to be in that. Equity reflects on all of us.

III. Agenda Items

- a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes June 2nd: Action Item (5 min) - motions to approve: Marie, Cheri. 5 votes, no dissenting.**
- b. New Business**
 - i. CIP development - Alex to provide update**
 - CIP starts in May - June, work on the projects until the next year. Sent out requests for updates, received a few. We review and update the CIP based on need and funding, then we provide the CIP to the Parks Commission. This is a general list of projects that will be occurring. Commissioners will vote on the top 3-5 projects. We take this input and incorporate it into the division-wide CIP. Once included it goes to finance., then council for final approval.
 - What we have for you today - please review these CIP selection criteria when making decisions. Matched funding projects are prioritized. Equity projects, to include diversity. Projects already in play.
 - Current projects: Deering Oaks irrigation for fields, pesticides are permissions here HOWEVER, we do not use those. We prefer organic. Water is needed, which is why this is a focus. Cemeteries: Evergreen cem expansion, plots are limited and more space is needed. Courts resurfacing, preventative maintenance. Great Diamond Island courts, clay tennis court, looking to resurface. These courts are public property. Infrastructure: ADA improvements - sidewalk and pathing, needs to be replaced. These improvements were sparked by an ADA

inspection.

- Queenie's Castle is doing well, but struggling a little with the unhoused population. Constructions are happening, like a seating wall. Staff has been supportive.
- Deering Oaks Pond wall reconstruction - wall repair is a high priority, to prevent an emergency situation.
- Eastern Prom - Additional ADA improvements, fixing storm water damage to make it accessible for all.
- Fencing - Eastern Prom trail, invasive plants are running rampant. Replace wooden guardrail to limit invasives. Aesthetically appealing, easier to maintain vegetation.
- Fort Gorgeous Wharf Reconstruction - Army corps of Engineers - a fun project using large and powerful machinery. They provide the labor and equipment, we just need to get the materials.
- Lincoln Park Fence - Fencing is progressing and a phased project, we'd like to continue on with the project. We have funding previously, and want to keep that going. As this is the oldest park in Portland, it has historical significance. There have been funds raised privately. Mike Ciamaga will be heading this project for us.
- Payson park - entrance improvement - Front street development could use a nice entrance and improve it to make it more welcoming/accessible for the incoming families. Would connect the park and existing trails.
- Veranda Street - this is a placeholder, we do not have a price for this, but we want to hold this as there would be waterfront open space opened up for a potential park. More information pending.
- Valley Street - shorter retainer wall, losing stones and needs to be replaced/rebuilt. Time is of the essence.
- Playgrounds - 30 playgrounds around the city, last 20 years each. Which means 1-2 each year. Longfellow is being designed right now. Funding for additional playgrounds is also needed. Reiche, Ting Tate, Clark. Grants might be needed.

ii. Parks Capital Improvement Priority Projects -Friends Groups Presentations and Public Comment

- Frank and Sharon Reilly - thanked everyone for the support of Lincoln Park. Fence dates back to 1866, original Portland Company, took 2 years. At that time the park was purchased as a firebreak after the previous city fire. It was also a memorial, used to be Phoenix Square. It has a lot of historical significance. 1970, lost ¼ of the park to Franklin arterial. Hoping to get that back someday. This is a team effort, Portland is helping a lot. Private entities are helping along with Portland. We want to keep the current project manager to continue as they are doing a fantastic job. Next Tuesday night is the final musical performance in the park, Blue Phrobets, 6:00pm. Fountain and the basin needed to be replaced. HUGE boulder under the fountain, kept the boulder there, rerouted the fountain plumbing around the boulder. They were able to incorporate electricity into the park, including park lights. They applied for a matching grant to have the fencing continued. Opened up for questions:
- How much money has been raised? - We can provide it.
- Paul Drinan - 1 - Preservation plan - 2 wharf rebuild - 3 composting toilets - 4 Parapet - 5 sea level rise update. Project estimate 480,000, asked to increase to

\$500,000. In 2022, based on additional inflation, we'd like a solid 1 million. In 2016 - an army engineer advised that cribbing should have been installed already. Condemnation is possible. We received updated quotes recently, but they are asking for a fresh review of the resto project. This plan is being reviewed for validity. Will share soon. Equity: is easily a 10 min park, Friends would like to provide free access, but they are committed to getting this done. 10% free tickets for all events. Islands have a place, privilege is a barrier, you must have a boat and most people do not have this. Safety is primary - Impact of service to public - safety issues, no other park has the same safety issues. We will share the engineering report, hopefully no complete collapse, a very serious issue. Priority - Fort G has a 92% community support rating, social media reflections 99.7% support. Prior phases, the Fort has already received a number of improvements. We are partnering with the city and hoping for funding. There seems to be a disconnect - the preservation plan was a higher priority, but we are focusing on the wharf, why? - Parks need to raise matching funds for the preservation before we can provide CIP funds. So a decision was made to focus on the wharf to enable more access. Would like to contribute. \$100k materials cost is more than likely, and we are happy to assist with permitting.

iii. Follow up questions from Commissioners

- Questions -
- Q: What fundraising efforts are underway with those needs?
- A: We are awaiting the MOU report, then we can move forward with funding avenues. The wharf is important, but the restoration is vital too. It is a really great project. Safety improvements are critical.
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c. Communications and Updates

- i. Parks Report (15 min) - Reviewed the Parks Report items: hiring positions, tree planting concluded 150 trees in the ground, Water is a huge issue, we need rain. Public participation was asked, adopt-a-tree would be ideal to address management issues. Campsites - no camping in the parks - it is permitted ONLY if the shelters are full, and they are not. Public bathrooms, they are being installed. Jon Krachmar - feedback is provided and they are delighted to have those bathrooms. This is rapid progress and makes for world-class parks. Beth - Lyseth has a limited budget, could you provide more detail about this? Alex - \$250K is not sufficient for playgrounds at this time. Inflation has impacted the project. Lyseth is a title 1 school, and this playground would be surviving in an underserved community. We had to make some cuts, but those do not reduce the value or quality of the playground. We are asking for inter-department assistance. Cheri asked - schoolyard greening coalition, do we work with them? Jamie - Portland Trails housed this coalition, but they have moved on to different advocacy work. Parks are now incorporating green elements, which is ideal. What are things we can provide in these spaces which are natural, as opposed to the glassic plastics and metal.
- ii. Land Bank Commission Report (10 min) - Last month was off, but they did take a field trip. Went to Stroudwater property, a very exciting prospect. Would like to add parking and access for boats. Went to north deering, Coolidge and Davenport lots. Public is always welcome. Riverton Trolley park has an additional parcel, which is wonderful and provides a great deal of benefits. Made the paper!
- iii. Committee Updates (10 min) - No updates -
- iv. Commission Vacancies - Three openings - Due by Aug 22nd - please see this link for more information: <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/603/Boards-Committees>

d. Commissioner requests for Agenda Items

IV. Adjournment