



Commission Members: Chair Cynthia Loebenstein, Vice Chair Michael Mertaugh, Ana Lagunez, Jon Kachmar, Nathan Robbins, Zack Anchors, Shaylyn MacKinnon, Jaime Parker. **Staff:** Alex Marshall and Samara Ray

**City of Portland
Parks Commission Minutes
June 3, 2021
5:00 PM**

On Thursday, June 3rd 2021, at 5:00 pm, the Portland Parks Commission conducted a virtual meeting using emergency legislation approved by LD 2167; 1 M.R.S. §403A, that authorizes cities and towns to conduct meetings online.

I. General Citizen Comment Period

No comments from the public.

II. Agenda Items

a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: May 6th 2021 - Nathan would like the minutes amended, he was interested in more discussion before the letter was to be sent out. The Commission voted to accept the minutes for the May 6th meeting with the amendment as requested by Nathan.

b. Old Business

i. Discussion of Greenspace Gathering - Commissors praised the Committee that organized the Greenspace Gathering. Overall it was a success. There were many community members present at the Greenspace Gathering.

ii. Parks Handbook Next Steps - The Parks Handbook will be presented to the City Council and be given to all new Park Commissioners. The Handbook will also be added to the Parks Division website and passed along to the Land Bank Commissioners.

iii. Needle Exchange Letter Follow Up - Parks Commissioners and the Parks Director feel that since public health is not their area of expertise it may be best to leave this issue to Health and Human Services at the moment. Commissioners discussed the importance of being informed of trends involving needles in the Parks, this data could be useful in policy changes in the future. Currently the Parks Division does not have a trend analysis report to provide since they have only been collecting data for a couple of years. The Parks Director noted that they are now using a GIS system to track where needles are found in the Parks so data can be more easily collected and shared. The Parks Division shares its needle data regularly with the Health and Human Services Department.

iv. Land Acknowledgement Discussion

This topic came out of a conversation on interpretive signage at a Parks Initiative meeting. This would be a statement that would be read at the beginning of each meeting. The Parks Initiative Committee will do more research and present findings to the Commission at a later meeting. The Corporation Council would need to weigh in about this before the Parks Commission adopted a Land Acknowledgement Statement. The research May be best accomplished uniformly accity wide. Research would be the first step. Zach, Jaime, Shylyn, Ana created a Sub Committee to begin research into this idea. They will get together and get back to the rest of the

Commission at the next meeting.

c. New Business

i. Parks Commission Election VOTE

Cynthia made nominations for Commission Chair and Vice Chair. She nominated Michael Mertaugh for Chair and Jaime Parker for Vice Chair. The Commission voted and the Commission voted unanimously in favor of Michael for Chair and Jamie for vice chair. The Commissioners thanked Cynthia and Nathan for their service as this will be their last meeting. Cynthia noted that she will still be involved with the Parks Conservancy.

d. Communications/Updates

i. Parks Report

Parks is still hiring Seasonally and also has 2 full time positions that are vacant. Excited to have hired a new Parks Maintenance Supervisor hired last month. The Fourth of July fireworks at the Eastern Promenade will happen but will not be a large-scale event. The Parks Division has received a 10,000 grant with Project Canopy Grant for planning to improve canopy cover over in Portland. Sundays on Boulevard will stay in the regular route for at least 4-5 more weeks, the official date of route change is to be determined. 82 planters at street closures have been planted by Horticulture, Forestry is on pace for normal tree planting numbers this year. There has been concern about trash in the Parks. Deering Oaks, Eastern Prom and Bayside see a lot of trash. Food trucks generate a lot of trash on the Eastern Prom, Parks is working with the Inspections Department to make sure the trucks are providing adequate receptacles. Alex has ordered 8 historic (SPEC) trash receptacles but it may be a while till they make their way into the Parks.

ii. Land Bank Report

The Land Bank has started to look at tax acquired parcels. Redlon Woods is getting updated appraisal work. Site visit in either July or September and no meeting in August. Two new Commissioners will be added in July. 1830 Washington Ave property working with the Trust for Public Land, presently there are no updates. Hope Ave is another property that is undergoing due diligence but no other updates at this time.

iii. Sub Committee Reports

Parks Initiatives Sub Committee- met and discussed interpretive signage, Shyalyn talked to her point person and has been working on connecting with resources.

No other updates from any other Sub Committees

iv. Update on CIP Process

Alex outlined the projects in last year's CIP. The attached CIP shows the Departmental CIP projects not just projects in the Parks realm. July 19th is the date for FG to submit priorities. Overview of CIP list and Project Selection Criteria. It is important for the Commission to look at Project Selection Criteria and take into consideration the timeline.

v. Choose Parks Commission Summer Meeting Date

It was determined that there will not be a meeting in July and August 5th, 2021 will be the date of the Summer meeting. An invite will go out to all Friends Groups to attend the August 5th meeting to make a 10 minute proposal to the Commission.

Jon made a motion to adjourn, Jaime seconded the Meeting was adjourned.

City of Portland Commissions are not required to take public comment under FOAA and our Ordinance is silent regarding the duties of the Commission. The Commission has the discretion to not allow or allow public comment during its meetings, including the authority to limit the duration of comments. Since the Commission makes recommendations to the City Council, public comment is available at that level.