



In attendance: Commission Members: Chair Cynthia Loebenstein, V. Chair Michael Mertaugh, Amy Segal, Ana Lagunez, Dory Waxman, Jon Kachmar, Marie Gray, Zack Anchors, and Jaime Parker. City Staff: Ethan Hipple and Alex Marshall.

City of Portland
Parks Commission Minutes
January 7, 2021, 5:00 PM

On January 7, 2021, 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. This meeting was conducted remotely using Zoom.

I. General Citizen Comment Period

George Rheault voiced concerns about the virtual meeting recordings and the Redlon Woods letter.

II. Agenda Items

a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: Dec 3, 2020

Michael moved to accept the meeting minutes of December. Zack seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

b. Old Business

i. Commission Seat Vacancies

Jaime has been appointed to the Portland Trails seat. The Nominating Committee will be meeting on January 12th and all seats should be filled for the next meeting.

ii. CIP Update

Ethan shared that the City Manager and Finance Director should have their recommendations ready to send to the Finance Committee by the end of January. The hope is that the City Council will review in March.

iii. Strategic Planning Meeting Update

Michael outlined some questions and issues related to the MOU that would be valuable to focus on at the Strategic Planning Meeting. The plan is to hold the virtual meeting on February 18th from 4 PM to 6:30 PM. Cynthia would like to have some breakout sessions for small group discussions.

iv. Green Space Meeting Update

Zack reminded everyone that the focus of the meeting will be on building and sustaining Friends organizations. The meeting will take place during the regularly scheduled Parks Commission meeting time in April or May. Zack will reach out to the suggested panelists to determine whether April 1 or May 6 will work best. He would

like to start with a Q&A session followed by breakout rooms for each panelist. Micheal suggested that a May meeting would give more time to update the Friends Group handbook and draft an MOU.

c. New Business

i. Portland Trails Presentation

Jaime gave a presentation on the history, accomplishments, and vision for the future of the Portland Trails organization. Portland Trails is a nonprofit land trust started almost 30 years ago. The Eastern Prom trail was their first project in 1992 and they now own about 160 acres of land and 100 miles of trails. They have a strong volunteer program and partner with many land trusts, municipalities, corporations, and schools. Some upcoming projects include new trails on the West End and Stroudwater Preserve.

d. Communications/Updates

i. Subcommittee Reports

Parks Initiatives: No update

Annual Report: No update

Finance: No further update

Community Outreach: No further update

ii. Land Bank Commission Report

The Rand Rd parcel has been approved by the City Council. There is currently a request out for an appraisal of Riverton Trolley Park. City staff are reviewing the 1831 Washington Ave parcel to provide recommendations to the commission. Cynthia shared that she and Michael prepared a letter regarding the proposed Redlon Woods development.

iii. Parks Report

Alex gave some background information on the invasive Norway maple removal that was part of the Western Prom Master Plan. The goal is to remove the remaining stumps and replant native vegetation in the spring. Ethan explained that the tree clearing taking place at Evergreen Cemetery is part of a lot development project. Native trees will be replanted along Stevens Ave. Baxter Pines was also thinned as part of a citywide forest management plan. This work will help the overall health of the remaining red pines as they thrive in a less shaded environment. Trail improvements and native tree planting will take place in the spring or summer.