Commission Members: Chair Cynthia Loebenstein, Vice Chair Michael Mertaugh, Amy Segal, Ana Lagunez, Dory Waxman, Jon Kachmar, Marie Gray, Nathan Robbins, Zack Anchors, and Mayor Kate Snyder

City of Portland
Parks Commission Agenda
December 3, 2020
5:00 PM

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

Please use the link below to join the webinar:
https://zoom.us/j/91710859101?pwd=MUVLWTVFRG5jUFNxSHlEcTFlSk8wZz09 Passcode: P3pperm1nt
Or Telephone:
US: +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099
Webinar ID: 917 1085 9101
Passcode: 480730

The Mission of the Portland Parks Commission is to advocate for the enhancement and stewardship of our parks and open spaces. Review and propose projects that impact parks and open spaces and recommend action. Foster collaboration among park users and the City. Promotes public access and enjoyment. Advocate for public and private funding for parks and open spaces. Enjoy Portland for Life.

I. General Citizen Comment Period

II. Agenda Items
   a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: November 5, 2020
   b. Old Business
      i. Commission Seat Vacancies
      ii. Annual Report
   c. New Business
      i. CIP Discussion
      ii. Redlon Woods Parcels
      iii. Strategic Planning Meeting Discussion
      iv. Green Space Meeting Discussion
   d. Communications/Updates
      i. Subcommittee Reports
      ii. Land Bank Commission Report

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.

iii. Parks Report

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

City of Portland

Parks Commission Minutes

November 5, 2020, 5:00 PM

On Nov 5, 2020, 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

No comments

II. Agenda Items

a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: Oct 1, 2020

Michael moved to accept the meeting minutes of October. Marie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

b. Guest Speaker, Kristen Dow, Director of Health & Human Services

Kristen gave an overview of the Social Services Division which consists of the General Assistance Program, Oxford St Shelter, and the Family Shelter. The Oxford St Shelter has reduced capacity by 50% since the beginning of the pandemic and the Portland Expo was being utilized as shelter space until it was needed as a polling place. Maine Housing holds a contract with a hotel that is currently being run as a shelter with capacity for 144 individuals. A group of social service providers as well as Portland Parks, Fire, and Police staff continue to meet weekly to discuss the homeless individuals congregating in Deering Oaks park and elsewhere. The Public Health Division is fully operational at this point. Needle exchange staff and volunteers are doing daily sweeps in high need areas. Winter planning has become a priority. There is a need for more shelter staff and those positions are being advertised.

c. Old Business

i. 46 Western Prom License Agreement

The original license agreement was updated to address comments made during the September meeting. The fee was increased to a non-refundable single payment of $20,000, and a termination clause was added. Commissioners were unanimous in supporting the license as presented.

ii. Commission Seat Vacancies

The commission seats vacancies should be posted soon.

iii. Oct 15 Work Day

Cynthia thanked those who attended the work day last month. The group worked on weeding and mulching at Deering Oaks playground.

d. New Business

i. Annual Report Discussion and Vote

Michael motioned to accept the most recent version of the report. Zack seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Michael suggested that highlights from the report be presented to the City Council.

e. Communications/Updates

i. Baxter Woods Update

The leash ordinance is in place and signage will be added to the park. Dogs need to be on leash at all times in the habitat restoration area. Cedar benches have been installed at various locations and there are plans to resurface the main path.

ii. Subcommittee Reports

Park Initiatives: No update

Finance: Continuing work on the MOU and updating the friends handbook.

Community Outreach: Looking into holding a virtual Green Space Gathering in the spring.

iii. Land Bank Commission Report

Meeting times have been changed back to the second wednesday at 5 PM. There is an interest in creating a list of qualifications to help with filling the current vacancies. The Rand Rd acquisition is under way. There was discussion about continuing due diligence for the Riverton Trolley Park property and Jon would like input from Parks Commission and Parks Conservancy.

iv. Parks Report

Pamela Shaw of the Friends of Harbor View Park gave an overview of the park and the work being done there. She outlined accomplishments such as establishing fruit trees and pollinator plants as well as challenges like the discovery of invasive plants within the park. Current goals include sustainably improving the landscape to make it even more inviting for wildlife and the community. A suggestion was made to have virtual zoom workshops over the winter covering various topics pertaining to parks/gardens.