



Commission Members: Chair Pat Bailey, Jayne Foley, Daniel Herzlinger, Jennifer Fox, Robert Foster, Jon Kachmar, Kara Wooldrik, Simon Rucker and Baxter Miatke **Staff:** Doug Roncarati and Samara Ray.

City of Portland
Land Bank Commission Minutes
December 8, 2021
5:00 PM

I. Call to Order

Land Bank Commission Chair Pat started the meeting at 5:00pm

II. Citizen Comment Period

Pat asked if there was any public comment or comment from the Commissioners. There was no comment from the public or the Commissioners.

III. Agenda Items

i. Acceptance of the November 10th Meeting Minutes

Pat wanted to make sure that Jon checked the appraised value for the Hale property, Jon confirmed the appraised value is 27,000. The minutes were approved with a few edits from Commissioners. Simon moved to accept the minutes, Jon seconded. The minutes passed unanimously.

ii. Treasurer's Report

No updates from Baxter this month.

iii. Secretary's Report - Comments and Acceptance of Annual Report Action Item

Pat handed this over to Simon and thanked everyone that helped. Pat said she made a few comments on the report. Robert, Jennifer and Daniel helped Simon out on the 2021 Land Bank Annual Report. There are some changes to the draft that was submitted.

The Parks Department is now issuing the accounting report and in the end we have \$576,000 in our budget moving forward right now. Kara confirmed that Greg Mitchell is still a consultant with the City. Pat said the accounting report is hard to follow. Because of the bonding of cash, these reports did not accurately show the Land Bank balance. To provide a better summary the Parks Department is issuing a report on one spreadsheet that will be shared with the Land Bank Commissioners Kara said this is a huge step forward and Baxter noted that a Treasurer is still necessary to go through the budget in detail to make sure it is accurate.

Simon provided an overview of the Annual Report, describing each section and noting that the order of the exhibit has yet to be finalized. Approved with Pat's edits and exhibits put in the right order.

Baxter asked about the map of Land Bank holdings. Simon said that the link to the map is included as the PDF is too large to be attached to the Annual Report. They may work with City Staff to get smaller maps for each Land Bank property to be included in future years. Baxter noted that Fort Gorges was not on the map and it would be great to have this.

Pat asked Kara to give an overview about how Portland Trails works with the City on trail improvements. She said they meet with Ethan or Alex in early Spring to determine priorities. Then Parks will choose the top few that are related to trails and then they ask Portland Trails for a proposal. Every year Portland Trails has additional projects related to ecosystems and no one in the City is appointed for these types of projects, although the Parks work on invasive removal in the past year has been helpful. Kara said there is not a lot of funding to provide management or conservation efforts of Land Bank properties. Pat noted that there should be an agenda item to have Portland Trails address the Commission since they are on the ground every day on the trails to gain an additional perspective on open space in the Land Bank. Portland Trails and Maine Audubon are Land Bank partners and it would be good to have additional perspectives on land management from these organizations. Jon said that the effort right now to update the Commission ordinances could be a good time to add some stewardship responsibilities to Land Bank properties.

Pat proposed that the Commission vote on the 2021 Land Bank Annual Report with all edits noted this evening. Jennifer made a motion to accept the 2021 Land Bank Annual Report, Jon K seconded a roll call vote was made and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. Communications

i. Parks Commission Report

Jon gave a summary of December 2nd Parks Commission meeting, a great deal of this meeting was spent on a presentation from Fiona Hopper and her work involving Wabenaki curriculum for Portland Public Schools. Fiona is the Social Studies Teacher Leader and Wabenaki Coordinator for Portland Public Schools. A law was passed 20 years ago that required schools to teach Wabenaki studies; it is referred to as LD291. There is not a school distinct to her knowledge that is in compliance with this law. 20 years ago a state law was passed. Fiona talked about many sites that are important in indegnous history that are Land Bank properties and Park properties.

One of the Parks top priorities is improvements at Dougherty Field and Playground. Jon will share a presentation about the Land Bank Commission at the January Parks Commision meeting which will include information about the Land Bank and Parks Commission ordinances. Most parks are in the Land Bank. One of the reasons most of the park spaces were put into the Land Bank to provide an additional layer of protection- supermajority vote is required by the City Council to remove protections. Doug has been involved with the ordinance in the past and offered to be a resource as the Commissions and City work to potentially draft new ordinances. The Parks Commission will have a February retreat the topic will be how to assist Friends Groups.

ii. Parks Division Report

Highlights include that the Parks Division recently hired 3 new parks maintainers. No major projects this time of year. Staff are geared up for winter operations. The Division maintains 100 miles of sidewalks, but not the Portland Downtown District. There are 5 sidewalk routes and 1 trail route. Forestry crew does public safety fire lots and school lots. Ballfield crew helps with overnight downtown clearing. Parks is still trying to refine winter ops to manage the sidewalks the best way possible. Parks also maintains winter recreation elements in Cit parks like the grooming of regular cross country trails at Deering Oaks and Payson Park.

V. Parcel Updates

i. Hale Parcel - Riverton Trolley Park

The memo to approve the Land Bank purchase will not go to the City Council for approval until the Purchase and Sale agreement is finalized. The hope would be to work with Tom Jewel and figure out a strategy for the Purchase and Sale agreement to close by the end of January.

ii. North Deering Park Expansion

TPL reached out to the 410 Auburn St landowner and they are not interested in the longer timelines that come with TPL transactions. Phil Dube of TPL wanted everyone to know that they will continue to explore ways to get access through Auburn St.

Staff provided an update from Doug Beck from the State about ORLP submissions. The 5th ORLP round closed in September with States submitting 64 proposals requesting just over \$150 million. They have initiated the technical review process and set an ambitious schedule to complete the merit review process and final selection by March 31, 2022.

Simon mentioned that Mrs Havery may be interested in adding more land to the project.

Additional updates

Pat and Simon discussed the presentation of the 2021 Land Bank Annual Report to the City Council. Samara will place it on the draft agenda for the City Council meeting on Jan the 3rd, it may be pushed to the next meeting. Samara will confirm with Pat and Simon about when the meeting it will be presented at is confirmed.

Doug wanted to acknowledge the work Jon and the Parks Commission have been doing to raise awareness of indegenouse peoples in this area.

In regards to Kara's comments about open space maintenance. He always thought that the open spaces were different in terms of maintenance but some of these open spaces do have trails, dog walkers and invasive species. There are different management opportunities for these spaces. They cannot be forgotten however they do require different management but some provision does need to be made like what level of care and investment we need to do for these spaces. Lastly he mentioned that the City of Portland is working on its new stormwater permit and low impact design program related to it. He is lobbying for stream, shoreline, wetlands and over all resource protection. A key component is, protect the best and figure out how to manage the rest.

Pat asked if there were any comments, she thanked Commissioners.

VI. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned.