



# Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023

4:30 p.m.

Vancouver City Hall

Aspen Room

415 W. 6th Street

Vancouver, WA

### Commissioners Present:

Haygood, Fletcher, Robbins and Kuntz

### Commissioners Absent:

Crow, Panter, and Piland

### Staff Present:

Perlick, Zoltie, Hannon, Cook, Stokke, Meade, Brosius, Tubberville, Gutierrez, C. White, Burton, Hull, Heath, Donovan, R. White,

### Guests:

None

### Item 1: Call to Order

Chair Haygood called the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. in Aspen Room at Vancouver City Hall and online via Microsoft Teams. Crow, Panter and Piland were absent.

### Item 2: Approval of Minutes

PRAC approved the September 20, 2023, meeting minutes by consensus.

### Item 3: Public Comment

Seven community members provided public comment on Item 4, Recreation Program Staffing Challenges and Strategies, concerning the reduction of water exercise classes at Firstenburg Community Center and Marshall Community Center.

## Members

**Jayne Haygood**

President

**Angilo Fletcher**

Vice President

Jeremy Robbins

Mathew Kuntz

AJ Panter, VPS

Cale Piland, EPS

Syble Crow, Parks

Foundation

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#### **Item 4: Recreation Program Staffing Challenges and Strategies**

Perlick gave an overview of the memo titled Response to Recreation Program Staffing Challenges dated November 14 and echoed the real-life impacts to patrons and staff raised by speakers at Public Comment. Swimming pool hours of service have been reduced by half since the beginning of the year due to loss of staff. Equity in service reduction was carefully considered and the cuts were spread across a variety of program types, days, times, and locations.

The memo described several short-term and long-term options that are being considered to both address the current lifeguard shortage and to develop a more sustainable staffing approach that considers the logistical and financial limits of temporary part-time employment. Long term solutions will require a new employee classification and pay structure and the goal is to develop recommendations by February 2024 that can be addressed through the spring supplemental budget. Perlick additionally acknowledge the community's desire to be a part of the problem solving process as raised at Public Comment.

Fletcher thanked staff and agreed that regular updates will be helpful going forward. Haygood noted that non-wage benefits are increasingly important in recruiting and noted that PRAC may need to advocate for that when the time comes.

#### **Item 5: VIC Development Update**

Perlick provided updates on the Vancouver Innovation Center (former HP site in east Vancouver). In 2021 the property was rezoned to mixed use from light industrial and a development was planned for the site. The developer is currently working on an updated proposal that will go to the Planning Commission on December 12.

The new proposal does not include any changes to the park size or site. The 13.6-acre park is maintained via a restrictive covenant associated with the property. The park will be transferred to the city as intended and PRCS is committed to community engagement, tree preservation, and constructing phase 1 improvements within 3 years. Master planning will begin in 2024.

#### **Item 6: Waterfront Gateway Overview**

Zoltie gave an overview of the Waterfront Gateway project. The site consists of the City-owned property surrounding City Hall. The City is redeveloping the property in partnership with the developer, Lincoln Property Company.

The site plan includes a mix of market rate units, affordable units, retail space, office space and 2 acres of open space. The open space is mostly hardscaped, with a designated plaza area adjacent to City Hall to accommodate events and markets. PRAC will review and approve its design in March 2024. The plaza design will have a community engagement process that includes branding of the plaza to make it a distinctive place.

Haygood expressed concern about parking and Robbins added that accessible parking spaces (and enforcement of those spaces) are needed throughout downtown.

#### **Item 7: Parks Update**

Hannon provided updates on various park development projects:

- Minor design changes to Oakbrook Park include relocating the pickleball courts away from residences and into a natural depression to attenuate noise. Stage one construction will start this fall.
- PRAC will approve the Bagley Park master plan in February or March and phase one construction will be completed by 2026.

- PRAC will approve the Shaffer Park master plan in February.
- The playground theme for VanVleet is Western Wildlife. Construction starts next month.
- The playground theme for Columbia Lancaster is STEM. Construction starts next month.
- The playground theme for Fruit Valley is Birds of the Lowlands and the master plan will be ready in January.

Robbins noted he attended a tour of local Harpers Playgrounds and saw that the mallets were missing from musical instruments at every site. Hannon agreed that it was a universal problem and that either a better anchor was needed from the manufacturer, or they would look at options for instruments that can be played with a hand strike rather than mallets.

**Item 8: Director's Report**

None presented.

**Item 9: Chair Report**

Haygood recommended [Vancouver Family Magazine's article on Marshall Park published in November 2023.](#)

**Item 10: Evergreen School District Report**

None presented.

**Item 11: Vancouver Public School Report**

None presented.

**Item 12: Parks Foundation Report**

None presented.

**Item 13: Open Discussion**

Robbins encouraged more signage in multiple languages and in braille. Kuntz announced that he will give an update on the pollinator subcommittee at the next meeting.

**ADJOURNED**

This meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.