

**In attendance:** Commission Members: Chair Dory Waxman, Vice Chair Nathan Robbins, Cynthia Loebenstein, Colette Bouchard, Zack Anchors, Amy Segal. City Staff: Sally DeLuca, Matt Coleman, David MacLean, Meaghan Void, and Alli Carroll. Members of the public: Director of Friends of Congress Square Park Dela Murphy, President of Friends of Deering Oaks Park Anne Pringle, Executive Director of Friends of Ft. Gorges Paul Drinan, and Portland resident George Rheault.

**Parks Commission Minutes**  
**October 04, 2018**  
**5:00 PM**  
**Portland City Hall**  
**389 Congress Street, Room 24**

**I. General Citizen Comment Period**

George Rheault requested that the vote to accept the September meeting minutes be postponed because he would like to submit an amendment to his comments. He suggested that the meetings could be taped. It would be a great way to show the community what the Parks Commission is doing each month. The new Rowe Elementary School specifically spent more money for a new middle school sized gym. He wonders why this isn't being done for all gyms, however, it would be really terrific if they were 24/7 community centers to allow recreation to expand. Lastly, Preble Street is not a shelter. He asked if there was a mistake in the agenda. Sally said it was a typo and it would be corrected. George will submit his amendment for his public comment in the September minutes.

Paul Drinan of Westbrook and the Executive Director of the Friends of Ft. Gorges appreciated the Commission's efforts to have offsite meetings. He invited the Commission to have a meeting out in Ft. Gorges. It would be great for those Commissioners who have not been out there to experience it.

Anne Pringle, the President of the Friends of Deering Oaks Park handed out their newsletter. There are more than 1,000 trees in Deering Oaks Park. The newsletter highlights the tree growth problem in the park. She hopes the Commission takes time to read it. Cynthia wonders if the park trees are on the GIS Map. Sally said they are not yet.

**II. Agenda Items (*public comment taken on action items only*)**

**a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes**

**i. Acceptance of September Meeting Minutes**

The September meeting minutes have been moved to the November meeting.

**b. New Business**

**i. Preble Street Resource Center Update – *David MacLean of Health and Human Services and Dela Murphy of Friends of Congress Square Park***

Preble Street Resource Center is closing at noon now. People will still be able to get meals daily though. This is on the agenda so that everyone can talk as a community. An invitation was extended to Dela Murphy of the Friends of Congress Square Park to discuss strategies they have employed in the park. The parks and Portland Public Library will probably see a large influx of homeless soon.

David MacLean of the Health and Human Services Department said that this is a topic that bears discussion. Unfortunately, Oxford Street Shelter does not have the capacity to be able to take on some of the load. They obtain their funding based off of providing emergency care.

Preble Street Resource Center has logged four hundred individuals in a day. Oxford has 100 individuals throughout the day and only those staying at night are going to be able to access the interior and courtyard. At this time, it has only been a couple of days so it is too soon to see the impact on the shelter or the community.

Staff have been looking to see where people are now. It seems as though they are dispersed throughout the neighborhood. Unfortunately, there have been incidents where they have been interfering with private property rights. There is an outdoor bathroom facility at Oxford Street Shelter and that is and will continue to be used by anyone.

Meaghan Void agreed with what David said and reiterated that they have not seen the full impact at this stage. As the weather changes it may increase drastically. They do have a direct phone line to who is in charge of shelter that is given to the Bayside Neighborhood Association in case something is happening around that area where they would need the shelter's services. Anyone else should still call emergency services.

Dory asked if the HOME team will be extending their hours. David said that has not been discussed yet. He suggested the PATH program through Opportunity Alliance. They would be a good place to call besides emergency services. Dory asked if Preble Street met with other providers before they made this decision. David said that they met with the City about three weeks prior to it being effective.

Sally introduced Dela Murphy. She thanked David and Meaghan for the work that they do. She explained that the health, well-being and safety of those in the parks is very important to the Friends of Congress Square Park. After a recent assault in the park, they are interested in learning and being trained in more safety procedures. She gave examples of escalated situations where police did not show up or not in a timely matter. The Friends Group is not sure who to go to to give their neighbors the assistance they need. The Parks Commission could be the convener and can provide training and information to help the situation.

Anne Pringle of the Friends of Deering Oaks Park explained past issues of drinking and drugs in the park. She expressed her concern of the situation getting worse if it's not enforced. TIQA has had increased vandalism from those using the bathrooms. The porter potties are also an issue. David shared that the Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee (ESAC) is a gathering of all of the community entities that can help solve this. They meet every third Thursday at 9:00 AM at One City Center.

Sally asked if there is a list of resources. Meaghan said if they do not have one then they can most certainly create one. Sally wants to make sure the parks do not become a social service agency. We want to protect our neighbors, supporting our neighbors, and use the resources that could really help them. Dave and Meaghan reiterated that PATH and emergency services are here to help. All issues will be addressed in the ESAC meetings. Sally would like a coordinated strategy to handle this and make sure that we all have the right resources. Nathan agreed and said that there are much bigger issues involved that the Parks Commission can handle and want to make sure that the Commission focuses on how they can effectively help. The Outreach Subcommittee will look further into this and consider how they can move forward. Sally ensured the group that City Council will be looking at the homelessness ordinance. That is another way the Parks Commission can contribute.

**c. Communications/Updates**

**i. Subcommittee Updates**

Parks Initiatives met last month and unfortunately, Deb Andrews and Joe Dumais couldn't attend. How much signage placed in Evergreen Cemetery can be sensitive to it's historic nature. Each sign will have a map on it and it will have a virtual feature. Deadline to get the writing done is next week. They will then be reviewed by historians. Finally, they will meet with graphic designers. Finance met this week. Alli showed the Commission the updates to the website and how the virtual gift catalog was going.

Annual Report has created a draft mission for the subcommittee. The Annual Report is also on the October 15th City Council agenda.

**ii. Parks Division Updates**

Matt went over the parks report. He spoke of the maintenance manuals that he is working on for each park. The benches for Cousins Memorial have arrived and should be wrapped up soon. King Middle School worked with the forestry division and horticulture staff at Deering Oaks Park to do plantings by the porter johns. They did a great job and Matt encouraged the Commission to go see them. They are preparing seventy water surfaces for winter. The park ranger is going to work directly with Matt. Would like to expand the Park Ranger program because it could be a great asset to our parks. The parks crew will also work directly under Matt to help facilitate the maintenance manuals.