

1. Parks Commission September Meeting

Documents:

[PC AGENDA 09062018.PDF](#)

[PARKS COMMISSION MINUTES 07262018.PDF](#)

[PARK COMMISSION AND LAND BANK REPORT 2018-09.PDF](#)



**Commission Members** : Chair Dory Waxman, Vice Chair Nathan Robbins, Councilor Brian Batson, Craig Lapine, Cynthia Loebenstein, Meri Lowry, Michael Mertaugh, Chelsea Malacara, Colette Bouchard, Zack Anchors, Amy Segal, Ana Lagunez and Marie Gray.

**Parks Commission Agenda**  
**September 6, 2018**  
**5:00 PM**  
**Portland City Hall**  
**389 Congress Street, Room 24**

*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  | (5 min)  |
| II.  | Agenda Items ( <i>public comment taken on action items only</i> )                                   |          |
|      | a. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes  |          |
|      | i. Acceptance of July Meeting Minutes   | (5 min)  |
|      | ii. Acceptance of August Workshop Minutes   |          |
|      | b. New Business   | (50 min) |
|      | i. New Parks Manager Introduction   |          |
|      | ii. CIP Recommendation  |          |
|      | <i>Vote to recommend that the Parks Division bring their CIP list to City Council for approval.</i> |          |
|      | iii. Annual Report  |          |
|      | <i>Vote to bring the 2016-2018 Parks Commission Annual Report to City Council for approval.</i>     |          |
|      | c. Communications/Updates   | (25 min) |
|      | i. Offsite Meetings   |          |
|      | ii. Subcommittee Updates  |          |
|      | iii. Parks Division Updates   |          |
| III. | Commissioner requests for Agenda Items  | (5 min)  |

*City of Portland Commissions are not required to take public comment under FOIA 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 recommendation to the City Council, public comment is available at that level.*



**In attendance:** Commission Members: Dory Waxman, Chair, Cynthia Loebenstein, Meri Lowry, Michael Mertaugh, Colette Bouchard, Zack Anchors, Craig Lapine, Nathan Robbins, Ana Lagunez and Marie Gray. City Staff: Ethan Hipple and Alli Carroll. Members of the Public: George Rheault, Liz Trice, Anne Pringle, Carol Schiller, Victoria Kinney.

**Parks Commission Minutes**  
**July 26, 2018**  
**5:00 PM**  
**Portland City Hall**  
**389 Congress Street, Room 24**

Dory began the meeting at 5:07 pm

**I. General Citizen Comment Period**

George Rheault encouraged the Commission to review what was funded in the past year and compare it to what was actually spent before making their CIP recommendation.

Victoria Kinney of the University Neighborhood Organization expressed Longfellow Parks need for lights and electricity for public safety and to support the events in the park.

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

**a. Acceptance of June Meeting Minutes**

Michael moved to accept the June meeting minutes. Cynthia seconded. All in favor. Passed unanimously.

**b. New Business**

**i. Welcoming new Commission Members**

Dory welcomed Ana and Marie to the Commission. The Commission went around the room and introduced themselves.

**ii. CIP Request Presentations from Friends Groups and Neighborhood Associations**

**a. Friends of Deering Oaks**

Anne Pringle expressed the history of the Friends of Deering Oaks and how they have raised \$750,000 in private funds to help improve the parks over the past 21 years. They are an effective partner with the City for improving the parks. Most recent was slight narrowing of State Street to improve safety. They are currently  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way through completing the Deering Oaks Park master plan. Their CIP priorities reflect the needs of the master plan. Top priority is replacing the 45-year-old light fixtures. Total estimated cost is \$400,000. Second priority would be to replace the porter potties. The finally, replacing the retaining wall. The current one is failing.

**b. Friends of Bramhall Square**

Liz Trice shared photographs over projection. The Friends of Bramhall Square held a contest for a new design for the park. They had 13 designers and 180 votes on the designs. The winner was WBRC Architects. The Friends of Bramhall Square's priority is for their redesign to be on the CIP list. The Commissioners expressed their opinions of the design. They wish it to be greener and have less hard surfaces. They were also wary of having a child's play area so close to the road. Ethan told the Commission that many of the Friends Groups/Neighborhood Association requests have been added to the Divisions 10-year plan.

**c. University Neighborhood Organization**

Carol Schiller prepared a document that was used as a script which is attached for reference.

**c. Communications/Updates**

**i. Parks Conservancy**

City Council approved the MOU and they will be posting the job ad for the Executive Director position.

**ii. Subcommittee Updates**

Finance Subcommittee: Alli has been working very hard to create the Gift Catalog through the City website.

Park Initiative Subcommittee: Have been working on signs for the Baxter Trail project. They will be meeting in a few weeks to work on the Evergreen Cemetery. This subcommittee needs new Commissioners since most of its members termed out.

Annual Report and Inventory Subcommittee: It is pertinent for them to get the final report done. Would like to have it on the next agenda. Will discuss it at the workshop and then vote in September.

**iii. Nomination and vote on Commission Chair and Vice Chair**

Craig moved to nominate Dory as Chair and Nathan as Vice Chair. Marie seconded. All in favor. Passed unanimously.

**iv. Parks Division Updates**

Eastern Promenade Trail was washed out today due to a sewage spill from the sewage treatment plant. Trail is closed for the time being. Target date is Wednesday to reopen. The contactor is optimistic that Wednesday is feasible. East End Beach is also closed. Two tests were done today and those tests will come back tomorrow.

July 10<sup>th</sup> microburst did a number on many parts of Portland. We lost 60 trees as a result. Crews are still taking care of the damage.

Opportunity Crew has started for the summer season.

Pianos in the Square is going very well. The community is loving the creativity and music they have brought to the Squares.

The Department has made an offer for a Parks Division Manager. If all goes well, they should be able to attend September's meeting.

Craig moved to adjourn the meeting. Michael seconded. Passed unanimously.



Sally L. DeLuca  
Director

Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Ethan Hipple  
Deputy Director

Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

### Memorandum

**TO:** Parks Commission and Land Bank Commission

**FROM:** Ethan Hipple, Deputy Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

**SUBJECT:** Parks Division Update

**DATE:** September 2018

#### **Park Manager Hiring Process**

After a national search, we have hired Matt Coleman as our new Park Manager. Matt will be managing the day to day operations of the Parks Division (Parks, Athletic Facilities, Playgrounds, Forestry, Horticulture, and Cemeteries) and will be overseeing the implementation of Parks projects. He spent 14 years with the Monmouth County Parks System in NJ, and we are very excited to have him here in Portland.

#### **CIP**

Parks CIP priorities have been established by Parks Staff and recommended by the Parks Commission. Staff are now busy gathering quotes, plans, photos and other backup documentation for submission to City Manager and Finance Director.

#### **Park Projects Update**

Staff are working on the following funded CIP/Park Improvement projects:

- Cousins Memorial Reconstruction: Pedestrian plaza at Cutter/Eastern Prom. Plaza, memorial, and landscaping are 100% complete. Awaiting delivery of seven benches.
- Deering Oaks Playground Improvements: Zip line and net climber coming Fall 2018.
- Futsal Court, Fox Field: Funded by CDBG, planning for Fall construction
- Hall School Playground: Design complete, staff will be managing construction. October/November install planned.
- Island Playground Improvements: funding secured, bid awarded. August/September install.
- Lincoln Park Fence Restoration: Project was sent out to bid summer, 2018. Due to busy construction season and bonding requirements, no bids received. Staff are working on options to put it back out to bid for winter completion.
- Lyman Moore Athletic Facility Drainage and Reconstruction: In progress, 75% complete. This \$900K project will result in fields that are well-drained and irrigated, making them much more playable through the three seasons.
- Park Signs: funding secured, summer/fall install.
- Payson Softball Title IX restroom and locker room improvements: funding secured, spring installation
- Dougherty Field Playground: Design phase and community input to start Fall 2018.



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### **Unauthorized Tree Cutting**

Staff are working on revising city code to specify fines for illegal/unauthorized tree cutting. Will require Council approval. We have had numerous cases lately of unauthorized cutting of city street trees and the City Code is not strongly worded enough to enforce fines that are a deterrent.

### **Deering Oaks Pond Water Quality**

Sought proposals to install pond aeration system to reduce algae growth in Deering Oaks Pond. Possible spring 2019 install, pending funding.

### **Baxter Trail**

Baxter Trail project is progressing. Route is finalized, signage text is drafted, photos collected. We will now be contracting with interpretive sign company to do final edit and produce signs.

### **Eastern Prom Trail Repairs Due to Wastewater Spill**

Coordinated public communications and repairs to Eastern Prom Trail due to 1.6M gallon wastewater spillover. Trail was closed and repairs were made within 4 days.

### **Skate Park Skate-A-Thon**

Successful Skate-A-Thon event at Portland Skate Park. 100+ attendees, 2 live bands, portable lighting for skating till midnight, food carts. Participants got pledges from family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, teachers and raised over \$5,000 for the skatepark expansion. One 9 year old participant single handedly raised \$660. Proceeds go towards Skatepark Expansion Project with \$350K budget (\$250K from City CIP, \$100K from private fundraising). Online contributions can be made here:  
<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/2176/Fundraise>

### **Mt Auburn Cemetery Field Trip**

Parks and Cemetery Staff made field trip to Mt Auburn Cemetery to meet and share information with their operations, education and marketing staff.

### **SCA Conservation Crew**

Hosted 3 week SCA Conservation crew working on Land Bank properties. They completed projects at Ft Gorges, PATHS property, and Evergreen Cemetery.

### **Winter Lighting at Pleasant St Park**

Working with Portland Downtown, Pandora and CMP to add power to Pleasant St Park for Pandora lights.

### **Back Cove Signage**

Working with Public Works and Casco Bay Estuary Partnership to replace aging ecology interpretive signs



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along Back Cove Trail. These signs are seen by 350,000 users per year and help tell the story of the city's efforts to improve water quality in Back Cove.

### **Preble St Fields**

Stormwater project at Back Cove will take Preble Fields out of commission for a season while 3 million gallon stormwater storage tank is installed under the fields. After completion, the elevation of the field and surrounding area will be 3-5 feet higher, which will greatly reduce saltwater intrusion and winter flooding. Project expected to start spring 2019.

### **Parks Conservancy Update**

Staff made presentation to Parks Conservancy on long range park planning, 10 year CIP, new park projects, and Portland Youth Corps concept. PPC board is actively interviewing candidates for Executive Director, hoping to have someone on board in October. Board is also seeking to add members with fundraising experience. Board President is Andrew Magoun, Vice President is Kate Malin.

### **Lincoln Park Fountain**

Extended Lincoln Park Fountain run times to increase public enjoyment of the newly restored fountain. Previously, the fountain was running for 2.5 hours during three different periods in morning, afternoon and night. Now we will have two 3-hour running periods in morning and afternoon, and a 4 hour run period in the evening. Water expenditures were under budget in the past, so this should not have a major impact on the budget.

### **Instagram Scavenger Hunt**

Initiated instagram parks scavenger hunt in Portland Parks. Participants get clues through our Parks, Recreation and Facilities Instagram account, then race to various Parks to retrieve a toy lobster that has been hidden. The first to find the lobster receives comp tickets to concerts at Maine State Pier and Merrill Auditorium. Sign up at <https://www.instagram.com/portlandmepf/>

### **Park Signs**

- Large Park entrance signs to be installed at Payson, Lincoln Park, Riverton Trolley Park, Back Cove, Dougherty Field in September.
- Small park signs (pedestrian size) to be installed in 15+ parks in September/October.

### **MDOT Coordination**

Working with MDOT on repairs to fences along Tukey's Bridge and Dougherty Field.

### **Pianos in the Squares**

Successful first season of Pianos in the Squares. Pianos were donated and tuned, and the Parks Division installed them on dollies, had custom covers made, and transported to Monument, Congress, Longfellow and Bramhall Squares. There, they were left in the square for the public to play. Local



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businesses were recruited to adopt the pianos and keep them out of the elements at night. Pianos were out for the month of July and part of August.

### **Negative and Illegal Activity in Parks**

Convened meeting of Parks Staff, Police, TIQA Cafe, Friends of Deering Oaks, and Social Service providers to discuss homeless encampments, drinking, drug use in Deering Oaks Park. Increasing Park Ranger and Police patrols of these public spaces to decrease amount of public drinking, drug use, defecation, urination, etc...

### **"A Walk In the Park" Series**

Good attendance at bike rides and tours in Parks as part of our Walk In the Park series. Upcoming trips include a Peaks Island Bike Tour and City Tree Bus Tour. More info at:

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1990/A-Walk-In-The-Park-Tours-and-Talks>