

LYNNWOOD PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
September 9, 2020
Via Zoom

10. Call to Order – 6:04 pm.

20. Roll Call

Boardmember Gladysz
Boardmember Hernandez

Director Sordel
Deputy Director Olson
Park Superintendent Peterson
Administrative Assistant Flesher

30. Approval of Minutes – August 5, 2020. Approved.

40. Written Communications – None.

50. Public Comments – Ms. Whitney Stohr was in attendance. A Lynnwood resident, she is an advocate for community livability, including parks. She and her family are in local parks almost every day. Her son is in a wheelchair and there are many parks he cannot fully use without adaptive play elements, ramps, paved paths to every play area, and ground cover installed with wheelchair accessibility in mind. Most of them don't allow for that type of accessibility, and the parks don't fully serve youth with disabilities. She understands the budget challenges, but as a mother of a child with a disability, she is committed to promoting inclusion and wanted to share her story. She asked the Board to keep kids like her son in mind when there is an opportunity to do so. Director Sordel thanked Ms. Stohr for her comments. They are very much in alignment with staff's thinking.

60. Comments from Boardmembers

Boardmember Gladysz thanked Ms. Stohr for sharing her story. It is great to hear real stories that are impactful. It is definitely something he'll keep in mind in the future. Boardmember Hernandez echoed those sentiments. She noted that this is a topic that comes up and is often considered by the Board and staff.

70. Resolutions and Other Business.

70.1 October Meeting Time. The Board discussed changing the October meeting time to 6:00pm. *Boardmember Hernandez, seconded by Boardmember Gladysz, moved to start the October 7 meeting at 6:00pm. Motion approved.*

80. Staff Reports.

80.1 Parks Report – Issues and Challenges. Superintendent Peterson was in attendance to provide a report on our parks and park issues in lieu of a tour of parks this summer.

Superintendent Peterson reported that he wanted to provide a snapshot of the reality we're dealing with this biennium and some of the challenges we have coming up in the next biennium.

The 2016-2025 PARC Plan includes a lot of information about asset management and deferred maintenance in parks. It has acted as a playbook over the last four years in putting together a workplan and budget for parks. The deferred maintenance

workplan has focused on replacing older playgrounds, pathway and trail maintenance and replacement of park furnishings.

Playground replacements in 2019-2020 included a new playground at Heritage Park with an accessible pathway and replacement of playgrounds at Spruce Park and Lynndale Skate Park. Upcoming replacements include South Lynnwood Park, Pioneer Park, Meadowdale Playfields (playground over 30 years old) and Maple Mini Park. We want our playgrounds to appeal to all kinds of users rather than going with just one standard. Swings are popular at any park.

Boardmember Hernandez suggested showing a chart including the age of the various playgrounds to illustrate the need for replacements. Superintendent Peterson replied that he does have a chart that could be included in a presentation. Deputy Director Olson noted that we have been using deferred maintenance funding for one playground replacement each year. We have to request this funding again in 2021-2022. It is a high priority for us.

Pathway and trail work has included major asphalt renovations this year with repair of root/crack upheaves at Lynndale Park, Pioneer Park, Scriber Lake Park, South Lynnwood Park, Scriber Creek Park and targeted segments of Interurban Trail. Upcoming projects will include South Lynnwood Park, North Lynnwood Park, Spruce Park, and Heritage Park; sealcoating parking lots; and gravel replacement on trails. Director Sordel noted that the City's parks crews have gained the expertise to do this work in-house. Superintendent Peterson highlighted specific improvements at the Scriber Lake Park entrance, a collaboration with Public Works.

Superintendent Peterson noted that furnishings in parks are actually pretty expensive. His staff completed a major overhaul of picnic tables in 2019 with board and hardware replacements. He purchased a stock of 55-gallon garbage cans. In 2020 all park rules signs were replaced. Upcoming work will include bench replacement and memorial benches, barbecues (ADA upgrades), trash receptacles, gravel pads, and composite tables (ADA upgrades). We have an ADA assessment for every park so we're always working on the items that need to be upgraded. Accessibility and inclusion is something we always look at.

Boardmember Hernandez about the current status of the 2019-2020 budget for this work. Deputy Director Olson noted that Superintendent Peterson has done a good job programming all of the dollars we had for deferred maintenance and ADA improvements. Almost all of it has been spent and there are a few more projects to be completed before the end of the year. Director Sordel reiterated the importance of maintaining this funding in. Boardmember Hernandez noted that the presentation highlights that the money has been well-spent and that there is still much more to do. Deputy Director Olson reported that, in 2015, the plan showed a \$3 million deferred maintenance backlog, and the ADA assessment includes an additional list of compliance issues. This funding helps us eat away at the backlog. Superintendent Peterson stated that the deferred maintenance funding has been imperative to getting this work done.

Superintendent Peterson highlighted some systemwide improvements including park entrance signage, mulching of landscape beds, door lock repair and replacement and playground surfacing. Up next are some additional signs and irrigation controller replacement.

ADA upgrades have been completed at Meadowdale Playfields restrooms, system-wide grab bars, mirrors, toilet paper dispensers and other compliance issues, and South Lynnwood Park restroom. Upcoming improvements will include South Lynnwood Park, Skate Park Entrance and Wilcox restroom entrance improvement.

ADA transition planning is a big part of the work we're doing right now. In 2018 the ADA Facility Assessment Report was done for all City facilities and properties. Deferred maintenance is a good tool to help us meet the standards. The work is ongoing. Universal Design is something that goes into all new facilities to be designed with no barriers. Deputy Director Olson mentioned that the draft Citywide ADA Transition Plan will go out for public comment/public review with approval anticipated in late fall or early winter.. Boardmember Hernandez asked about funding for that work. We got started on our ADA issues four years ago and are committed to continuing to work away at those items. The public comment will help determine priority issues, parks, or types of updates that are most needed by current community members. Director Sordel noted that a briefing to City Council on the ADA Transition Plan would be held on September 21.

Superintendent discussed some of the issues that impact operations in the field. Necessary work includes public safety and risk management issues, emergency repairs and routine maintenance (often takes a back seat). Graffiti and property damage have been regular occurrences in many of our parks, particularly in 2020. We aim for a 24-hour response time, which means we alter plans for other projects and maintenance. Boardmember Gladysz asked about installing security cameras or signage. Superintendent Peterson replied that we have utilized cameras for illegal dumping and had cameras at the Skate Park. It was a lot of work to manage and maintain and never seemed to provide helpful information.

Boardmember Hernandez mentioned a program in Everett where people came in and did graffiti art for a competition. She asked if there might be something like that available to them. Park Superintendent reported that none of the graffiti he sees is anything that would be considered art. Deputy Director Olson noted Ms. Stohr asked if the City has a mural program that could cover some of the empty spaces. The Arts Commission is dipping their toes into the world of murals and there is a beautiful mural planned at South Lynnwood Park on a restroom wall. That might be a potential solution for some places. Superintendent Peterson reported that since a mural had been installed in the Interurban tunnel, it had not been graffitied. Boardmember Hernandez suggested that it's important for Council to know how much work all of this is. Deputy Director Olson noted that it is a phenomenal level of service to deal with these items within 24 hours.

Other major challenges include homeless activity and illegal dumping in the park system.

Superintendent Peterson highlighted impacts of Covid-19 on staff, including additional safety measures, management of closures and messaging, additional reporting, increase in cleaning frequency, more frequent vandalism and increased customer complaints.

An example of new/changing responsibilities is maintenance of parking strip and new street trees on 36th Avenue. This involves 125 trees that require care and watering and mowing and trimming of the parking strip. Boardmember Hernandez asked if Public

Works maintains some of this. Superintendent Peterson replied that Public Works maintains curbs, cracks, streets and sidewalks. Park crews do landscape and formalized vegetation management.

Additional responsibilities coming in 2021 will include Heritage Park Water Tower Maintenance, utility cost, inspection and recertifications; South Lynnwood Park increased maintenance, utility cost, specialized turf repair, and additional picnic shelter operation; and continuing deferred maintenance and ADA projects (subject to funding). And, looking into the future work will also include 196th street widening (median landscaping and street trees), Sound Transit station, Poplar Way extension bridge and Beech Road improvement.

Superintendent Peterson highlighted the following issues in 2021-2022.

Reductions in Service:

- Reduced response time for graffiti removal
- Reduced mowing frequency
- Reductions seasonal floral plantings
- No season lighting
- Reduces level of service with expanded areas of responsibility
- Reduced frequency of monitoring open space
- Reduced watering times on formal lawns and landscaping
- Reduction of 2 part-time positions
- Elimination of funding for replacement equipment

Budget Drivers:

- Fleet charges
- Medical costs
- Utility costs
- Staffing costs (union contract)
- Additional FTE

Superintendent Peterson noted that he has had to reduce a little bit everywhere with the tremendous responsibilities his team has taken on. Boardmember Hernandez suggested it is important to add the explanation to make clear that there is an overall system-wide impact.

The one additional FTE proposed in 2021-2022 is a result of reductions made in other areas of the department in order to fund this critical position.

Boardmember Gladysz thanked Superintendent Peterson for his hard work.

Boardmember Hernandez noted that it is obvious he takes pride in his work and in what he is providing for the community. Superintendent Peterson looks forward to an actual tour again next summer.

80.2 Staff Report. A written report was provided. Public hearings on the budget will take place September 28 and November 9. Park user surveys will remain open through October.

90. Messages from the City Council. None.

100. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.