



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES JULY 21, 2016

## **Call To Order:**

Chair Poor called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

## **Roll Call:**

Chair Poor, Council Liaison Sanderson, Trustee Christy, Trustee Westberg, Trustee Olson, and Trustee Hildebrandt were present. Trustee Newman was absent.

## **Staff Present:**

Paul West, Park Operations Superintendent  
Alaine Sommargren, Natural Resources Manager

## **Minutes:**

It was moved by Trustee Westberg, seconded by Trustee Christy, to:

**Approve the minutes of May 19, 2016.**

Motion passed 6-0.

## **Public Appearances:**

Marie Bender, 7890 81<sup>st</sup> Place SE

Ms. Bender provided suggestions regarding the off-leash dog public education signs. She presented her comments in written form which were provided to the board. She expressed her support for the public education effort and provided suggestions for sign locations and content. She recommended that ball throwing not be allowed in the park, since dogs running after balls are more likely to be involved in adverse person/dog interactions. She also recommended that the city install a four foot fence to address continued concerns raised by the private homeowners on the north perimeter.

## **Regular Business:**

### **(I) Annual Election of Officers – Chair Poor**

Board Chair: Trustee Westberg nominated Chair Poor to continue with her service as board Chair for one more year. Chair Poor accepted the nomination. Motion passed 6-0.

Vice Chair: Trustee Christy nominated Trustee Westberg. Trustee Westberg accepted the nomination. Motion passed 6-0.

Secretary: Chair Poor nominated Trustee Christy. Trustee Christy accepted the nomination. Motion passed 6-0.

### **(II) Off-leash dog education – Paul West**

Paul West noted that the staff integrated community feedback and OSCT discussion in its work on this issue. The staff have been working on the Tier 1 level effort focused on public education

as directed by the OSCT board at the May meeting. Staff will be developing a brochure to provide clarity on resources already available to dog owners as relates to off leash areas and clarify the existing animal code.

Natural Resources staff developed draft park signs for review at the meeting. Paul presented the examples of two draft signs, one for the NW quadrant and NE quadrant where dogs are supposed to be on leash as all times. The first titled "Share the Trail" – includes direction from the existing animal code, as well as recommended courtesies based on public feedback and restoration professionals doing work in the park such as leashing your dog and keeping dogs on trails.

The third component of Tier 1 recommendations is to promote self-policing among the community. Staff spoke with our information manager about utilizing social media. Staff can provide posts to the moderator of the Pioneer Unleashed Facebook group as a way to share information. Lastly, staff can also collaborate with Community Police Officer Anna Ormsby to give a presentation to the community. Anna Ormsby would appreciate more feedback from Parks staff. Officer Ormsby relayed to our staff that she gives first-time offenders a warning, but does not issue citations very often due to the infrequency with which she encounters a second-time offender. This doesn't mean people are not reoffending, but the likelihood of encountering someone a second time is rare in her experience.

#### Trust Discussion:

Trustee Westberg asked whether it would help to ask the Facebook group to form an informal advisory committee. He noted that if only 5 or 6 people give feedback, does that represent the group as a whole who may or may not comment? Chair Poor added that there are a number of people who are not on Facebook. She suggested that there be a city website where people could give feedback instead that might draw from a broader cross section of park users. Paul suggested posting a temporary draft sign with a QR Code that would link to a page where people could give comments. This would be in addition to posting on the Pioneer Unleashed page and might capture a broader cross section of voices.

Chair Poor asked for staff feedback regarding the fencing suggestion raised by Ms. Bender. Paul noted that staff is not in favor of fencing the north perimeter of the park due to the extent (1/4 mile) and expense of the fence to the City. Private property owners have the option to fence their own property. This would be a huge project involving negotiations with about 15 neighbors, some of whom do not want a fence in their backyard.

Chair Poor asked for feedback on the suggested annual review/ staff check-in to the Trust Board on dog leash issues. Vice Chair Westberg clarified that staff would be asked to report on the impact of all users to park natural resources, not just dogs. Paul noted that, to date, staff has not done this in a quantitative way. He noted that this task would be in keeping with the by-laws of the park. There are survey plots in the park that were used for the Forest Health Survey and the 10-year Update to the Open Space Plan which are used to measure ecological conditions over time in the park. Elaine added that these plots may not capture the kind of information the board is looking for in terms of impact to restoration sites by different park users. Re-surveying permanent plots is time-intensive, costly, and is not likely something we could do on an annual basis. A different set of data is likely needed to identify user-types and impacts. Trustee Westberg noted that this was in the idea phase and needs more pursuing.

#### *Trustee feedback on brochure:*

All agreed that the brochure is a very good idea and would like it to have a positive tone to it and outline different parks and activities for different needs. Secretary Christy reiterated the importance of defining voice and signal control to the public. All agreed that citing the code is not enough.

#### *Trustee feedback regarding sample trail signs:*

Trustee Hildebrandt suggested the following edits: (1) Instead of "Share the Trail," the title of the sign should be directed at dog owners specifically, (2) signs pertain to all the trails not just the perimeter trail and would like to strike the first sentence of sign, and (3) the bullet stating "keep

dogs on trail” is too directive, unrealistic and goes counter to the idea of having your dog off leash.

Secretary Christy stated that the Trust is tasked with protecting the resource and dogs should be discouraged from chasing wildlife. Trustees discussed softening this language and including a statement about protecting native plants and wildlife or “to minimize off trail damage.” Trustee Sanderson suggested adding symbols on the sign and not just words. He is concerned about the bullet point “leash your dog if asked to do so” and believes it welcomes conflict. Trustees discussed the dynamics of park-user interactions related to leashed and unleashed dogs and how to encourage positive dialogue and conduct.

Staff noted that the perimeter trail differs from the interior trails in that it is flat, allowing access to users with disabilities. It is identified as an ‘accessible trail’ in the park master plan. Trustees suggested a change to the language, such as “Prepare to leash your dog if necessary.” Trustees agreed to revisit specific language.

Trustees discussed the draft sign for the NE Quadrant and noted that the text should not lead with the city ordinance number. Trustee Westberg noted that the sign should also include a statement about why dogs are not allowed off-leash in this quadrant – because this is an ecologically sensitive area. Staff agreed this will be integrated into the second draft of the sign.

*Trustee feedback regarding Promoting self-policing with community groups:*

Trustees agreed that they would like to see this move forward, but asked if scheduling meet ups would be a staffing issue. Paul noted that this could be done periodically in conjunction with Officer Ormsby.

There were no additional comments about the final tier one recommendations.

(III) Annual herbicide report – Alaine Sommargren

The annual report is required via the Pioneer Park Herbicide Protocol adopted in 2010. The staff report was created by Kim Frappier, who could not attend the meeting. The staff report includes an outline of work conducted in 2015, proposed work for 2016, and maps of the populations. Alaine provided background information on yellow archangel and the populations being treated. She also noted the new knotweed population that has been mapped which was treated in 2014. In 2015, the population was already dead, but not certain why. Staff will continue to monitor and treat this population.

Invasive tree treatment: Alaine discussed the change in method used for treating invasive trees such as cherry laurel and English holly. Staff have moved from frilling to EZ-Ject Copperhead shells to treat invasive trees. This is not a method that was approved in the 2010 Pioneer Park Herbicide protocol. She explained that The EZ-Ject lance method has been found to be more effective. This is based on a study that Mercer Island Natural Resources was a part of with King County. Staff will provide a full report on the EZ-Ject lance method at the next meeting in order to request an amendment to the Herbicide Protocol.

Trustee Sanderson asked question about the public’s concerns over glyphosate/ Roundup use. Paul explained that Roundup is the most overused herbicide in our agricultural and cultural lands and the public is right to be concerned about its use in that context. Paul noted, however, that our Natural Resources program uses a very small amount of glyphosate for the land area we manage, that we need to look at the tradeoffs and the impacts that manual/mechanical removal can sometimes have on the environment, given the extent of our invasive species populations. Paul explained that the Natural Resources program only uses aquatic formulations that are deemed safe for amphibians. Staff noted that the program seeks to minimize herbicide use and approaches this conservatively.

(IV) Updated Park Map – Alaine Sommargren

Alaine presented the new draft park maps developed by Deborah Alexander and noted that kiosk map signs are due for updates. She noted that the City is in the process of updating style standards for all Parks’ signs. The legends and colors have been updated. This is an in-house

first draft.

*Trustee feedback on new park signs:*

Trustee Westberg requested that bullet number two under rules should include “please stay on trails.” Chair Poor raised question about dog waste bags on East Mercer Way and the bench that needs to be added off Mercer Way before the bridge. Paul suggested that the roadways be darkened so they are more recognizable and adding a “you are here” feature. Staff recommended that the seasonal water courses be removed. Trustees and staff discussed overall layout, titles, legend, etc. Trustees suggested including “Engstrom Open Space” in smaller letters under main “Pioneer Park” title.

(V) Juanita Woods Field Trip – Alaine Sommargren

Alaine gave a brief explanation of tree root diseases in Pioneer Park and Staff’s efforts to research and manage these diseases. In 2011, Alaine and Paul consulted with the professionals who developed a strategy at Juanita Woodlands in Kirkland, where root diseases are also prevalent. Contractors performed micro-stumping on this property in an attempt to contain the root rot pockets and keep other trees from being affected. Alaine described the method of micro-stumping. She suggested a field trip to Juanita Woodlands so Trustees can see an example of a forest where this was used and how the forest recovered from this treatment. Alaine will send out a Doodle poll to schedule the field trip.

(VI) Quadrant Reports – Trustees

*NW Quadrant – Trustee Westberg*

Removed signs regarding a lost dog that has been found. He noted that some dog owners are not removing dog waste. There are no signs on the SW entrance of the park where people park – that it is tucked around the corner and we should consider relocating that sign. The large kiosk on 68<sup>th</sup> and Island Crest Way has a place for people to post public notices on the back, but lately things have been posting things on the front with City notices. Trustees note that they move these when visiting the park.

*NE and SE Quadrants*

No report

(VII) Remote meeting attendance - Trustees

Alaine spoke with the City Clerk, Ali Spietz, who explained that if Trustees phone into an OSCT meeting, they are considered part of the quorum. Vice Chair Westberg expressed his support for remote/ phone-in participation and noted that the Bylaws should be changed to reflect this. Trustees agreed. Paul suggested we come back next meeting with language for the Bylaws.

(VIII) Next Meeting – Chair

The next meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2016  
Trustee Westberg will not be able to attend the September meeting.

**Adjournment:** 7:36 pm

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Geraldine Poor, Chair

Attest:

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Kim Frappier, Scribe