



OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD & PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION JOINT MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 19, 2019

Call to Order:

Chair Bender called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM

Roll Call:

Open Space Conservancy Trust (OSCT) Board members present included Chair Marie Bender, Vice Chair Thomas Hildebrandt, Secretary Craig Olson, Trustee Carol Lynn Berseth, and Trustee Geraldine Poor. Council Liaison David Wisenteiner was absent.

Parks and Recreation Commission members present included Chair Rory Westberg, Vice Chair Jodi McCarthy, Commissioner Don Cohen, and Commissioner Lyn Gualtieri. Commissioners Amy Richter, Sara Berkenwald, and Kirk Robinson were absent.

Staff present were Ryan Daly, Interim Parks and Recreation Director, Alaine Sommargren, Interim Parks Operations Manager, and Kim Frappier, Natural Resources Specialist.

Minutes:

Secretary Olson motioned and Vice Chair Hildebrandt seconded to approve the July minutes.

Motion passed: 5-0.

Public Appearances:

There were no public appearances.

Regular Business:

(I) Recognition of Rory Westberg, outgoing OSCT Board Chair

Chair Bender shared remarks on Rory Westberg's service on the OSCT Board and thanked him for his service.

(II) Overview of the Parks and Recreation Commission and OSCT Board

Commissioner Westberg provided an overview of the Parks and Recreation Commission. He noted that the primary purpose is to be the eyes and ears of the Mercer Island community, be a conduit to share ideas, and make policy recommendations to City Council. The first important project will be to contribute to the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.

Park Operations Manager Sommargren presented the history and mission of the OSCT Board and the plans that guide the work of the Open Space Conservancy Trust Board.

(III) Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS) Plan Overview & Timeline

Interim Director Daly provided an overview of the purpose of and process for developing the PROS plan. The Plan is vetted by the public and serves as a guiding document for the Parks and Recreation Department's work. The Plan also improves the City's eligibility for grant funding.

(IV) Quadrant Reports

NW Quadrant: Trustee Berseth

Trustees discussed concerns over the dogs digging holes under the Don Cohen bench and the impacts to the fenced off area adjacent to the bench. Staff reported that park users continue to vandalize the fence, remove signage, and allow dogs to use as an off-leash dog area. The impacted area continues to increase, and dogs are digging holes next to native vegetation. Trustees suggested using hardware cloth under the Don Cohen bench.

Vice Chair Hildebrandt reported that the Hatheway Bench restoration is on hold because the Eagle Scout hasn't submitted a plan yet.

NE Quadrant: Trustee Poor and Trustee Bender

Trustees noted that the trail clean up went well.

SE Quadrant: Secretary Hildebrandt and Trustee Olson

Trustees reported on the improved trail conditions.

Trustees inquired into the purpose of white spray paint on roots within trails. Interim Park Operations Manager Sommargren explained the purpose is to alert walkers to roots in the trail for their safety.

(V) Other business

Trustees requested more information about the sword fern decline at Seward Park. Natural Resources Specialist Frappier explained that she serves on the Sword Fern Decline Working Group, primarily to stay abreast of new developments. This group is primarily focused on Seward Park, but land managers from other jurisdictions also participate. She explained that we have two sites with areas of die-off that the Natural Resources Program is monitoring.

Trustees raised a concern about commercial activities going on in Pioneer Park. Trustees observed yoga and exercise classes being led in the parks by outside groups, which is against City policy.

Trustees raised concern over park visitors parking above the curb on 84th Avenue SE. Drivers keep pushing further into the Park, impacting vegetation. Trustees inquired whether there is a way to get logs to delineate the parking area off the street. Interim Park Operations Manager Sommargren will put this on a future agenda.

Trustees asked why the Pumpkin Walk event was moved from Pioneer Park to Luther Burbank Park. Interim Park Operations Manager Sommargren provided more information on the event and explained that they needed a park that had space for food trucks and a larger gathering space with more lighting.

(VI) Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 21, 2019.

Adjournment: 7:20 PM

Marie Bender, Chair

Attest:

Kim Frappier, Scribe