



PIERCE COUNTY PARKS

Citizens' Advisory Board

May 17, 2022

Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Tom Utterback, Chair Pro Tem, at 6:03 p.m. via Zoom Webinar and in person at the ESB in University Place. A quorum was present. Chair notes that this is an open meeting and is being recorded.

ROLL CALL:

CAB Members present: Dean Absher, Derek Barry, Robert Buck, Joan Cross, Angela Gallardo, Tom Utterback, Kendra Nguyen, Dean Burke

Staff members present: Roxanne Miles, Kimberly Freeman, Kyle Wintermute, Cheryl Saltzman

CAB Member(s) absent: Caleb Heimlich (excused), Aaron Bert (excused), Mary Brickle (excused)

MINUTES APPROVAL: Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes from Special Session meeting on the Carbon River Corridor. Board members approved the minutes of April 26, 2022.

Motion (Dean Absher) to approve minutes as presented, and seconded (Angela Gallardo). Minutes adopted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Roxanne

Roxanne discussed the Title 14 update following Tiffany Odell's May 16th presentation to the Community Development Community. The intent of the presentation was to satisfy some Council interests prior to June 7 Council meeting. Issues/concerns are as follows:

- Use of charcoal briquettes/personal grills at Parks properties
 - Title 14 currently bans the use of any grills fueled by anything other than propane tanks
 - Safety issue with briquettes being disposed of or transported while still hot
- Trail speeds for cyclists currently 10 mph, and being increased to 15 mph in Title 14, but some want it higher than 15 on regional trails.
 - Trails are multi-modal, meaning there are walkers, strollers and pets on the trails – higher speeds could reduce reaction time and put public risk. Visibility and disruptions are varied throughout the trail system.
 - Higher speeds could increase commuter use to transportation standard, bringing Recreational Immunity into question.
- Drones requiring a permit due to privacy issues and Federal regulations governing drones
 - Some members want to remove restrictions on drones as well as remote-controlled devices that travel at high speeds

Angela: I think it's smart to have a permit process with drones because drones could add more liability to the County if someone isn't properly licensed, if something bad were to come of it.

Roxanne: The majority of Council was supportive of the Title 14 language, but the discussion gave them pause. You are gaining awareness because you are members of the Advisory Board, and if you want to listen in or speak your personal opinion during the June 7th Council meeting, you could choose to do so. The Chair could attend to present the position that you all jointly

came to when you passed your recommendation to adopt Title 14, if that is desired.

A. Presentations

1. Capital update including grants – Kimberly Freeman

Kimberly reviewed the attached PowerPoint slide deck presenting updates for capital projects, including what we are currently working on and what is on deck for future projects.

Joan Cross asked for clarification of one of the grant funders, WWRP - Washington Wildlife Recreation Program

Roxanne added that some of the projects are awaiting additional project manager staff hires. We are also dealing with bidding climates and supply chain issues which will impact cost and timing of projects.

Roxanne also mentioned to Dean Burke that in the design category are a couple master plans, Plateau and Gonyea, and the Waller Road Feasibility Study. Waller Road is one location that Riverside BMX is interested in. She included that understanding the relationships we have with different partners when it comes to things like disc golf or BMX is an important place for us to finish putting recommendations around the Special Use policy recommendations.

Dean Burke shared appreciation for the detail.

2. Special Use Agreements – Kyle Wintermute

Kyle shared the Pierce County Parks and Recreation Special Use Agreement Matrix (attached) and discussed current and future use or activities and programming that has a unique or nontraditional recreation attribute or facility or equipment requirement that doesn't currently exist in our park system.

Kyle also discussed different agreements: lease (exclusive use of property), concessionaire (no property interest), professional or personal service, management, county government/interlocal, facility use, park host, stewardship, partner memorandum, and which agreements are best used or required to be used in different situations.

Roxanne added that this matrix is an important tool for our special use policy. Some key features of this matrix:

- Every relationship Parks has must fit into one of these categories, and are tied to the following questions:
 - Who owns the liability?
 - Who is bringing capital to the table?
 - Investing public dollars must not turn into gifting public funds for private profit
 - How much resource should be brought to table to operate?
 - County-owned/operated properties are bound by procurement rules and labor bargaining agreements
 - Example: Disc golf supporters want to install baskets, but don't want restroom or facility access responsibilities.
 - We would have to clearly differentiate the disc golf partner's role in maintaining baskets from other park maintenance which could interfere with bargaining agreement
 - Tournaments would give proponents more exclusive rights or profits, and we have to defend this with the appropriate terms of use.

- We continue to need feedback to help set parameters around types of return or relationships possible under the various scenarios.
- What is the public/private partnership with different entities especially when there are nonprofit advocates from mountain bike and disc golf groups, for example.
 - These types of groups can potentially help us do some cool stuff that we don't have in-house expertise to maintain, but they don't have infrastructure to assume all the accompanying liability
- There is an RCW that limits jurisdictions, public bodies from contracting with nonprofit groups to do private maintenance of facilities, limited to \$25,000/year, and there's a caveat that the nonprofit operator has to prove they are bringing 2-3 times as much as the revenue that they're getting to do it. Associations are talking about pursuing an increase to this.
- ACTIONS: Be looking for an update to the draft policy at future meetings that incorporates the importance of this agreement matrix.

3. Parks and Recreation SEEK Scholarship - Roxanne:

Roxanne presented an overview of the SEEK scholarship program (presentation attached) and shared that last year we had the huge benefit of some American Rescue Plan Act funding supported Kids Need Play Program, which served 12-13,000 kids with a 70-90% discount on camps, which got kids out and active over those 8 weeks. That opportunity sparked interest to continue to do something for kids. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) got a ten-million-dollar award for this year and wanted to set up a grant program to foster summer enrichment. Summer enrichment education is what SEEK stands for. The County, along with other jurisdictions, applied for the OSPI grant, and are setting up a scholarship program which is active right now for this summer.

Roxanne asked the Board to give input on the following questions:

- Do you think we should be trying to scale this up and offer a full-service scholarship program? Should we only do so if we're able to secure grant fund and bring in private resources to do it?
- Do you think we should limit the parties to just youth, or persons with disabilities, or seniors, and do it on a more restricted scale that goes beyond just a household income qualification?
- Is it worth doing this even if we end up having to have other people pay more for the rest of the services we offer to generate funds to offset reduced fees and charges?

Derek Barry: I think it's a great opportunity. I have concerns with the cost of bringing on a staff member to take \$100,000 when there's only \$150,000 left for the scholarship. That might be where the grant or other opportunities for additional revenue might help, but we should look into moving forward with it.

Rob: The \$300, where did that figure come from? If we dropped that to \$200, we could stretch it a lot further. Even \$200 towards a program is quite a bit.

Roxanne: It is possible to lower the cost, some may want it raised or have it based on the size of the family, though. Some camps are \$300 a week, so 50% is \$150. We benchmarked that against other agencies. It's not necessarily that it's the right amount, but it is what

people have been able to fund raise and comfortably carve out of their budget to serve some need. Lower amount could serve more people versus a higher amount.

Rob: Start low and you can choose to raise it as you have capacity versus have to reel something back.

Joan: As I heard tonight, I think it's a wonderful program, but my suggestion would be to start slow. You've got grants and work on that, and I think this is something that the community would help support. I would start slow and build on it.

Roxanne: Should we only grow it at the pace that private dollars can be raised? Who will raise the money?

Tom: Angela texted a comment about private purveyors being involved, camp organizers?

Angela: It seems like private companies that specialize in things like BMX and some of those other things you've talked about tonight would be excited to sponsor things like this, so that might be another opportunity to get some funding.

Tom: An important point you made at the beginning about it's a little slow going on trying to reach the kids for this summer – my wife works at a Title 1 at Bethel district, and they have strong social services. Are you working with school districts to get the word out to these target populations?

Roxanne: Yes, we are. Between now and June 1, a lot of school counselors and newspapers start promoting summer programs. We had to work out some of the technical end of applying the scholarship funding, so it wasn't until May 1 that we had it ready to go live. Having to set up a new program didn't give us as much lead time as we would have liked.

Tom: Everyone likes things that are grant funded, and aside from the OA2 that you'd look to for processing applications, , does this add other costs with trying to ramp up this program? Would this add extra layers to your grant funding staff capabilities by trying to keep this going in addition to all the other grants of different types that you're usually seeking?

Roxanne: We don't have specific staff that writes grants, it's on the operating team or capital team to do that. There is also a definitive number of foundations in Pierce County. We have gotten funding support for our specialized recreation program for example, or their special events. We must be conscientious that while this may be very appealing, do they may choose to fund this and not fund a Fantasy Lights sponsorship, per se. We'd also have to look at the potential that we don't bring in more private funds but divert some that we already have to cover scholarships if we don't raise our target. To launch any program for consistency, even if we make every attempt to attract private funding, we may need to underwrite it with some degree of public funding in order to go beyond these specific groups (youth summer camp and specialized recreation).

Dean: I think it's a great program. I have the same concerns regarding the FTE costs being almost over or over half of what's available. Is there any other way to share the FTE with another program? Because once you put an FTE, if it's grant funded, when the grant dries up you either have to get rid of someone or find them another place, and people don't like to take those positions very often. It's hard to get those positions filled. Is there bandwidth somewhere else that you could combine with someone else that's already doing that kind of work? Maybe someone outside of Parks that already processes income data, , like the homeless programs? The State has like five different agencies that gather the same data, and the County has the same information that their application could just go and be granted by someone who already does that and maybe free up that FTE money? Just some thoughts of working with another agency.

There are other programs that are more generously funded than Parks are for income evaluations, and they might be able to shave off part of an FTE to help. Right now, you have low numbers, but if you were to ramp up to where it would require an FTE, then maybe that might be an answer to put more money back to the people who really need it. That's my only concern.

Roxanne: Human Services processes some degree of family support, so we can find out if they have an income verification system already in place. We have not evaluated how much staff time is needed yet, and as it is dependent on size and scale, we just acknowledged that if a program is launched, somebody processing applications and pursuing grants, whether it's an inside or outside organization, is going to have to be evaluated.

Kendra: I work for a nonprofit and sometimes you have to stretch where you can. I agree with the FTE – someone who is part-time. In nonprofits, we have part time employees dedicated to a certain thing, maybe someone who works like 25 hours a week to take something like this on.

Roxanne: We can definitely look at shared duties. It's just at this point, without knowing the size and scale, I don't have excess capacity. If we give it to someone, what are we taking away from them to free up time to do work on this? Is there a natural transition from when existing resources aren't enough? If there's a decision by Council to make this a significant program, we will have to get deeper into what the impact of that is.

Tom: Did you say this topic may come back for an update at some point?

Roxanne: In July when we meet, we'll actually have data on the SEEK program. We might have some sense about where we're at with the roll out for specialized recreation scholarships as well. The Council has asked for an update on low-income accessibility to programs, and we'll be able to share how these two very specific opportunities are going with them in October. That is when I expect any feedback or direction from them. It wouldn't surprise me if I didn't walk out of there with a request to send them a proposal for a full-scale scholarship program, but as of yet it has not been asked for. The way they couched it in their proviso was about wanting access to all programs for all qualifying individuals based on income.

Board Comments:

Tom: Aaron made a comment in an email that he was impressed with the Annual Report, and I share that too. The data that you compile for some of these metrics is amazing. I find it interesting to see how some of the participation and even cost recovery was being affected by the pandemic. You were having to think of that moment in time as well as plan for and protect longer-term goals. There's a lot there but it's well put together. Thank you.

Joan: I agree, it's put together very nice, and I just have one question for Roxanne or Kimberly. In Cross Park's income for their recreation, is the house income, the rent from the house, included in that?

Roxanne: Yes, it is. And for future reference, Kyle is the guru. He has set up and manages the data collection system, and then JJ, our new Business Manager helps do some of the analysis breakdown and we put some of this information on Open Pierce County. This report is the only one that gets into the site-specific detail that really helps us manage on the ground. The target is not 100% cost recovery across the board, these numbers only have real meaning when you're looking at trends of change and know that there is a target. The targets represent a blend of all the free public access that we want the site to offer, with the rentals, leases and paid experiences that come in at the other cost recovery levels, and lead to an overall performance for the site. The biggest change you'll see is registered

classes is still down a little, but sharply went up from 2020, so we're on a projectile to get back to 1M. Passive recreation and trail use continues to be very high, which feeds into the interest of doing more and more special interest activities out in our parks. The change that we made with the golf courses at a time where golf interest spiked upward because of the pandemic made it ideal to shift resources and put greater investment into the trails, in terms of park sales tax subsidy. Paula is great at capturing pictures that tell the story.

Tom: Any public comments?

No public comments.

Tom: Anything for the good of the order?

Roxanne: The work plan was sent with the agenda. For our next meeting, July 19th, the group had wanted to meet outdoors at a Frontier Shelter. The Public Meetings Act has mandated that Board meetings have a physical space, but there's also still interest in the online meetings. While we can meet in person at Frontier Shelter, it wouldn't allow for an online component. We can check on the Lodge at Frontier, or we can forgo that location and basically do the same thing we've done here tonight.

Tom: Would that latter option mean that nothing happens at Frontier Park or would it be entirely remote, or back at the ESB for whoever is there?

Roxanne: We'd set up the physical space here for anyone who wants to come, or for public who want to walk in, so we could do it the same way. We could check on the Lodge, but the Lodge has pretty robust programming, so I don't know that we could facilitate, and we definitely wouldn't have the big screen that we have here in this room if we went there.

Angela: This format works pretty well for me personally because I work remotely.

Joan: I like this way too.

Roxanne: Rob is good either way.

Tom: I see that September is Sprinker, do you anticipate that being a potential, or to be determined?

Roxanne: That can be determined. Sprinker has more potential because there is a large room, and they have a portable screen, so that allows for the people in the room to have better interaction with the virtual attendees.

Tom: It sounds as though there's no objection as far as staging the next meeting the same as this one, given the logistical limitations out at Frontier Shelter, so just communicate with us prior to July 19 on remote checking in for that.

D. Public Comments

No public comments.

Tom: Any final words before we adjourn? Seeing none, we will adjourn at this time. We will reconvene for the July 19th meeting.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, July 19th at ESB, and via Zoom

Chair Pro Tem asked if there were any objections to adjourning at this time, and seeing none, the meeting was adjourned.

MEETING ADJOURNED: The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.