

City of Renton

Board of Park Commissioners



Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2013

4:30 p.m. – City Hall – 7th Floor Conferencing Center

I. CALL TO ORDER

In Attendance

The following members were present:

Members: Cynthia Burns, Al Dieckman, Mike O'Donin, Larry Reymann,
Tim Searing, Sojin Thompson, Marlene Winter

Excused: Troy Wigestrund

Staff: Terry Higashiyama, Leslie Betlach, Sonja Mejlaender, Carrie L. Olson,
Wendy Kirchner, Kris Stimpson

Chair, Cynthia Burns, called the November 12, 2013, meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.
Roll call was taken.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mike O'Donin made a motion, seconded by Marlene Winter, to approve the agenda as presented. All were in favor, motion carried, the November 12, 2013, agenda was approved.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Larry Reymann requested one change to the meeting minutes from October; he was not present at the October 8, 2013, meeting (*he was listed as attending*). A motion was made by Larry Reymann, and seconded by Al Dieckman to approve the October 8, 2013, minutes as amended, all were in favor, motion carried. The minutes were approved.

IV. BOARD COMMUNICATION

Sojin Thompson provided a brief report on Renton Schools. He noted that Ed Crow, Hazen High School Assistant Principal was named state's Assistant Principal of the Year. The Renton Rotary provided more than 1,200 dictionaries to the 3rd graders. Sojin also noted that the Renton School District and the Renton Police Department partnered to create the "Adopt-A-School" Program. As part of the program, patrol officers spend more time at schools to make connections and create relationships with students and staff to help improve safety at the schools; such things like using the school parking lot to work on paperwork, monitoring traffic during high peak times, and working to build trust between youth and law enforcement.

Terry Higashiyama further explained that with the loss of the SRO Grant, the Mayor helped put together the "Adopt-A-School" Program.

Mike O'Donin reported on the last meeting of the City Center Planning Committee. There were 14 attendees present; and they reviewed mid-range goals. The majority of time was spent determining boundaries for the Renton Core. Moving forward the committee has decided to hold meetings every other month rather than quarterly.

Larry Reymann commented on the Cedar River Salmon Journey saying there was a 30% increase in the number of people visiting this year. There were sightings of Sockeye, Coho, and Chinook species. Larry also mentioned that there was a tree uprooted into the creek which could affect the habitat.

V. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

Terry announced that there will be a Library Update presented at the November 18, 5:30 p.m. Committee of the Whole meeting by the KCLS and City staff. Permits for the Cedar River Library should be obtained within the next couple weeks and permits for the Highlands Library the first part of December.

VI. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Briefing from Neighborhoods, Resources & Events Division

In Bonnie Rerecich's absence, Sonja Mejlaender facilitated a PowerPoint outlining the many programs that are brought to the public by the Neighborhoods, Resources & Events Division.

Sonja presented the Special Events and the Volunteer Program and talked about the many partnerships and how these make an impact on our programs.

Farmers Market

Carrie Olson commented on the Farmers Market for this year; noting that out of the 60 vendors that make up the market 47 were returning vendors. Special note and thanks went to the Piazza Renton primary volunteer group for all their contributions and support to make the Farmers Market a success. Carrie also mentioned the WIC program – they issue checks to those involved in the program that can only be used at the market. The Farmers Market is not just produce; there are also groups such as the Salvation Army, Noxious Weed, the Library-to-Go van is on-site for some market dates. Approximately 1,000 lbs. of food was donated to the food bank. Themes to incorporate healthy eating are incorporated as part of the market. On a closing note, Carrie thanked the committee members for attending the Farmers Market and encouraged them to feel free to email or call with any new opportunities for the market.

Special Events

Sonja Mejlaender presented additional information on the 4th of July Event. This was the 11th year for this event and it is the largest City Event with 20,000-25,000 patrons making their way through Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park during the one-day event. Sonja also talked about the Renton River Days Festival; noting this is the 28th year with special mention and thank you to Committee Member, Tim Searing who has been volunteering for 23 years on the Renton River Days Committee. Renton River Days is a 501C Non-Profit with 30+ volunteers on the committee along with all City departments involved in making this event an overall success.

Renton Sister Cities Association

Sonja provided information on the Sister Cities Program; noting that the two Sister Cities banded together in 2010 to form one group (Renton Sister Cities Association) which is more citizen driven than city staff. They are trying to organize a delegation trip to Nishiwaki, Japan for April 2014.

Neighborhood Program

Wendy Kirchner assisted in presenting an overview of the Neighborhood Program. This program helps to establish good communication between the City and residents and also between residents themselves. Neighborhoods apply to be officially “recognized” with the City which in turn allows them benefits such as: access to grant funding, neighborhood picnics, leadership workshops and training, volunteer City employee as a liaison, and opportunities to place neighborhood information on the City’s website and Channel 21. Wendy mentioned the new training program offered this year, “Renton Academy of City Services” and also made note of two upcoming training sessions:

Grant Workshop, City Hall – January 8, 2014

Neighbor to Neighbor Forum, Senior Center – February 8, 2014

Summer Lunch Program and Recreation Scholarship Program

Sonja continued with a brief overview of the Summer Lunch Program; a collaboration with the City of Renton, Renton School District, community non-profits, churches and apartment complexes. In 2013, over 18,000 lunches were served in 8 weeks at 17 sites. A new refrigeration unit was purchased by the School District this year to increase the number of sites that could be served.

Recreation Scholarship Program

Information on the Recreation Scholarship Program was also presented by Sonja noting that donations have decreased and demand for assistance has increased during the last year.

Marlene Winter questioned whether the City still had a sponsor for 4th of July Event. Sonja indicated that the YMCA is still sponsoring and it is becoming more challenging to find sponsors.

Terry Higashiyama thanked the staff for a great job on the presentation and noted that this Division, who help organize and maintain all of the programs, really contributes to the quality of life in the community.

VII. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Terry gave an update on Community Services staff that have been on leave and thanked Kris Stimpson for filling in as an interim for the Recreation Director. Our department has had a lot of transition in the last few months. The Aquatics/Recreation Coordinator position is currently open since Dave Perkins recently left. We are reviewing Parks organization after the retirement of John Slaney.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Leslie Betlach provided an update on Meadow Crest Playground. The project is progressing; the opening has been pushed to 2014 due to weather and survey topographic issues. Even though the construction has been delayed the relationship between the school and the architect is really good.

Terry Higashiyama distributed copies of the Benson Hill Community Plan to all interested members.

IX. UPCOMING EVENTS

The "Winter Blast" flyer was handed out to committee members; along with announcement of other special events and activities planned for November and

December. Kris Stimpson added that the Polar Bear Dip will take place again on January 1, 2014, at 11:00 a.m. and invited anyone to come and join in on the fun.

Terry Higashiyama asked the Park Board Members to please email her or Margie Beitner if they are planning to attend one of the upcoming events. She noted a couple things that will be covered at the January meeting: discussion of the Sunset Plan and goals for the upcoming year – create a new list and review the previous list of goals. Terry also announced there will be a social following the December 10, 2013, meeting at the Museum and spouses are invited.

Mike O'Donin asked about the lease at Carco Theatre and how things were going. Puget Sound Access (PSA) received a grant through King County to fund improvements at Carco Theatre, and as part of that grant there is a requirement to have more programs. Once improvements are completed the staff will schedule a tour.

X. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Marlene Winter and seconded by Larry Reymann to adjourn the meeting at 5:46 p.m. All were in favor, motion carried, meeting adjourned.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

DECEMBER 10, 2013, @ 4:30 P.M.

MUSEUM

Social following meeting – Spouses and Significant Others Invited