

GREENSPACES POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 26, 2004

Metro Regional Center, Room 501

Meeting Notes

Committee members present: Chair Jim Zehren, Ernie Drapela, Kim Gilmer, Steve Greagor, Faun Hosey, Esther Lev, Doug Neeley, Chris Noble, Mike Ragsdale, Tim Raphael, Zari Santner, Dick Schouten and Don Trotter. In attendance via speakerphone: Mike Houck (from Park City, Utah).

Committee member absent: John Griffiths. Chair Zehren read to the committee a note from Mr. Griffiths that a business trip prevented him from attending and that he regretted missing this first meeting of GPAC. He looks forward to attending future meetings.

Also present: Kelly Punteney, City of Vancouver/Clark County Parks & Recreation, Geoff Roach of Trust for Public Lands and Ellena Ochoa, citizen/Metro Parks volunteer

Metro elected official present: David Bragdon, Metro Council President

Metro Parks staff present: Nancy Chase, Jim Desmond, Mel Huie, Heather Kent, Ron Klein, Dan Kromer and Patricia Sullivan

Convene

The meeting was called to order by Jim Zehren, Chair, at 5:30 pm.

Welcome

David Bragdon, Metro Council President, welcomed the members of the newly appointed Greenspaces Policy Advisory Committee (GPAC). He spoke of being pleased to convene this group and of anticipating it helping move Metro Parks & Greenspaces Dept. (and parks, greenspaces and open spaces of the region, in general) to the threshold of some exciting undertakings. He explained choosing the people he nominated to positions on the committee because of their individual expertise, enthusiasm and advocacy for parks issues rather than their affiliation with any jurisdiction or organization. They are all citizens of the region whom he sees working together in that spirit.

Need for GPAC review of short-term funding proposal

Mr. Bragdon referred to previous work done by the Green Ribbon Committee in advising Metro Council concerning properties purchased through the 1995 bond measure. *The Executive Summary of the Green Ribbon Committee's 2001-2002 Report was included in the packet sent to committee members in preparation for this meeting and is part of the meeting record.*

In the upcoming year's budget (FY 04-05), Mr. Bragdon will propose to Metro Council an increase in the excise tax on solid waste to fund a portion of the projects recommended by the Green Ribbon Committee. As that debate continues over the next month, he asked for the committee's input on the proposed increase. There is a need for significant advocacy for the proposal as there will be a number of competing requests for funding.

Mr. Bragdon is calling for Metro to be very open as it re-defines its mission in this arena of parks and open spaces. He wants Metro and other providers to discard notions of competing proprietorship and instead to collaborate to better serve the citizens for whom they work. As he stated, citizens don't care who owns or manages the parks and open spaces; they care about adequate park services being provided and having an enjoyable experience at the various sites. This mindset will have revenue and operating implications and Mr. Bragdon would like to see the committee explore this issue.

Mr. Zehren agreed it would be beneficial for GPAC to weigh in on the proposal of the increase in excise tax, but felt it was important for this committee to first learn more specifics about its role and purpose before it takes any positions as a group. On the other hand, a number of people present have a great deal of knowledge about the subject matter and Mr. Zehren thought any input or support they might want to give individually would be valuable.

Mr. Bragdon explained the excise tax proposal is a work in progress; he will be back before the committee with more detail after meeting with the Council. He was seeking more to begin a dialogue with the committee than expecting an official position to be stated.

Introductions of committee members

The members of this newly appointed committee were invited to introduce themselves and, if applicable, to include information about the organization they are representing as well as give a brief summary of their connection to Oregon, to Metro and their involvement with parks in general. Mike Houck expressed his pleasure that Kelly Puntoney of City of Vancouver/Clark County Parks & Recreation was in attendance. Mr. Houck had hoped Southwest Washington would have a seat on GPAC. He added there is no regional system without the "other side of the river".

Committee Logistics

A roster of the committee members was distributed and revisions or corrections were solicited.

Mr. Zehren reviewed the purpose of GPAC as outlined on page 2 of Exhibit A of Ordinance No. 04-1030 establishing the committee. *A copy of the Ordinance is included with the meeting record.*

Regional parks and greenspaces – "an overview of how we got to where we are today"

Metro Parks Director, Jim Desmond, provided an overview of the Parks and Greenspaces Dept. in the form of a power point presentation. *A copy of the presentation is included with the meeting record.*

Continuation of Committee Logistics Discussion

Mr. Zehren opened up a discussion as to whether meeting once a month at the outset of its formation will be adequate for this committee. Taking into consideration the background work to be done and information to be absorbed, did the committee want to increase the number of meetings for the first few months? Responses included a suggestion to create a work plan or at least identify likely components of a work plan

before doing any kind of strategic planning. Mr. Zehren suggested the scheduled March 25 meeting be a working meeting, and that he and staff work together in the interim to consider preliminary ideas to "get things up and running". He encouraged those with specific thoughts on the topic to contact him or Jim Desmond. A couple of weeks in advance of the next meeting those preliminary ideas will be sent to committee members for their review. The question of additional meetings can be re-addressed on March 25.

Mr. Houck suggested as a future agenda item a discussion of how this committee can interact with the broader parks community. His concern is that there are many organizations with long-term investments in this process and GPAC is not large enough to truly represent all those interests. He noted GPAC is important for moving the agenda forward but there needs to be a mechanism for interfacing with other groups such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife, etc. Chair Zehren indicated that this will likely be one of the subjects on the proposed GPAC work plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.