

Metro Parks and Greenspaces Advisory Committee
April 6, 1999 Summary Meeting Minutes
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Metro Regional Center

Chair John Griffiths called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Present, in addition to Griffiths, were: Jim Battan, Rick Charriere, Julie Garver, Jay Hamlin, Mike Reid, Brian Scott, and Seth Tane. Also in attendance were Charles Ciecko, Jim Desmond, Mel Huie, Ron Klein, Heather Nelson Kent, Patricia Sullivan and Julie Weatherby.

Introductory Comments and Announcements

- In response to Regional Parks & Greenspaces Advisory Committee's (RPAGAC) proposal that Metro Council establish a tax study committee to consider possible new revenue sources for the RPAG Dept., (in particular an auto rental tax), Charles Ciecko noted the auto rental industry is considering an increase in rental tax as a possible funding source for the expansion of the Convention Center. The auto rental industry may have considered its connection to the Convention Center a more direct link than to parks and greenspaces.
- Future committee meetings will begin at 6:30 pm effective May 1999 through the end of daylight savings time (Oct.) according to a motion made by Seth Tane and passed by a unanimous vote of the Advisory Committee.
- Jay Hamlin expressed concern about requests by local governments and others to purchase Metro acquired open space for active recreational uses (e.g. the Morand property). Although such a formal request has not yet been made, the committee questioned the process should that occur. Ciecko noted the opportunity now presents itself to address such concerns in the drafting of Master Planning, Management Planning guidelines as required in the Regional Framework Plan.

The following motion was passed by a unanimous vote: the RPAGAC requests the Metro Council and Executive Officer include a provision to refer to RPAGAC for review and recommendation any proposal pertaining to the sale or exchange of any/all properties owned or managed by Metro Regional Parks & Greenspaces Dept.

Open Spaces Acquisition Quarterly Update – Jim Desmond

In the future, Jim Desmond will be on the agenda the first meeting after the close of each quarter unless a major issue arises in the interim.

For the first time more funds were spent than are remaining in both regional and local share funds. Desmond displayed a map illustrating results of the bond measure including regional acquisitions, regional bonds spent on two improvements (Peninsula Crossing Trail and the OMSI to Springwater Corridor Trail), local share acquisitions and improvements and partnering efforts in which regional and local monies were combined. It was evident how even the distribution of projects was throughout the region and that the majority of the regional acquisitions are inside the UGB (of the 142 closings, approximately 80 are inside the boundary.) In dollars spent, it is heavily weighted inside as well.

Discussion ensued concerning the future of the Open Spaces Acquisition Division. Metro Council has included a note with the Regional Parks & Greenspaces Dept. budget requesting recommendations be generated concerning this issue prior to the end of this calendar year.

Federal Legislation for funding to preserve, protect and enhance parks, open spaces, fish and wildlife habitat, trails and recreational facilities – Mel Huie and Charlie Ciecko

Over the last several months, Ciecko has served on the Oregon Fish & Wildlife Dept.'s Wildlife Diversity Planning Committee. In that capacity he has become familiar with a national legislative initiative called *Teaming with Wildlife*. Under that 'umbrella', a number of bills have been introduced. The one of greatest interest is called CARA – Conservation Reinvestment Act of 1999. It has three elements of interest to parks:

1) It would increase the appropriations for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, (LWCF) the largest funding source for assistance to state and local governments for park conservation, natural resource related acquisitions and developments, 2) The Urban Parks & Recreation Recovery Act would receive a significant appropriation under this bill and 3) the Teaming with Wildlife element would provide funds directly for fish and wildlife, and in particular, although the bill does not so specify, it is intended to provide dollars for non-game wildlife in particular.

According to Mel Huie, the money for CARA would be derived from an existing offshore oil drilling and gas leases fund. It was noted that concern for an increase in offshore oil leasing has been addressed by the sponsors of the bill; changes have been made to remove any such incentives. The allocation formula for funding will be based 2/3 on population and 1/3 on land area. ***A motion was passed that the RPAGAC endorse the CARA bill or a reasonable facsimile.*** The Metro staff was asked to draft a letter to be sent to northwest congressional delegates requesting such endorsement. It will be reviewed at the next meeting and a list of recipients decided upon.

Addition of East Buttes Loop Trail to the Regional Trails System – Mel Huie

A proposal to add this trail, roughly estimated at between 20 and 25 miles in length, to the Regional Trails System Map, was discussed. ***The committee voted 8 to 0 to support the inclusion of the East Buttes Loop Trail.***

Cooperative agreement with the Oregon Parks Foundation to raise funds for the Diack Nature Center at Oxbow Regional Park – Charlie Ciecko, Ron Klein

The Oxbow Regional Park Master Plan includes a nature education center to be named in honor of the Arch Diack family. In adopting the master plan, Metro Council directed staff that the nature center concept be included, however, the center would need to be privately funded. The Oregon Parks Foundation voted to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Metro for the expressed purpose of raising money to construct and endow the Diack Nature Center. In the MOU the two parties are agreeing to work cooperatively to do a portion of the facility design (including floor plans, elevation drawing, architectural theme and narrative work). It is proposed that payment would be made with funds set aside in a trust account for this particular purpose. Also a strategic fund raising/ planning consultant would be hired to assist OPF and Metro in the development of the fund raising plan.

One of the points that OPF stressed in approving this MOU was to make clear funds will be transferred back to Metro once the objectives of the fund raising plan were met and that funds raised would be restricted to construction of the nature center and to an endowment for an environmental education staff person and operation and maintenance funds.

A motion was passed by a unanimous vote stating: the Regional Parks & Greenspaces Advisory Committee has reviewed the terms and provisions of the draft memorandum of understanding with Oregon Parks Foundation regards the Diack Nature Center at Oxbow Regional Park and recommends that Metro Council approve it.

Other

- Ron Klein suggested that in lieu of one of the summer meetings, the Advisory Committee spend a Saturday together touring some of the region's wondrous newly acquired open spaces. (Picnic to be provided.) This would afford committee members an opportunity to see firsthand the results of their significant contribution to the effort.
- The idea of committee members re-examining current RPAGAC by-laws was considered prudent as revisions or updating may be necessary. A copy of the current by-laws will be sent to the committee with the next meeting packet, along with suggested revisions to initiate further discussion at the May meeting.

The next meeting of the Regional Parks and Greenspaces Advisory Committee will be held Tuesday, May 4, 1999, at Metro Regional Center, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 p.m.