

Metro Parks and Greenspaces Advisory Committee
April 7, 1998 Summary Meeting Minutes
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Metro Regional Center

Present: Seth Tane, John Griffiths, Brian Scott, Faun Hosey, Mike Reid, Bob Akers, Jim Battan, Rick Charriere, Jay Hamlin, Julie Garver, Julie Weatherby, Ron Klein, Heather Nelson-Kent, Amy Kirschbaum, Jim Desmond, Jane Hart, Jim Walsh, Sylvia Milne, Susan Petersen

Mike Reid called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Jim Desmond pointed out the highlights of open spaces activity during the 1st quarter of 1998. Land acquisitions now total nearly 3,200 acres (93 acquisitions) of which 272 acres (12 acquisitions) were closed January through March 1998. Of special interest is 67-acres on Mt Talbert, 52 acres on Cooper Mt, 27 acres in the Tonquin Geologic Area and 45 acres along the Multnomah Channel. Ground breaking for the construction of the Peninsula Crossing Trail took place on March 17. The first segment of the trail is expected to be complete in September.

Amy Kirschbaum presented concept layouts for possible ads to appear in the Oregonian and other local newspapers letting people of the region know the status of the open spaces acquisition effort, 3 years after the passage of the bond measure. It was thought that an ad would be more effective in letting people know the progress being made. In contrast, during the 2nd anniversary of the bond measure, Metro hosted an open house that was attended by about 30 people. This was after many hours of staff planning and over 1,000 invitations sent out.

Although the RPAGAC thought it would be an effective outreach tool, there was concern expressed about using bond measure money for what could be perceived as an image ad and that tours may create misunderstood public access expectations. The committee encouraged seeking outside sponsors before proceeding.

Julie Weatherby and Jim Walsh (consultant) reviewed the findings of a scoping process to update the Blue Lake Regional Park Master Plan. The current master plan dates back to 1985. Many of the concepts are now infeasible or many not be compatible with Metro's role as a regional natural area parks provider. Julie Weatherby showed slides of existing park conditions.

The park was originally a private venture, later sold to Multnomah County and then transferred to Metro in 1994 when Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces was first established. Blue Lake is spring fed, while Fairview Lake to the south is stormwater fed. The park is 185 acres, with about 60 acres developed for swimming, boating, fishing, picnicking and field sports. Many of the current facilities are in need of capital repair or replacement. RV park is judged not to be feasible. Picnicking is the primary peak use in the park. The capacity of the park is about 10,000 people when the fields are used for parking. As managed today, Blue Lake Regional Park does not fully complement Metro's role as a natural area park provider.

The RPAGAC had the following comments:

Hamlin: the park should focus on natural resource-based recreation such as swimming, fishing, "low tech activities" and picnicking

Hosey: More shade along the shore is needed; modify the sidewalk to be more natural

Reid: use Crystal Springs as a model; get schools involved in the wetlands; use outside of buildings for interpretation; build an active friends group; consider a Britt-like Festival; fix up Lake House and build another;

Scott: Use the empty building as an interpretive center and take the opportunity to tell the Metro story; improve picnic areas; not opposed to revenue generating projects; set your priorities to recreate/educate/generate \$

Griffiths: current facilities need updating; enhance natural features in park; park as a environmental education destination for schools; updating the master plan is an opportunity to showcase Metro; no golf course or condos; upgrade existing use and establish a habitat restoration demonstration area

Battan: orientation sign would be nice; keep activities low-key; park operation needs to be revenue neutral or better; no more development; keep to the Metro Parks theme

Akers: upgrade old swim center or tear down and start over; provide education/meeting center in park; park needs more trails; don't turn the park into a neighborhood facility, it's clearly a regional resource; transition the park to feature natural attributes rather than active recreation facilities

Garver: do not pursue the golf course idea. It does not fit where Metro Parks wants to go as a regional park provider. Work to enhance the wildlife corridor and other natural features. Some development along the access road is okay

Charriere: consider all the ideas including a small golf course. A golf course could be a good source of revenue for other programs; build an interpretive or education center; increase fees if there is such a tremendous demand for the park; move the shoreline sidewalk

Tane: consider accommodating radio control plane hobbyists; parking is a big issue if you intend to increase park capacity; work with Tri-met to bring service to or near the park; bus service may get feasible considering the growth in the area; build more picnic areas balancing parking pressures; close Blue Lake Road

The next meeting of the Regional Parks and Greenspaces Advisory Committee will be on Tuesday, June 2, 1998, Metro Regional Center, 6 p.m.- 8 p.m.