

MINUTES OF THE METRO OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, June 9, 1999

Metro Council Chamber

Members Present: Ed Washington (Chair), Bill Atherton (Vice Chair), Jon Kvistad
Others Present: Rod Park, David Bragdon

Chair Washington called the meeting to order at 3:34 PM.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

None.

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF MAY 19, 1999, METRO OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Motion:

Councilor Atherton moved to recommend adoption of the minutes of the May 19, 1999, meeting of the Metro Operations Committee.

Vote:

Chair Washington and Councilor Atherton voted aye. Councilor Kvistad abstained. The vote was 2/0/1 in favor and the motion passed.
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Chair Washington announced that agenda item number five, Resolution No. 99-2783, would be considered before item number four, Ordinance No. 99-807, to give Councilor Park an opportunity to return from a meeting and introduce the ordinance.

5. RESOLUTION NO. 99-2783, FOR THE PURPOSE OF AUTHORIZING AND ENTERING INTO A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE OREGON PARKS FOUNDATION TO ACQUIRE AND MANAGE FUNDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE DIACK NATURE CENTER AT OXBOW REGIONAL PARK

Charles Ciecko, Director, Metro Parks and Greenspaces, summarized the background to this resolution. (More details can be found in the staff report associated with this agenda item in the meeting record.) Briefly, the Oxbow Park master plan, approved in the fall of 1997, included a nature center but specified that funding must come from outside of Metro. The Oregon Parks Foundation, a non-profit foundation dedicated to improving parks that provide recreation and education in natural settings, has agreed to help Metro with fundraising for and planning of the nature center. (A copy of the foundation's board of directors has been attached to the meeting record.)

Mr. Ciecko outlined the responsibilities of Metro and the Foundation in the partnership. (Details can be found in Attachment 1 to the staff report, in the meeting record.) He said the foundation's board of directors approved this agreement in March of 1999.

Councilor Atherton asked about the requirement that funding come from outside Metro. He noted that \$200,000 would come from Multnomah County to pay for planning. Mr. Ciecko said that money comes from a trust account established prior to the completion and adoption of the Oxbow master plan. It was understood that the money that was in the trust account would be available for the project, but that no additional money--no Metro general fund dollars--could be used. It did not prohibit using funds already set aside for this purpose.

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Councilor Atherton asked whether the master plan specified the size of the nature center. Mr. Ciecko said yes: It would be in the 4,000-5,000 square-foot range. Councilor Atherton asked if it could be two stories. Mr. Ciecko said no, because it would be located within the Sandy River Scenic Waterway, which imposes height restrictions.

Councilor Atherton asked if Mr. Ciecko had reviewed the amendment he had drafted that called for developments in this natural area to be constructed so as to minimize environmental impact.

Mr. Ciecko said he had reviewed the amendment and agreed with all the principles except one, and that relates to composting toilets. He said composting toilets have been problematic in public settings. He said Metro supports the rest of the concepts. However, this resolution would not be the most appropriate place to put those concepts, because this resolution focuses on defining the roles and responsibilities of the fundraising partnership, not on the actual design and engineering of the facility. He said if the committee chose to approve the amendment anyway, he would need to have the agreement re-approved by the Foundation's board of directors. He did not anticipate any objection to the principles, but he did not think this would be the best place to lay them out. He suggested instead writing the principles into the request for proposals (RFP) that would be issued for the design and engineering contract.

Councilor Atherton argued in favor of including his concepts in this resolution, to provide policy direction; however, he said he would defer in the interest of avoiding excess paperwork.

Councilor Kvistad urged Councilor Atherton to put the concepts in the RFP, where it would have a direct effect.

Chair Washington directed Michael Morrissey, Council Analyst, to be certain the content of Councilor Atherton's amendment appear in the resolution that requests approval of the RFP for construction.

Motion:

Councilor Atherton moved to recommend Council adoption of Resolution No. 99-2783.

Vote:

Chair Washington and Councilors Atherton and Kvistad voted aye. The vote was 3/0 in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Atherton will carry the resolution to a meeting of the full council.

4. ORDINANCE NO. 99-807, FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING A METRO PARKING POLICY AND AMENDING CHAPTER 2.14 OF THE METRO CODE

Councilor Kvistad moved to substitute Ordinance No. 99-807A for No. 99-807. (The "A" version of the resolution has been attached to the meeting record.)

Motion:

Councilor Atherton moved to recommend Council adoption of Resolution No. 99-2783.

Vote:

Chair Washington and Councilors Atherton and Kvistad voted aye. The vote was 3/0 in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Park said the reason he was proposing a parking policy for Metro was because of confusion over the use of some of the parking facilities at the Zoo, Expo, and the Convention Center. With new construction at Expo and the potential for a MAX line out there, some of the lots could be used as park and ride facilities. He said Metro had no policy to guide its decisions in such matters and felt now would be a good time to create one.

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Councilor Park said he drafted his resolution to allow for flexibility in terms of the kinds of facilities Metro owns and operates. He said parking policies should be designed primarily to serve the customers of the facilities. Employees and others should seek parking off the property. He also said parking should produce revenue where that activity is appropriate. It might not always be appropriate. He said transit available also needed to be considered.

Councilor Atherton asked about amending the policy to call for using impervious materials in the construction of the parking lots. Councilor Park said this ordinance focuses on policy rather than specifics. He said construction materials that might be appropriate for one area might not be for another.

Chair Washington asked Mr. Morrissey about a neighborhood association report he had received from a Mr. Jeff Boly. Mr. Morrissey said he had not seen the report. Chair Washington recessed the committee so the report could be copied and distributed to the rest of the committee. (The report is attached to the meeting record.)

Chair Washington recessed the meeting at 4:10 PM and called the meeting back to order at 4:15 PM.

Chair Washington asked Mr. Morrissey to address the broader issue of a parking policy statement. Mr. Morrissey said when Councilor Park asked him to research Metro's parking policy, he found that Metro provides parking regulations but no policy statement. This resolution would provide such a policy statement and incorporate the policy regulations that exists. He said this policy intends to say that parking exists to serve the mission of each regional facility.

Chair Washington opened a public hearing at 4:19 PM.

Jeffrey Boly, Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association and the Northwest Neighborhood Coalition, 2879 SW Champlain Dr., Portland, OR 97056, said he supported amending the ordinance by incorporating the concepts in the neighborhood report (referred to above and attached to the meeting record). He said he sought to include in the ordinance concepts that reflect that the best parking policy is one that reduces the need for parking. He said that if Metro encourages people to use mass transit, then the parking policy should reflect that. He said Metro should take a leadership role by setting a good example. He proposed specific additions to the policy language that would address situations where there might be both a regional facility and a transit opportunity.

Eric Hoffman, Southwest Hills Residential League, 1920 SW Highland Road, Portland, OR 97221, summarized the League's position opposing the use of the Zoo's parking lot as a park-and-ride. (A copy of the League's position has been attached to the meeting record.) He noted that there would be more developments in that neighborhood with construction at the zoo and the new location of the Children's Museum. He testified that the ordinance seemed to be consistent with the League's view.

Councilor Atherton asked Mr. Hoffman to clarify his league's objection to using the zoo's parking lot as a park and ride. Mr. Hoffman said the association thought that would be an inappropriate use of the zoo's parking lot. Councilor Atherton asked if people had used his neighborhood as a park and ride. Mr. Hoffman said no, although he could only describe what had happened in the past. He said the light rail station has not been around long enough to assess its impact on the situation. He said in the past zoo patrons had used his neighborhood as a parking lot during zoo events. He said if more demands are put on the facility, then the neighborhood could anticipate an increase in parking on neighborhood streets.

Mark Reed, Operations Director, World Forestry Center, 4033 SW Canyon Road, Portland, OR, said his facility shares the parking lot with the zoo. He said he supported the ordinance and the policy it puts forth. He noted the proposed amendments from Mr. Boly seem to allow a park and ride on the zoo's parking lot. He said the perception exists that surplus capacity exists because during the winter months there are days when usage is low. He said, however, that events at any of those facilities can happen at any time of the year, putting pressure on parking that could push cars into the neighborhoods.

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Councilor Atherton asked Mr. Boly if his association had considered use of car pools or jitneys that could park at the zoo facility. Mr. Boly said Tri-Met had instituted a shuttle that runs every 15 minutes throughout the Washington Park area. He said that partly addresses the issue for people in his neighborhood but not the people in the Sylvan-Hillsdale area.

Councilor Kvistad said the Hillsdale neighborhood is too far away to worry about in this context; the Sylvan neighborhood might be more directly affected.

Councilor Atherton said his reading of the ordinance would allow the operation of jitneys. Mr. Boly said that although that is true, his proposed amendment speaks to issues beyond the zoo's parking lot.

Chair Washington closed the hearing at 4:32 PM.

Councilor Kvistad said he had heard from folks on both sides of the park and ride discussion. He said he understands the concerns, but he cannot support the amendment that puts the interests of the neighborhood ahead of those of the regional facilities. Metro's charter mandates that the interests of the regional facilities come first. He said he would support the "A" version of Councilor Park's ordinance. He suggested that more work be done to flesh the ordinance out, as he anticipated that with development of the facilities at the zoo and at Expo, the parking situation would become even more challenging. He said he was pleased with Tri-Met's decision to put a shuttle in the neighborhood. He said even as multi-modal systems become available, the demand for parking will exceed supply. He said the interests of the regional facilities must come first. He said he would not support Mr. Boly's suggested changes.

Councilor Atherton asked whether employees of the zoo should be charged for parking. He noted that employees who work at Metro Central must pay for parking. Councilor Kvistad said the employees don't park in the parking lot. They park on a nearby dirt lot.

Councilor Atherton said if Metro charged employees for parking at all their facilities, it would encourage use of alternative means of transportation. It would also be entrepreneurial. He said he would like to see that addressed in the ordinance.

Chair Washington asked Mr. Vecchio to explain the zoo's policy on parking.

Tony Vecchio, Director, Oregon Zoo, said the zoo aggressively encourages employees to use modes of transportation other than cars. It provides Tri-Met passes to employees and has an active telecommuting and car-pooling policy. He said employees cannot use the regular lot; they use assigned places in a dirt lot. They are not charged for parking.

Councilor Park said the original purpose of the ordinance was to establish a broad policy for use of the lots, not to delve into managing transportation demand. He noted that Metro has a comprehensive transportation demand management program that. He reiterated the need to preserve parking lots for those using the regional facility. He said Tri-Met has primary responsibility for providing park and ride lots for people using its buses and the MAX line.

Councilor Atherton said his main concern was for charging Metro employees for parking. He said this is business. He said Metro employees pay for parking at Metro Central and asked, "why shouldn't other employees pay parking?"

Councilor Park said each of Metro's regional facilities is different. At some it makes sense to pay for parking and others it doesn't. It partly depends on the pay scale of the employees and the location of the facility. He said his policy would allow facility managers to decide what would be best for their facility.

Councilor Kvistad said the only reason people pay for parking at Metro Central is to pay the debt service on the parking lot. He said there is a lot of talk about ideal transportation, but basically people need to be able to get to work. Some people live near transit and can use it. Others do not. He thought it would be

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terribly unfair to charge zoo employees for parking when they are providing a service and receiving only modest incomes. He said it is unrealistic and impractical and unfair to charge all employees. He said he has to drive to Metro because his schedule is irregular and he does not live nor work near transit. He said most employees are like that. Metro needs to fund alternatives and encourage their use, but for those who must drive, Metro should provide whatever it can to enable them to get to work and provide their service to this government.

Chair Washington asked Councilor Atherton if he wished to amend the ordinance. Councilor Atherton said yes.

Motion:

Councilor Atherton moved to amend Ordinance No. 99-807A to read, "Parking lots and structures are for the use of the visitors to the facility," striking reference to Metro employees and staff.

Vote:

Councilor Atherton voted aye. Chair Washington and Councilor Kvistad voted no. The vote was 1/2 opposed and the motion failed.

Chair Washington asked if any member of the committee wished to move Mr. Boly's amendment. No one responded. The amendment died for lack of a motion. Chair Washington called for a motion on the Ordinance No. 99-807A.

Motion:

Councilor Kvistad moved to recommend Council adoption of Ordinance No. 99-807A.

Vote:

Chair Washington and Councilor Kvistad voted aye. Councilor Atherton voted no. The vote was 2/1 in favor and the motion passed.

Councilor Park will carry the motion to a meeting of the full Council.

9. COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS

There being no more business to come before the committee, Chair Washington adjourned the meeting at 4:53 PM.

Prepared by,

Pat Emmerson
Council Assistant

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF JUNE 9, 1999

The following have been included as part of the official public record.

TOPIC	DOCUMENT DATE	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DOCUMENT NUMBER
Resolution No. 99-2783	June 1998	Oregon Parks Foundation Board of Directors	060999Mop-1
Ordinance No. 99-807A	no date	Amended version of Ordinance No. 99-807	060999Mop-2
	June 7, 1999	Neighborhood Report,	060999Mop-3

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	prepared by Jeffrey E. Boly suggesting amendments to the Ordinance	
January 1, 1999	Letter to Tony Vecchio from Knut Eie, Southwest Hills Residential League	060999Mop-4

Testimony Cards

Jeffrey E. Boly, Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association

Eric Hoffman, Southwest Hills Residential League

Mark Reed, World Forestry Center