

VASHON PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING MINUTES

Teleconference, 7:00 pm
DATE: Tuesday, July 14, 2020

Commissioners attending: Hans Van Dusen, Bob McMahon, Doug Ostrom, Abby Antonelis, Karen Gardner
 Staff attending: Elaine Ott-Rocheford

ISSUE	DISCUSSION AND OUTCOME	FOLLOW UP
Call To Order	Hans called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.	
Public Comment	No public comment.	
6.23.20 Minutes; 6.6.21 – 7.10.20 Preliminary Vouchers	Bob: Motion to accept Karen: Second Pass 4 – 0 (Abby had not arrived yet)	Motion to approve 6.23.20 Minutes; 6.6.21 – 7.10.20 Preliminary Vouchers Pass 4-0
Board Votes	Bob: I move to approve moving forward with the exploration of this project up to knowing this is going to work. Doug: Second Elaine: No response yet from the Coast Guard. Captain Joe said he would respond about this and the CG lease but hasn't. The gist of the motion was to continue with the exploration and not to approve the project, so we have time. Pass 4-0 (Abby had not arrived yet).	Motion to approve moving forward with the exploration of the Hydrophone project up to knowing this is going to work. Pass 4-0
Strategic Plan Goals - Review	Elaine: I thought it would be good to touch base on where we are on this from time to time. We have 4 primary goals, and a number of objectives under each goal. Goal 1: Improve the professionalism of the District's organization. Objective 1.1: Achieve CAPRA's highest accreditation (Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies). I am picking away at it. Randy has done some work on it. It is slow going. I don't know that we will	

achieve it, but it would be worth a try.

Objective 1.2: Develop a Board of fully engaged commissioners.

I think we are quite successful along that line.

Bob: I have never felt more engaged!

Elaine:

Objective 1.3: Develop a schedule of pay and benefits for VPD employees that is financially responsible and benchmarked against local park and recreation industry standards.

Most districts have a schedule, but we opted to simply do COL increases going forward after the first two bucket increases that helped meet this objective. But for how long? Remember, we did not give the 3rd bucket due to pro-rationing concerns. It would be a graduated pay schedule. Should we go back to developing this?

Hans: It is different from cost of living?

Elaine: I believe most agencies do both. The notion is that somebody new coming in will be at the bottom of the wage schedule. Then going forward, they would know what to expect.

Karen: Sounds like a good idea to me.

Hans: So it would be pay steps for tenure. Has your staff not received pay increases?

Elaine: In 2018 and 2019, we made significant increases to bring us in line with like-sized districts. Last year we just did COL.

Karen: That is a good idea.

Bob: In my shipyard days, we had this plus COL, and the two got tangled up. How does it work together? Some sort of formula based on the industry then adjusted for COL?

Elaine: I will do some research in the industry on how that is done.

Doug: In my experience, step increases were semi-automatic, and COL got co-mingled.

Hans: Can you remind me what CAPRA does for us?

Elaine: It is the gold medal standard set forth by the National Recreation and Park Association. It is great for grant applications and something the community can be proud of. It goes a long way to show we are doing all the right things, since it requires that certain policies and plans are in place. It's like a self audit relative to best practice.

Hans: It seems like it should be medium to low priority – we get to it when we can. Is there a benefit to prioritizing it higher, or can we be okay with characterizing it as medium priority?

Elaine: That is exactly how I would characterize it, because the reality is that it is very time-consuming and hard to carve out the time to regularly work on it.

Elaine:

Goal 2: Strengthen community relations, involvement, and partnerships.

Objective 2.1: Create an effective and active citizen advisory committee.

We tried that. It didn't go over well.

Karen: Based on the experience to find interested people plus the commitment, we were not successful.

Hans: My sense is that it is hard to recruit for this.

Elaine: Should we leave it as an objective?

Hans: I think it is fine to leave it. It could come up in our equity work, but intuitively, it seems it would be

Action Item

difficult to sustain.

Bob: I think we might look at it as something we would form for certain circumstances rather than consider it as a long term tenure.

Karen: I think our original approach was to do it on a case by case basis when particular expertise was needed.

Objective 2.2: Encourage a strong volunteer program relative to specific projects.

Elaine: I think we have this. They are random and definitely related to specific projects, but we do receive the odd volunteer request that we utilize as much as possible. Good examples of recent volunteer activities include VES lights, BARC, Paradise Ridge, Keepers.

Bob: Burton Acres has active volunteers.

Elaine:

Objective 2.3: Encourage VPD's partnerships with other community groups and agencies, assuring efficient use of community assets and best coordination of effort in working to make Vashon better for everyone.

We have great existing examples: VISD, Chamber, numerous sport groups, VIGA, Keepers, VMIHA, Food Bank. New include: a VCA event group, Vashon Theater for CID, Senior Center and Seeds4Success for Ober.

Goal 3: Improve the District's financial health and viability.

Objective 3.1: Responsibly reduce the inventory of surplus properties.

As you know, and reported a few meetings ago, this is in progress.

Objective 3.2: Improve and maintain a VPD facility user fee schedule that (1) equitably shares the cost, among users, of providing these facilities for public use and (2) is in line with the schedules in use in other local park and recreation districts.

Done, although still discussing the RFA policy.

Objective 3.3: Augment the District's capital improvement program funding through development of a strong base of financial donors, through grant writing, through fundraising for specific programs, and through development of bonding strategies for large capital projects.

Grants, yes, we have been successful with this. Some fundraising (Senior Center for Ober; BARC project).

Bonding strategies is not something we are discussing at this time.

Goal 4: Enhance/improve parks, facilities, programs, services.

Objective 4.1: Continuously improve the physical condition and appearance of our facilities in accordance with board-accepted standards so that they are a source of pride to all our citizens.

Yep – we adhere to the ABC plan for parks.

Objective 4.2: Create a variety of recreational programs that meet the diverse needs and interests of the community, including those of school-age children, the elderly and the special-needs population.

Well, we're trying! Things keep getting in the way – failed levy; fear of pro-rationing; now COVID. Ober is a great example of children, elderly, special-needs population. Besides managing what we already have (Ski School, Sailing Camp, CIP, Low Tide, Rec Guide), Eric has developed camps at BARC, Concerts in the Dark, van for elderly to recreation activities. Working on Movies in the Park, partnership events, but these have stalled.

Objective 4.3: Reduce the list of deferred maintenance projects currently listed to a minimum consistent

	<p>with responsible management of available funding . Yep – CIP schedule on track. Objective 4.4: Invest in new and/ or updated facilities, funded principally by non-levy dollars, when such facilities are clearly shown through surveys, public forums, workshops, and open houses to be strongly desired by Vashon's citizens. No new, but several “updated” via grants: Ober; Agren; BARC; VES Restroom, lights, storage, fencing; Pt Rob lighthouse decking. Hans: I appreciate you bringing this to us, and presenting the high level view. There are no significant gaps. Bob: We should keep the community updated about this. Something on our website or an op-ed. Hans: Or an email blast. Elaine: I can also put something on FB directing people to take a look at our website. Paul Rowley: Commentaries are always welcome. Elaine: That might be the best strategy.</p>	Action Item
RFA Policy	<p>Elaine: Back in March, I proposed the attached changes to the RFA policy. At that time, I was tasked with questioning that it must be donation based, so I confirmed that with the WA State Auditors. We discussed creating a low income fee but decided the vetting process involved the applicant having to submit personal income information that we are uncomfortable with. We decided to leave the vetting process as is. Finally, another expressed concern was not being comfortable offering every opportunity low income families to participate. We presently allow one award per person per year with a 50% award. Abby suggested an allocation to each opportunity, and somebody who received a scholarship for another activity might be a lower priority. Do you want to move forward with Abby’s idea? Another idea? Or leave things the way they are? Hans: Your comment about the low income fee requiring too much paperwork, how do we know that? Elaine: Just based on what other Districts do. I can explore that further. Hans: Do you think we can use the same standard of vetting we do now? Elaine: I can check. To recap, we have them provide a VISD reduced lunch certificate, ORCA card, Apple Health, etc. I suppose we could still do that, then when there is use of the low income fee, we can fill the fee gap with the donation dollars. So the fee could be 50% lower, and the transfer from the donation account can be the other 50%. Doug: I thought we could simply have a reduced fee for low income people based on policy? Elaine: I think that may be an option. But I don’t know. I would have to research this. I am afraid it would be considered inappropriate gifting – offering a reduced fee not available to everyone. Doing it as I describe, it addresses the concern about somebody only receiving one award. Doug: Is there enough money to do this? Elaine: We have run out of money once. At that time, we simply told people that. Doug: So this would be first come, first served? Elaine: Yes. We have \$7k right now. Hans: Is the scholarship from fundraising different from establishing a low income tier rate? Elaine: I think the idea would be the same – we have to have a donation base. We are just simplifying it by</p>	

	<p>offering a low income fee. Then we reimburse ourselves the fee difference from the donation base. Hans: That is my interest – that we have a low income fee for all our programs and services for anyone who qualifies, and they qualify based on the current evidence of need. I don’t like that we would run out of money. Elaine: We aren’t close to that now, but if we do, we can’t offer the reduced fee. That is my sense of how an auditor would see it. Bob: The idea is that we are not using District funds for a reduced rate. Hans: I’m still confused about this, but I don’t want to belabor it. Elaine: I will research this. If I find we can do a low income fee without a donation base, I will report back. If my understanding is correct, we will do it the way I described. Doug: Do we know how COVID will affect this? Many people are out of work. Should we anticipate a surge in applications? Elaine: I suppose we should, once programming is allowed to start up again.</p>	Action Item
Lisabeula Land Donation	<p>Elaine: At the last executive session, we discussed this potential land donation. We are discussing it publicly now, because you have to make a public motion to accept it, and it has to be unanimous. In our last executive session, you wanted to know about the fiber optic cable there. I contacted the donor, and he did not believe it runs through this piece of tidelands. The first sign went up when the dock came down and it looks like the cable went through the county road property. These tidelands abut the county road on the south. He has never been advised of any installation on the property. He is not completely sure but he thinks any right-of-way would be identified in the title transfer. That's a long way of saying he is not aware of any issues or concerns. Abby: I can’t imagine what problem would be, but it’s good to know going into it. Abby: I move to accept the Lisabeula tideland donation. Karen: Second.</p>	Motion to accept the Lisabeula tideland donation.
Park Security Cameras	<p>Elaine: The interest has been expressed that we increase security in our parks. You already approved installing gates and Agren and VES. We also talked about security cameras. Jason got three quotes, and they are very expensive. They all have various components of needing internet, etc. ADT is just an installation – no monthly fee - \$41,000. With Comcast, there are a couple installations at \$17k, then a monthly fee cumulatively at \$14k annually. Froula Alarms is similar to ADT – just an installation -- \$87k. Karen: We had 4 cameras put up at our place for \$8500 for several cameras. Elaine: We are looking at 7 different parks, all with different needs. One park like Ober is \$4k – not too far off from your experience, Karen. Maybe we should just look at our highest risk parks and do a few? Or scrap this idea altogether. Karen: Given the vandalism we experience, I would like to see cameras. I just find the amount of money to be amazing. Our cameras work beautifully. Bob: Is anyone monitoring them? Karen: No. If there is a problem, you can go online and review it.</p>	

	<p>Bob: Are they in one central location?</p> <p>Karen: They are in various locations. I am able to view them in a quadrant on my computer.</p> <p>Bob: Would these options be viewed at the park office?</p> <p>Elaine: They all have remote view, so Jason could look at something immediately if there was an issue.</p> <p>Karen: One issue with the cameras is that, if they are visible, they get taken out – shot at. I think we need to be careful to hide them.</p> <p>Elaine: With some of these parks, that is one of the reasons it is so expensive. At VES, for example, they would be mounted on a light pole, which would require a crane. We could go with something as low tech as hunting cameras, but the problem is being able to conceal them.</p> <p>Doug: We had some at the skate park, and they were vandalized.</p> <p>Bob: Which parks do you consider most vulnerable?</p> <p>Elaine: Our sport fields. If VES got trashed in the same way Agren did, that would be disastrous. Paradise Ridge and Ober – not so much. BARC – lots of crime there. So, BARC, Agren, VES, the historic houses.</p> <p>Doug: What about all the new playground equipment at Ober?</p> <p>Elaine: I don't worry about that so much, unless it gets tagged. We haven't had much trouble at Ober. It's more nefarious activity there, like illegal dumping in the trash cans. It's more illegal activity in the parking lot, actually.</p> <p>Hans: What is your sense, Elaine?</p> <p>Elaine: I think we either go super low tech or not do it at all.</p> <p>Hans: Either of those options sound good to me. It doesn't stop the violence, but it allows you to pursue it. The advantage of low tech is that we can post with some degree of honesty that the place is under surveillance.</p> <p>Bob: What about blinking fake cameras?</p> <p>Karen: Low tech can mean it will not alert you while something is happening, but you can go back and go after them. That would probably be the most likely scenario.</p> <p>Bob: In some cases, a physical barrier is best – like Agren.</p> <p>Elaine: We will look at low cost options, and I will report back.</p>	Action Item
Anti-racism and Equity Team	<p>Hans: I sent a note out about maybe a subgroup of a couple commissioners and Elaine/Eric but didn't hear back. At the last meeting, all commissioners except Karen, who wasn't able to make it, were interested. I didn't get any feedback. Also, if we want a special meeting or have in our regular meeting to avoid special noticing, etc. Any thoughts about that?</p> <p>Bob: Elaine sent me a bunch of policies to look at.</p> <p>Elaine: At the last meeting, we discussed whether or not to do separate meetings – that is what Hans is referring to. We also walked away with particular tasks.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bob review policies 2) Abby contact SURJ 3) Eric and I – recreation angles <p>Bob: I have been through what you sent me and have comments. In thinking about the Strategic Plan, it would be good to add to our Mission, Vision, Values. I'm happy to do that.</p>	

	<p>Hans: That did come up in the goals we just reviewed, but it would be good to have the value higher up.</p> <p>Elaine: One approach, Bob, would be for you to send an email to me with your ideas, and I will send to the group for their review.</p> <p>Hans: Did you find the policies hit some of the areas we talked about last time? Like employment, contracting, impact from our services, program participation, community engagement. Is the gamut covered in the policies?</p> <p>Bob: Some of it is but needs to be amplified.</p> <p>Elaine: I sent Bob comments on the policies I sent him. There were 4 Board policies. There were 5 Admin policies with some good language. 4 HR policies with decent language. The idea might be to just highlight them, and see if we can do better.</p> <p>Hans: And the HR policies cover hiring as well as employee for advancing?</p> <p>Elaine: It's in our Recruitment, Disciplinary, Harrassment, and Office Equipment.</p> <p>Hans: How about contracting? Like WIMBY?</p> <p>Bob: The Authority of the Executive Director policy has a lot of wording like that.</p> <p>Hans: And programmatically, we covered some of that in the objectives, but what about diverse opportunity, access to facilities/programs?</p> <p>Elaine: Eric and I will tackle that.</p> <p>Hans: Ability to pay we covered tonight.</p> <p>Elaine: We can add language to the RFA, like the idea is we want access to all.</p> <p>Hans: I would be interested in seeing the program for low income include all our partners, like soccer. Language like, we partner with you, you offer the low income rate for your constituents. And address effective community engagement in our partnerships is something we are shooting for.</p> <p>Doug: I can see we want to look at what procedures we have in place, but how do we know we are doing well? How do we measure our success? We talked about having a consultant come in, but that could be expensive. Is there something we can do along that line? An outside assessment of how we are doing.</p> <p>Bob: Like an audit?</p> <p>Doug: An outsider looking at things as an auditor might.</p> <p>Elaine: Abby, does SURJ do that?</p> <p>Abby: I'll talk to them next week. I think the best thing is to follow the lead of how others are doing it. I don't think we need to reinvent how to do this. The school district just got \$50k for their racial equity program. We should see what they are doing as well as SURJ for the first step. I will follow up with Janie Starr.</p>	
<p>Staff Reports</p>	<p><u>Camping at Lisabeula and Pt Rob</u></p> <p>Elaine: At the last meeting, you approved this, but there was a concern about the beach spot at LB. Jason, Eric, Erin and I met there and considered other options. The forest is marshy; also, the alders are old and come down a lot – not safe. We have minimized the beach spot and will surround it with pompous grass to conceal it a bit. We don't want to fence it, because then you invite nefarious behavior. But this delineates it a bit. We also identified a second smaller spot to the north of the parking area that we are going to give a</p>	

try, and potentially offer two spots. There wasn't a good option for getting away from the beach. The solution seems to be to make it less obvious.

We are in the process of making signage. Reviewing Vashon Adventures reservation forms this week. We spoke to the Water Trails folks, and they are really supportive of it. Most of their sites are fee paid. ETA is a couple weeks out.

Hans: If folks show up without a reservation, might they use it anyway?

Elaine: Assuming if they have a phone on them, they can make a reservation right then. We won't be Nazi about this. I have explained to the gate attendants to be agreeable. But if a reservation was made, they would have priority.

Hans: I don't have concerns about the beach site. The tall grass is a good buffer idea. If you can add a second site in the back, that's a good thing.

Elaine: We are moving forward to that.

Hans: We said we are leaving it up to you to work out the fees. I would favor on the lower side. We want the business to work for them, but we aren't making a lot of money on this. I would encourage it being on the affordable side.

Elaine: We are going with consistent with MIMP. \$17.50 per night and a 10% concession fee.

Bob: One of the big alders at Pt Rob is leaning over, and it will fall and go through the kayak rack. We need to remove that. We had an arborist look at it, but it looks precarious to me. It's right at the bottom of the steps.

Ober Park Playground

Elaine: I sent you all the survey results, so I won't go into too many details. In summary:

Number of survey participants: 220

Playground equipment: Option 3

Color: Rainforest

Exercise Equipment: Option 1

Color: Rainforest

I mentioned in the past that the reason we went with this vendor was due to their grant program that comes up in August. The sales rep contacted me last week that it is now open. On Friday I applied for the vendor grant, which would cover 50% of the cost of the play systems. If we get it, we may save ourselves \$40,000. We might want to add another piece of equipment, add drainage, or save it. It would be our money we are putting in this.

Doug: When will the project be?

Elaine: In the Fall due to the conditions of the grant, and we don't want to close the playground while the weather is nice. Likely October.

October Property Tax Receipts

Elaine: We have recently discussed concerns about levy receipts through the COVID situation. On June 23, the King County Council approved a motion sponsored by Councilmember Reagan Dunn that would allow taxpayers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to spread out payments from April and October over a period

	<p>of up to 18 months. King County Executive Dow Constantine accelerated implementation of the motion, making the program immediately available to taxpayers in need. “To help our taxpayers cope with the financial impacts of the pandemic, I’ve asked our Treasury staff to expedite the payment plan option so that it is readily available starting in July for any residential or commercial taxpayer who was not able to pay their property taxes by this year’s June 1 property tax deadline,” Constantine said. I don’t know how this will affect us, but it concerns me.</p> <p>Doug: What do they mean “people affected by COVID-19?” We are all affected by COVID-19.</p> <p>Elaine: People unable to pay their property taxes because of lay-offs. I don’t know of the vetting process.</p> <p>Doug: Presumably people have paid April, so this will mostly be October.</p>	
<p>Adjourn 8:05 pm</p>	<p>Doug: Move to adjourn Karen: Second Pass 5-0</p>	
<p>Executive Session</p>	<p>Charges against Employee</p>	

Minutes by: Elaine Ott-Rocheford