



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MAY 18, 2017

## **Call To Order:**

Chair Poor called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

## **Roll Call:**

Chair Poor, Vice Chair Westberg, Secretary Christy, Trustee Bender, and Trustee Olson were present. Councilmember Wisenteiner arrived at 6:30 PM. Absent: Trustee Hildebrandt.

## **Staff Present:**

Paul West, Park Operations Superintendent  
Alaine Sommargren, Natural Resources Manager  
Andrew Prince, Trails and Urban Forestry Specialist

## **Minutes:**

Chair Poor called for a motion to approve the March minutes. Trustee Westberg made the motion, seconded by Trustee Olson.

**Approve the minutes of the March 16, 2017 meeting.**

**Motion passed 5-0.**

**Public Appearances:** There were no public appearances.

## **Regular Business:**

(I) Off-leash dog education updates – Paul West

Paul reported that he had a walk last Saturday in Pioneer Park NW. He had one attendee. Another event is scheduled for Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 PM. Voice control classes are scheduled for this summer. Jennifer Kolar will be running these classes, which will be held at different parks across the city. The 'Dogs in Mercer Island Parks' brochures continue to be circulated.

Paul provided an overview of the progress regarding the dog leash issues and education program implemented during the past year. He provided a summary of the Trust Board's decisions and efforts to improve these issues. Staff do not have an evaluation plan at this time. Three issues to be evaluated regarding the dog leash issues include (1) Are dogs jumping on people? (2) Are dog owners picking up dog waste? (3) Are dogs doing damage off trail? Paul noted the challenges inherent in doing a survey to assess dog impacts.

Paul suggested that Trustees may want to consider doing their own assessment during weekends or weekday evenings when the park is busiest. Staff are open to other ideas to evaluate the dog owner education program. Paul noted the email sent by Trustee Hildebrandt with his positive impressions since the inception of the dog owner education efforts.

## Discussion

Trustees inquired about feedback from Officer Ormsby and whether she has issued more tickets or warnings. Staff will get information from Officer Ormsby for the July Trust Board meeting. Trustees reported that poor dog behavior has not been observed during their walks through the park the past couple of months. Continuing to monitor during the summer months will be important as park use

increases. Trustees agreed to continue with the education plan for dog owners, but did not make a decision about an evaluation method.

(II) Bike Trail Resurfacing Update – Paul West

Paul met with Clint Morris, Mercer Island's Street Engineer, who is responsible for street paving projects for the City. The three prescriptions to be used on the trail include: (1) cut the asphalt and roots, and repave, (2) cut the asphalt, but do not cut the roots; put gravel over the roots and ramp over them, (3) place asphalt over existing asphalt where there was less grade change and higher risk to damaging roots if asphalt was pulled up. Paul received bids for this work. The patching will take place this summer. The accepted bid came in at \$17,000, which was lower than expected. The project will take about one week.

(III) 2017 Trails Work Plan – Andrew Prince

Andrew presented the 2017 Trails Work Plan and provided an overview of accomplishments from 2016, including repairs on the Engstrom Loop Trail and the Bridge Trail. He noted that the Fox Trail re-route was completed in the SE quadrant. In 2017, additional work will be done on the Engstrom Loop Trail and the Ravine Trail to deal with erosion issues. He noted that staff is looking to extend the railing on the Bridge Trail bridge because it is a common corridor for dogs to run into the creek, resulting in hillside erosion and loss of vegetation.

Andrew plans to develop a new trail plan for Pioneer Park to address ongoing maintenance issues. A completed plan would present a variety of re-route and closure options to be assessed by Parks leadership and the Open Space Conservancy Trust Board. A draft proposal will be presented to the Trust Board within the next year.

Discussion

Trustee Bender asked about the interior trails of the NW Quadrant and would like to see more work to improve muddy conditions there. Andrew noted that this is on the 2017 Work Plan as well. She also inquired about Eagle Scout projects and how those are incorporated into the trails plan.

(IV) Bench Request – Alaine Sommargren

Alaine reported that a bench donation request was made to Parks and Recreation. Alaine provided a map and picture of the proposed bench location. Paul noted that the Trust developed the original bench locations with staff and that final locations are determined by the Trust Board. The bench request is not in one of the current bench locations.

Discussion

Chair Poor asked for additional information about the request. Alaine noted that Diane Mortenson, the Recreation Superintendent, provided the donor with the existing map of available bench locations across the park. The donor prefers that the bench go in the NW quadrant directly across from a giant sequoia tree that he planted many years ago. Trustees discussed different issues and solutions to adding a bench to the proposed space and impacts to the park. Since the new bench is not included in the existing bench plan, a solution discussed would be to add a placard to the adjacent bench. Trustees agreed that they need more information in terms of intentions of memorial bench and the original intent of the tree planting. Staff will provide additional information to the Trust Board and the topic will be taken up at the July meeting.

(V) National Trails Day – Alaine Sommargren

Alaine noted that National Trails Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10 am to noon. Recreation staff will be launching the Letterboxing Kick-Off event. The event usually attracts about 100 children. Parks and Recreation invited the Trust Board to have an information table at the event in the NW Quadrant. Trustees decided to have a table at the event. Staff will provide a box of information and flyers for the Trust to use that day.

(VI) Quadrant Reports – Trustees

SE Quadrant - Trustee Olson and Trustee Hildebrandt  
The trails are holding up despite the rainy weather.

NW Quadrant - Vice Chair Westberg and Secretary Christy  
Trustees reported seeing a number of owls active in the quadrant.

NE Quadrant – Chair Poor and Trustee Bender  
The quadrant is in good condition.

Trustee inquired about Engstrom Open Space maintenance issue with a big leaf maple that fell. Trails staff will check on this.

(VII) Next Meeting – Chair  
The next meeting is scheduled for July 20, 2017

**Adjournment:** 6:53 pm

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Geraldine Poor, Chair

Attest:

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Kim Frappier, Scribe