

# MINUTES

## Portland Parks Conservancy - Blue Sky Commission

September 6, 2017

5:30 - 7:00 PM

Portland Public Library - Room 4

### I. Introductions (20 mins)

- All members of Blue Sky Commission in attendance, in addition to Lucas St. Clair, Dennis Hoey of the Portland Press Herald, and one community member.

### II. Background (20 mins) - Lucas St. Clair

- Lucas had a series of meetings with the City and local stakeholders and philanthropists about this idea and it was generally met with enthusiasm.
- Lucas decided it was worth pursuing the idea of a creating a foundation that would care for our parks and be additive to the current infrastructure of support.
- Great potential for support from larger companies in Portland that are invested in making the City a more livable place for their employees.
- The goal of the foundation should be to make itself eventually obsolete.
- We will want to be deliberative about which projects we are choosing to fund at first as we will want a couple of shorter-term victories, and we will want to understand that these initial projects will define our work. Develop a rubric for funding.

### III. Review of Deliverables and Timeline (15 mins)

- Simon has conducted about ten background interviews with executives of parks foundations and conservancies across the country - link to these interviews has been shared with BSC.
- In addition, Simon has filed Articles of Incorporation and is working through 501c3 nonprofit application.
- The BSC will meet 5-6 times between now and Thanksgiving, with the following deliverables charged to the group:
  - Proposed mission and value statements
  - Governance structure and bylaws

- Operational guidelines
- Resource requirements and job description(s)
- Proposed MOU with City
- Year one implementation plan (Simon will draft)
- All of this work from the BSC will be a proposal to the eventually Board of the foundation. The Board can then accept or edit these documents.

#### IV. Policy Discussion (30 mins)

- Multiple questions about current fundraising and park financing processes. Agreed that we will have representation from the City and/or Parks Commission at our next meeting to answer outstanding questions.
- Questions raised about naming of foundation as a “conservancy” as opposed to a “foundation.” Agreed that naming would be revisited by BSC.
- Discussion about MOU examples distributed beforehand:
  - Importance of working relationship between City and foundation
  - Foundation should be helpful but retain autonomy
  - Important for foundation to not replace funding obligations of the City
  - Cultivation of board members will be crucial and a task of the BSC.
  - How will the foundation formally take guidance from the City?
  - Make sure that we build a commitment to equity into the MOU.
  - Detail process for how dollars will be accounted.
- Discussion about the purpose and mission of the foundation.
  - Kate Snyder: When raising funds for PEF, it is important to communicate to potential donors how good the schools already are. Replicate for parks work?
  - With the mission, it is all about the verbs
  - Positive verbs: aligning, supporting, inspiring, celebrating, sustaining, enriching, generating
  - Negative verbs: building, transforming, developing, improving, restoring
  - Preferred missions: Minneapolis, San Francisco (talk about public support and civic engagement), Pittsburgh (“in partnership w/ gov’t + community”), Austin
  - Two parts: A) aligning w/ civic engagement, B) aligning to do what (and how); simple and short!

#### V. Next Meetings (5 mins)

- Next two meetings are on September 20 (East End Community Center) and October 4 (Riverton Community Center). Both are from 5:30-7:00 PM.

VI. Adjourn

**Blue Sky Commission Members:** Jessica Burton, Diane Davison, Sally Deluca, Casey Prentice, Kate Snyder, Kate Swan Malin