LYNNWOOD PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
August 7, 2013

10. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

20. Roll Call

Boardmember Aldrich  Parks Planner Cowan
Boardmember Cheek  Marketing/Outreach Supervisor Olson
Boardmember Gilbertson Senior Center Supervisor Grafton
Boardmember Hildebrandt Administrative Assistant Flesher
Boardmember Megill


40. Written Communications – None.

50. Public Comments – None.

60. Comments from Boardmembers.

60.1 Boardmember Gilbertson expressed serious concerns about the City Council not taking action on the Golf Course consultant’s recommendations. He suggested that the Board make a strong recommendation that Council act now. Delay continues to hurt the Golf Course operation. To do nothing is wrong.

60.2 Boardmember Cheek reported visiting Scriber Lake Park and seeing the new boardwalk. It is a beautiful space.

60.3 Boardmember Hildebrandt reported attending her first Neighborhood Night Out event. The program was really nice and the City’s participation was appreciated.

60.4 Boardmember Megill also attended a National Night Out event. It was nice to see the different City departments in attendance.

70. Resolutions and Other Business.

70.1 Comprehensive Plan Discussion.

Boardmember Hildebrandt requested a list of parks with their dates of development.

Boardmember Gilbertson requested a list of past grants received for park acquisition and development.

Senior Center Programs

Senior Center Supervisor Mary-Anne Grafton indicated that Lynnwood is a leader in the community in terms of preparing for the “silver tsunami,” and redefining senior centers as community centers for people 62 and above. Ms. Grafton rarely uses the term “senior.” Boomers don’t want to be called “seniors” unless there is a discount involved, and then only for the duration of the discount. In order to adapt to the changing demographics of the county, we have to be nimble in preparing for the group that is coming in.
Lynnwood’s staff is very deliberately friendly and customer service focused. Many patrons are uncertain about coming to the center, and staff tries to be very welcoming. This has earned Lynnwood the reputation as the friendly center. Staff also encourages positivity in its patrons.

Ms. Grafton and her staff work hard to pay attention to what people say they want in their center. Current programming includes unbelievably popular year-round outdoor recreation programs and remarkable trips with creative itineraries. The goal is to provide diversity in terms of interest and cost and accessibility.

Ms. Grafton explained the strongest resource of the center is the staff, who are functional, focused and supportive of each other.

It is amazing what’s been done with the current space. 80-90 volunteers contributed close to 4 FTEs last year at the front desk, in the kitchen, as trip assistants and as facilitators. Sponsorships have been secured for almost all of our events. Staff has done its best to utilize the space by capitalizing on access to the Recreation Center, and also be allowing access for the Recreation Center patrons to use Senior Center rooms for party rentals on the weekends.

The Lynnwood Senior Center has the most diverse fitness program in Snohomish County, including 12 weekly evidence-based classes shown to prevent falls such as enhance fitness, Tai Chi for Better Balance, SAIL classes, yoga, Pilates and Zumba gold.

Ms. Grafton highlighted some of the issues that need to be addressed and overcome:

- **Space.** The Senior Center lost over 2,000 square feet in moving to this facility. We are not able to come close to the output of programs, which are down about 40-50 programs per week, and memberships have dropped accordingly. Lynnwood will soon become the smallest senior center in south Snohomish County. What Lynnwood deserves is a Senior Center that is over 20,000 square feet. The current space is just over 4,000 square feet.

- **A Quality Wrap-Around Fall Prevention Program.** We have the will and knowledge, but we don’t have the staff or the space.

- **Busses.** If we had more busses for trips, we could be doing more of our mission-based activities and bringing in more revenues. All trips cover their costs. The Senior Center also needs a bus that is accessible. The current bus cannot safely accommodate scooters.

- **Parking and Disabled Parking.**

- **A Commercial Kitchen.**

- **Elimination of the Business License Requirement for Contract Instructors.**

- **Social Media.** The city’s prohibition on social media is problematic and limiting. We have a vibrant community that is well-engaged in technology and social media, and we are doing ourselves a huge disservice by not using that tool.

- **Lack of Cultural Diversity.** Lynnwood’s membership, volunteers and staff do not reflect the cultural diversity of this community. Ms. Grafton has participated in trainings and done outreach. As much as we have done it has
not been enough. That is a serious challenge to be overcome in this community.

Boardmember Gilbertson asked if the Senior Center was receiving support from the Verdant Health Commission. Ms. Grafton responded that it was not currently; she hopes to submit a request for a fall prevention program, but lack of staffing makes such projects difficult to accomplish.

Boardmember Hildebrandt asked about the funding source for the multicultural senior center. Ms. Grafton responded that Senior Services of Snohomish County funds the program; Lynnwood will be able to do some really firm partnering with that program.

Boardmember Aldrich asked about the benefits of being close to the Recreation Center. Ms. Grafton responded that it offsets lack of programming space at the Senior Center to run fitness classes. The proximity also encourages Senior Center members to use the Recreation Center. And the Senior Center has gained members who have always used the Recreation Center but never visited a Senior Center.

Boardmember Aldrich asked what the Board could do for Ms. Grafton and for the Senior Center. Ms. Grafton responded that the Board could advocate for changes to the business license regulations and for the need to utilize social media. And the Senior Center could benefit from more money, more space and more parking.

Cultural Arts Programs and Event
Marketing/Outreach Supervisor Olson manages marketing for the department and community outreach and healthy communities programs for the City. She and her staff do a lot of things that fit under the general umbrella of community, but do not run any revenue-generating programs.

The City used to have an amazing cultural arts program with 2 FTE of highly trained, creative staff. Budget cuts eliminated the staff and most of the City’s enrichment programming – art classes, etc. Some of it has remained and classes have been redistributed to various other recreation supervisors, depending on the type of class.

Shakespeare in the Park, which was once staffed and paid for by the City, is now performed free of charge by the two regular troupes who are compensated only with “pass the hat” donations at the shows. The troupes are losing money to perform at Lynnwood, but they love coming to here because of the deep Shakespeare history in Lynnwood. Both of the troupes are very excited about the Lynndale Park Amphitheater improvement project.

The library gallery, a rotating exhibit of local artists, was once managed by the Cultural Arts staff, but is now exclusively managed by volunteers from the Arts Commission. Our partnership of managing the rotating art exhibit at the Lynnwood Convention Center was eliminated.

WonderStage was a hugely popular weekly summer performance series that was also eliminated.

The City still has responsibility for maintenance of the public art collection.
Recreation Superintendent Faber is the official contact for all arts programming.
Ms. Olson noted that the Community Outreach and Health Communities programs are going through transition, discontinuing some things we’ve done and ramping up for new programs.

Get Movin’ is a county-wide collaborative program. That collaborative has suffered devastating resource blows, particularly in terms of staffing. It’s not likely that Lynnwood will have the same amount of time to devote to the program next year and it will likely not continue, although an official decision has not been made. It has been excellent in terms of bringing awareness to youth obesity, but there is not strong evidence that it has been effective in achieving behavior changes or that the program is reaching the intended population. Today, our healthy communities program is planning the next 5-10 years and Get Movin’ is the foundation for what we’re doing.

Boardmember Cheek asked if childhood obesity wasn’t one of the Snohomish Health District priorities, hence a conflict to discontinue Get Movin’. Ms. Olson responded that staff is engaged in the Health District’s CHIP for youth and adult obesity, which will address youth obesity using a different platform. The CHIPS project is more collaborative and it has more energy behind it.

Ms. Olson indicated that her staff also administers the City’s volunteer program, monitoring and tracking all boards and commissions positions. Ms. Julie Moore is the intake person for all board and commission applicants and reports to City Council twice a year. Staff is doing a process improvement for the City’s volunteer management program, using Volgistics software. Staff also manages the City’s annual event for volunteers. We try to create opportunities for volunteers when we can.

Boardmember Megill suggested using volunteers to manage other volunteers. Ms. Olson noted that our wide variety of tasks/needs makes it difficult to train someone to be able to do what we’re doing. We acknowledge the value and benefit of volunteers and we would like to do more with volunteers.

Ms. Olson indicated that the Outreach team is also responsible for various events such as the annual MLK event in collaboration with the college and YWCA and several other partners, Stand Against Racism events in partnership with YWCA and a Health Care Forum coming up in October. Our healthy communities program is three-pronged, dealing with policy, infrastructure and programs. We’re getting ready to write a strategic plan that will, hopefully, be adopted City-wide. Infrastructure items include walking paths, bike lanes, linkages multi-choice corridors. Programming might be something else that addresses youth obesity. We’ve launched our community garden program and hope to be a resource to drive more green space in the city of Lynnwood. Our Safe Routes to School grant included a Walk to School event as part of the grant. We also have an internal City wellness program that kicked off this year.

Past Events:
- Lynn-o-Rama
- Float Program and Parade
- Egg Hunt Events
- 4th of July
- Civic Lights/Lynnwood Lights
- 50th Birthday Celebrations
- WonderStage
Current Events:
- Get Movin’ Kick-off
- Shakespeare in the Park
- Stand Against Racism
- MLK
- Celebrate Food Festival

Community Events:
- Egg Hunt – LifePoint Church
- Alderwood Terrace Car Show
- Celebrate Schools 5K Run/Walk
- PaR 4 Kids Golf Tournament

Future Events:
Ms. Olson indicated that Celebrate! is a proposed new signature event, a music/dance festival with family activities that highlight the heritage and cultural diversity in Lynnwood and South Snohomish County. We have heard from the community, through visioning and other avenues, that they want a signature event in Lynnwood. There is also a desire to celebrate the diversity of our citizens. This is a natural fit for us to move forward in the development of a new event in Lynnwood. The goal is not for the City to be sole producer of such an event, but rather to have the community take part in putting it on. Staff is putting in great effort to engage the community to participate in this event with us. We are in exploratory mode and are considering the possibility of expanding to a 2-day event and including more of an adult component. There might be an opportunity to get tourism monies from the City and from Snohomish County if we develop and design an event that gets overnight space booked at local lodging. The proposal still needs to go to the administration and City Council for comment.

Boardmember Megill suggested contacting key people in the ethnic communities to get them involved in the Celebrate! event. Ms. Olson indicated that the initial thought was to have a Folk Life feel. The Diversity Commission is on board with this idea and two members, from the Filipino community and Latino community, will be very involved. She noted that we have to have business sponsors, but first we have to define what the event to identify the sponsor opportunities. We want food to be a component, but we also need to bite off what we can chew. We’re still working ideas out.

Boardmember Aldrich suggested involving the Eagles or Kiwanis. Ms. Olson responded that Rotary is the only group that has said they are on board thus far, but staff will continue to reach out to the other service clubs.

Boardmember Gilbertson was glad staff is planning an event. It is consistent with the City’s community vision. Lynnwood has such limited resources. The City of Seattle has
struggled with it as well. Business sponsors have to come to the table. Ms. Olson noted that getting sponsorships from local businesses is a challenge in Lynnwood as many are national chains. When the City used to have a special events program, it was a with a full-time supervisor and a ½ time coordinator. Now that is not even a part of the program.

Boardmember Megill feels it is disheartening to see what we had that we don’t have anymore. Ms. Olson noted that events are not a core service for parks and recreation, and budget cuts have been compounded by loss of event space. Even with funding and staffing resources, something things are not coming back.

Lynnwood is a culturally diverse City, and our events need to be inclusive. It will be multicultural in nature but it won’t be billed that way. Ms. Olson noted that the board used to be heavily engaged in special events, selling cookies at 4th of July, for instance. She welcomed the board’s participation on the Celebrate! steering committee.

Boardmember Cheek indicated that he is tired of going to other cities for events on the weekends. Maybe the board needs to play a role in volunteer coordination – taking a leadership role. Ms. Olson noted that many cities hold community celebrations in big spaces with lots of parking, which is a challenge for us. Boardmember Cheek suggested using shuttles.

Ms. Olson noted that the Farmer’s Market has several significant hurdles to get over to launch the Market for 2014.

Ms. Olson indicated that social media has been repeatedly identified as a high need for our programs. It is a tool that can be managed like our other tools. We’re hoping that the administration’s perspective will change on this front. The Tourism program is working on an RFP for a new Tourism Website and social media is a component of the RFP. Boardmember Gilbertson suggested that it’s a no brainer to utilize social media. Boardmember Cheek noted that Boston police used Twitter to communicate most of the updates about the Boston Marathon bombing.

80. Staff Reports.

90. Messages from the City Council. None.

100. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.