

**CITY OF OLYMPIA  
SPECIAL STUDY SESSION  
MINUTES  
April 21, 2009**

PRESENT: Mayor Doug Mah, Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Kingsbury, Councilmembers Craig Ottavelli, Rhenda Iris Strub, Karen Messmer, and Joan Machlis. Councilmember Joe Hyer was excused.

The Special Study Session of the Olympia City Council convened at 5:10 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2009.

**Parks, Arts & Recreation Plan - Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) Presents Fundable Projects/Program List**

Councilmember Messmer identified this meeting as an informal "check-in" and she described how the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) and the Olympia Arts Commission have provided input thus far in the planning process.

David Hanna, Associate Director of Olympia Parks, Arts and Recreation Department (OPARD), provided an overview of the Parks, Arts and Recreation Plan process to date, and reviewed the agenda.

Brenda Bulger, PRAC Chair, gave an overview of the process since the public workshop. She also gave an overview of the "values-based approach". She further laid out the suggestion by Councilmember Messmer regarding the "bucket" approach to funding. Mayor Mah asked whether the projects were "balanced" between the values and needs expressed by the public. Mr. Hanna stated that all projects resulted from values, but no effort was made to balance the projects across the buckets.

Jonathan Turlove, OPARD Associate Planner, showed how most projects touched on multiple values. Mr. Hanna stated that we could look at the "balance" to see if there is a trend emerging that would characterize our vision. Mr. Turlove also presented the draft Preliminary Funding Estimate and Proposed Projects matrix. He outlined the various funding sources for the plan, and identified the "fixed" expenditures. The available funding balance was distributed into three funding "buckets". He identified every component of the matrix and how the projects had been prioritized.

Mayor Mah inquired why the 2% increased each year, but all other funding sources did not increase annually. Mr. Turlove stated that project costs were not inflated over time. Councilmember Messmer asked how the projects included in the Parks and Pathways Funding Measure Information Sheet compared with the projects that had been placed in the "buckets."

Ms. Bulger briefly described the approach that was taken regarding placement of projects into each of the three buckets, and stated that the estimated costs were in balance with the anticipated revenue during each bucket period.

Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury inquired why Ward Lake was not proposed as funded while community park land acquisition was proposed in Bucket #1. He is concerned that more than half of the money in Bucket #1 is slated to acquire additional ball fields. Councilmember Ottavelli asked whether our ball field analysis factored in the Regional Athletic Center and fields in Tumwater.

Councilmember Machlis asked where the projected employee full time equivalents (FTE) funding would come from. Mr. Hanna stated that some FTE costs could be funded from the 2% monies.

Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury stated that he thought the direction to staff was to develop the projects and requisite staffing needs concurrently. Councilmember Messmer stated that it would be appropriate to have a discussion regarding revenue projections. She was concerned about the conservative numbers identified for impact fees. Mr. Turlove stated that we are currently collecting at only 50% of the full impact fees.

Councilmember Messmer questioned whether we have enough major maintenance dollars to address our maintenance backlog, as well as address the future major maintenance needs of the new projects that we are proposing. Mr. Hanna stated there is a \$2 million maintenance backlog.

Councilmember Machlis asked whether we have a park within ½ mile of all residents. Mr. Turlove stated that we had done a GIS analysis to ensure that this is the case. The analysis has identified four gaps that will be addressed in the plan.

Mayor Mah stated that the debt service shown on Attachment #2 is paying off the \$10 million bond purchased for land acquisition; last payment in 2016. No additional bonds are currently proposed in the funding proposal.

Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury stated that his vision for the Arts Center/Art Space combines both into one project and that the planning stage falls in the 2009-2012 bucket.

Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury was concerned about the "policy decision" that he thought was made when we acquired a fresh water swim beach at Ward Lake property, instead of Yelm Highway community park.

City Manager Steve Hall clarified that this meeting was to get Council direction needed prior to beginning to write the draft plan.

Mayor Mah stated that he thought this represented a very strategic approach.

Councilmember Machlis stated that some items are more time sensitive than others, and that there should be other criteria for timeliness.

Councilmember Messmer stated that open space is not shown early on in the planning horizon.

Mr. Hall suggested that Council create the guiding criteria.

Councilmember Ottavelli suggested that a "no net loss" approach is utilized for prioritizing projects and used Yauger Park Replacement as an example.

Mr. Hanna suggested that based upon available time left, Council should give staff guidance regarding the criteria for prioritizing projects into the buckets or suggest a process to follow to move this forward and bring it back to Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury stated his concern about starting new programs when we could be partnering with others. Councilmember Ottavelli had questions and observations regarding the Teen Center, Potential Westside Plaza project, and land acquisition for the eventual replacement of Yauger Park.

Ms. Bulger asked Council how they want to proceed. Steve Hall stated this will need a ½ day workshop. Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury wanted to move community park dollars from Bucket #1 and put money into more facilities and less programs. He stated we should get a fully developed dog park done now and get bigger priorities done earlier.

Councilmember Strub needs discussion about obstacles encountered in trying to fully develop the dog park now and wants it in Bucket #1.

Mr. Hall stated it is a good time to buy land. Councilmember Strub stated that our development regulations cause the price of a fully-developed dog park to sky-rocket. Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury asked if we have staffing to do Phase I development at a rate of one park per year. Councilmember Messmer stated that the results from the public input workshop showed people want access to sites we have already purchased and neighborhood walking connections. She wants Ward Lake in Bucket #1 and wants progress toward opening it. Councilmember Machlis wants to develop community parks sooner and stated we need to look at the possibility of a re-finance so that we do not have zero debt service in 2016.

Councilmember Ottavelli hears people are happy with the high priority on land acquisition and IUMPS.

Councilmember Messmer described the value of levels of service (LOS) standards.

Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury asked what the criteria is for acquiring park land over expanding facilities at properties that we already own. Mr. Hall asked Council for process suggestions. Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury asked if it would be valuable for staff to meet individually with each Councilmember. Mr. Hanna stated that staff needs 3-4 basic strategies to provide guidance.

Mayor Pro Tem Kingsbury liked the idea of Council-determined criteria. Councilmember Machlis wants more balance between acquisition and needs more information on acquisition. She asked if there needs to be a strategic acquisition fund. Councilmember Ottavelli stated there needs to be an over-arching policy decision and also wants to learn more.

It was determined that Mr. Turlove will set up individual meetings with each Councilmember.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.