

VASHON PARK DISTRICT (VPD) BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING MINUTES

Teleconference, 7:00 pm
DATE: Tuesday, November 9, 2021

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

ISSUE	DISCUSSION AND OUTCOME	FOLLOW UP
Call To Order – Review Agenda	Hans called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.	
Public Comment	<p>Kevin A: I want to comment on the use of the Skate park this year. The public does not understand the reduced hours due to an off-season. There have also been some staffing issues.</p> <p>Hans: So your question gets at why we don't have more hours presently?</p> <p>Kevin: Correct, especially since the weather is not conducive to outdoor activity. Since we have an indoor facility, why are the hours reduced?</p> <p>Elaine: I know you were part of the FB discussion today, but you may not have seen the follow-up discussion I commented on. The hours were set based on budget. This year, we were pro-rationed, meaning our levy dollars were reduced due to higher level taxing agencies taking higher rates. We lost 11.5% of our levy dollars as a result. We had to be conservative with our recreation programming budget this year, which included the BARC staff. That is what drove how the hours were set. I hope you also saw that for 2022 we have doubled our recreation programming budget. Later this evening I will be presenting that we would go from what is now 5 hours per day Thursday – Sunday to 6 days per week 8 hours per day. We wish to greatly improve upon availability.</p> <p>Kevin: That makes sense. I am aware of the pro-rationing issue. My next concern is issues of staffing availability. It was closed this past weekend due to staffing issues, even though it was scheduled to be open. What are we doing to prevent that?</p> <p>Elaine: We had a last minute problem with one staff member. I can't get into the details on that here due to confidentiality reasons, but that drove the closure over the weekend. We were unable to find available staff to fill in. That will happen from time to time. It is important that we have the facility staffed due to drug and alcohol use there in the past. Also due to COVID, we have KC requirements we must adhere to.</p> <p>Kevin: That is understandable. It is good to hear you are aware of the concerns. I appreciate that you are involved with the FB discussions in that forum. Not everybody comes to public meetings.</p> <p>Elaine: Thank you for your feedback. It helps us solidify the plan.</p> <p>Hans: We appreciate that you have made time to let us know your interests. We will follow up on all this.</p> <p>Armen Yousoufian: What are the impacts from the Hospital District on your budget?</p> <p>Elaine: We formed a new group of representatives from all the taxing agencies on Vashon. We meet every three months or so and discuss our levy rates, challenges, etc. It looks like nobody's rates will affect us this year. We were successful this past April in passing a bill in the state legislature that moved us out of the \$5.90 structure and into the 50 cent gap. We were pro-rationed this year in the \$5.90 structure. We now have access to all available funds in the</p>	

	<p>1% Constitutional Model. The short answer to your question is that we will not be affected in 2022, unless the state has had a huge increase, but that is unlikely. There are some upcoming levy lid lifts from KC roads and library that could be on the ballot in 2022 for 2023. Potentially, we could be pro-rationed from those rates in 2023.</p> <p>Sylvia: Katrin Fletter and I are interested in a fenced dog park. We'll be attending board meetings when you talk about budget. We appreciate the opportunity to see your deliberations.</p>	
BARC Update	<p>Judith Neary: My husband and I manage RJ's Kids. We wrote two grants for BARC. A brief update – the 2019 grant was a YAF grant. COVID derailed the process for getting a portion of the project built. In 2020, we applied for and received the RCO large grant. The two grants will be combined. The total dollar value is @ \$426,000. The 2020 grant only requires a 25% match – typically it is 50%. The KC permit process took almost 2 years. It was finally released in September. The tentative start date is 2/2022. I am working on several private grants for art pieces.</p> <p>We were competing with VPD for a grant for improvements to the indoor building. We did not get that. We will try again. Jeremy has been a huge help.</p> <p>Kevin: Are you in need of volunteers?</p> <p>Judith: Yes. A BC ad will go out soon for volunteers and donations.</p> <p>Kevin: The plans were publicized for the small grant. With the large grant, will there be additional features?</p> <p>Judith: We will infill the X and add additional features.</p>	
10.26.21 Minutes; 10.24.21 – 11.5.21 Preliminary Vouchers	<p>Abby: Motion to accept.</p> <p>Doug: Second.</p> <p>Pass 5-0</p>	Motion to accept 10.26.21 Minutes; 10.24.21 – 11.5.21 Preliminary Vouchers Pass 5-0
Budget 2022 – 2nd Draft	<p><u>Resolutions</u></p> <p>Elaine: I told you at the last meeting that there are two Resolutions that must be approved for the Assessor's office and the KC Council by November 30. These resolutions effectively state the levy dollars that we wish to receive based on what is allowable. Need motion to approve.</p> <p>Doug: Motion to approve the 2022 Levy Resolutions - Ordinance 2152 and Resolution 21-32.</p> <p>Josh: Second.</p> <p>Elaine: I get updates from the assessor's office regularly, and sometimes the numbers change.</p> <p><u>Recreation Programming Budget</u></p> <p>Elaine: I was instructed to increase the Recreation budget by \$50,000 to represent \$100k in Recreation Programming. Eric did not add any new activities to his original list, but rather, has expanded those items to be more robust either in the offering itself or for a longer term.</p> <p>He does, however, wish to greatly expand the hours available at BARC. Presently, BARC is open Wednesday – Sunday 8 hours a day in the summer and 5 hours a day through the school season. We wish to staff it 6 days a week, 8 hours a day year-round in 2022. Due to the high need for managing this facility, he wishes to fill a Lead position that would handle staff scheduling and daily issues that arise. Eric would still be the primary manager. This person would work 24 hours in a week (three 8 hour shifts) and be benefited accordingly. That position has been built into this budget. This is</p>	Motion to approve the 2022 Levy Resolutions - Ordinance 2152 and Resolution 21-32.

	<p>not a new position – there used to be a part time BARC “manager” per se before all staff was eliminated during the VES budget reduction days. So this position has essentially been unfilled since 2013.</p> <p>Doug: Do the other items represent a change from what we saw before, or were they incorporated there, as well?</p> <p>Elaine: They were incorporated there, as well. In this budget, they are just more robust, like expanding Concerts in the Park.</p> <p>Doug: What I meant was, have we seen a budget that did not include these same dollar amounts that we are now seeing?</p> <p>Hans: Last meeting, she presented a budget that was \$50,000 in rec programming. Then for this meeting, she sent a budget for \$100,000 in rec programming. In essence, it reduced the cash balance at the end of the year by \$50k.</p> <p>Elaine: It was included in your board packet.</p> <p><u>Fee comparison</u></p> <p>Elaine: At the last meeting you asked me to update the Puget Sound area fee comparison. Three items are provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Our current fee structure. b) Comparison with other Puget Sound area fees. <p>You can see that our lowest fee of \$5.50 per hour, which is our non-profit rental rate, is lowest throughout the region with the next lowest at \$10.00 at South Whidbey. And then upwards from there. In the original budget for the last meeting, I increased by 5%, which is historically what we have done in the past.</p> c) Lodgings rate comparisons – we are in line with if not lower than similar facilities locally. <p>Doug: In some years, we have not had fee increases. As a result, we are actually charging less with inflation. It also explains why our fees are so low. 5% doesn’t even keep up with inflation. We could consider an increase greater than 5% just to keep up.</p> <p>Elaine: The last fee increase was 2018.</p> <p>Abby: I think we should keep our fees as low as possible. I wouldn’t be comfortable with going higher than 5%. People are not comfortable with fee increases.</p> <p>Bob: But some programs need more money, need improvements. We are hesitant to bring the fees in line with others in the industry. I don’t understand the mismatch. It doesn’t make sense to keep them low, because we haven’t done many increases. It seems we should make a correction. Otherwise, we get into a trap. We never get back to where we should be in the first place. We need the money, so let’s get back in line.</p> <p>Doug: I agree with Bob.</p> <p>Josh: I’m somewhere in the middle. I appreciate Abby not wanting to create a burden to people who have budgeted with the current fee in mind. But we do have an opportunity to get closer to where we need to be. I don’t think we need to match what others are doing.</p> <p>Bob: Given that, in some cases we are high, and some we are low, we should get together a committee and look at the individual groupings. Don’t look at it as a broad brush percentage. Do it on a category by category basis.</p> <p>Abby: I would add that it is so expensive to live here. We should raise our rates every few years by an amount people might expect. I would be uncomfortable matching the other agencies. I agree with your approach, Bob.</p>	<p>Action Item</p>
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Hans: Procedurally, we could probably adopt a budget then add a fee increase later. My sense is somewhere in the middle, as well. 5% up from \$5.50 is \$5.75. Without undue burden, we could go higher than that, since we haven't raised rates for 3 or 4 years. We don't need to match the others. We are meeting about the Commons on Friday. We'll see where that goes. You are all acknowledging that you would like to see the taxpayers contribute significantly to the use of the Commons by keeping these rates low. By keeping the rates low, we are saying we would like to see our taxes continue to support the use of facilities. Who wants to be on the committee? – Josh and Bob. The pool is on there that we should consider, as well.

Elaine: And look at the lodging rates, as well.

Hans: And private is like a private family and commercial is like a vendor providing a class?

Elaine: Commercial is somebody who is charging – they are making money of it. Private is in between – so even an individual teaching an exercise class that is just an individual.

Hans: Like a sole proprietor teacher who is getting paid?

Elaine: If they are getting paid, they are commercial. If somebody is doing it not for fee, that is private.

Hans: And a BARC skatepark rental?

Elaine: It's on there.

Kevin: Traditionally, did you ever charge for use of BARC?

Elaine: We did. It wasn't very lucrative, because it was mostly kids. That was the original staffed model before I came in 2013.

Hans: And comps on the vacation rentals. We look pretty in line there – maybe on the low end. We just increased the cleaning fee.

Bob: Do we get complaints from other lodging facilities?

Elaine: We haven't recently. In the past, we would get the concern of us competing with local entities, which is why we attempt to not compete. It's also policy. We keep it pretty much in line with what others are doing. Some local facilities are provided in the comps.

Closing Lodging January – April

Elaine: At the last meeting, you asked me to consider the implications of closing the lodging facilities for the winter. I looked at Point Robinson, considering the points made against closure being 1) a reluctance to not having the facilities available at a discount for Vashon taxpayers; and 2) the extreme difficulty this would be to retain and recruit housekeepers.

Three spreadsheets are provided:

Spreadsheet 1: 2018 was our last normal year before COVID where the bookings were required to be for a week in the summer. Eric relaxed that through COVID, so we had a lot more weekend bookings. We are going back to the old model, since weekend bookings are too labor intensive. In 2018, we made \$3,823 for the year.

Spreadsheet 2: As it is, revenue reflects cash received, even if, for example, we receive \$10,000 in February for August bookings, but we only had one booking in February. Here, I laid in the revenue per booking in that actual month to get

an accurate portrayal of the revenue stream linked to the actual bookings. Expenses reflect the bookings in the month. In this scenario, we would have made \$397 in 2018– a difference of \$3400.

Spreadsheet 3: Now, removing January – April:

- Eliminate revenue
- Wages – still have maintenance and ½ Eric/Cheryl working on future bookings and managing the property, but being full time, their other half wages are merely apportioned elsewhere; no housekeepers.
- Supplies – eliminate
- Equipment rental – porta potties
- Bank Charges – eliminate
- Outside Services – pest control, septic pumping
- Utilities – still have to keep the heat on to keep the houses dry; electricity for security – cut in ½

We would make \$170. We would have lost \$3653 in profit compared to how we manage it now. I would say it's a losing venture.

Bob: That is really helpful putting that together! It makes it really clear.

Doug: I appreciate that, but I don't know what the labor market is for housekeepers. I get the sense that it turns over pretty quickly. How big a difference would that make? Also, if somebody wants to book in February, but we're closed, would they book later when we're open? If so, the comparison you make doesn't reflect that we might get increased bookings for when we are open.

Elaine: I suppose that is possible.

Bob: Then we would have to see if the open month were pretty well booked. There might not be room for them in the open months.

Doug: Under this analysis, we would still be open in the fall.

Elaine: On the other hand, February might have been their booked vacation time, so they would book it elsewhere and not stay with us at all. As for the housekeepers, I wouldn't go messing with hiring and laying off.

Abby: I don't think that's a good idea.

Doug: How long do housekeepers stay with us?

Elaine: We have had ours for a long time. Years.

Hans: Unless you want to pursue this further, Doug, I think we'll continue as is.

Doug: This is the kind of thing we should be looking at. We are something of an outlier being open all year.

RFA Policy

Elaine: I spoke with the auditor about using district funds as scholarships or providing a reduced fee for low income participants. Remember, we received an audit finding in past years for using district funds for scholarships, as this was considered an inappropriate gifting of public funds. She stated that we can do either if we follow the guidance from our attorney, then create a policy that reflects our attorney's guidance.

Our attorney's guidance was that the policy establish the program and adopt low income criteria. There also needs to be a verification mechanism. It does not have to be tax returns, but it has to have some tie to the income level the District is using. If Apple Health, EBT, or Orca Lift Cards have income criteria that works, then using those as evidence

	<p>that the criteria are met would be fine. I think it needs to be specific, so I would have to research them to identify the income levels. I have not that, but I certainly can.</p> <p>Hans: We left this with feeling that the scholarship use and donations are in balance for now. It is an adequate model. But it sounds like if we need to, we can adopt a reduced fee policy based on what you stated in the future. No change to the budget or approach for now.</p> <p><u>General Financial Management Policy</u></p> <p>Elaine: In the current policy, the issue of how we handle the Capital Reserve is an issue. It states that we save to a Capital Reserve to where all forecasted projects for the next five years are in that fund plus 10% for unexpected projects. Well, if all we do is save, does that mean we don't address the projects in the meantime? It doesn't make sense. I suggest we simply say that the Capital Reserve be utilized as we go in response to projects we need to address <u>OR</u> we save for future projects.</p> <p>Bob: The language in there now says the reserve is at a level that would forecast expected projects for the next five years. If those projects are accomplished, then that number decreases over the next 5 years. The reserve would also decrease. If we have \$50 million in projects for the next 5 years and spend \$20 million, we don't need \$50 million in reserves any more – we need \$30 million. It takes care of itself as it is currently worded.</p> <p>Hans: It's not clear. Whether it means you have enough to fund the next 5 years each year, or you have the \$50 million in bank now for the next 5 years. Next year, it's a new 5 years. I read the old language to mean you need to have reserve in hand this year for the next 5 years of projects. That doesn't seem appropriate.</p> <p>Elaine: That's how I read it, too.</p> <p>Abby: That's how I read it, too.</p> <p>Bob: It does seem excessive.</p> <p>Hans: We're not meeting it and never have.</p> <p>Bob: Where did that language come from?</p> <p>Elaine: Scott Harvey wrote that policy.</p> <p>Bob: I like the new language. I move to change the language about the Capital Reserve in the General Financial Management Policy to read as follows: "The Capital Reserve may be fully utilized in a budget year in response to planned and unplanned capital needs, or the Capital Reserve will serve as a 'savings account' for planned and unplanned future projects."</p> <p>Abby: Second.</p> <p>Bob: When does the budget need to be approved?</p> <p>Elaine: We have to have the resolutions in to the County by November 30. The budget does not have to be fully adopted until the end of the year.</p> <p>Josh: Did the layoff happen? In the notes it stated we would need another truck if that does not happen.</p>	<p>Motion to change the language about the Capital Reserve in the General Financial Management Policy to read as follows: "The Capital Reserve may be fully utilized in a budget year in response to planned and unplanned capital needs, or the Capital Reserve will serve as a 'savings account' for planned and unplanned future projects."</p>
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	<p>Elaine: It did not happen yet. The employee got vaccinated at the last minute. We intend to move forward with that by the end of the year.</p> <p>Hans: To Sylvia, if, in the future, we wanted to do a dog park, that would be a future discussion. Right now, there isn't enough known about where that would be located. It doesn't make sense to set aside specific funding. That would be downstream thinking with no consideration for funding right now.</p> <p>Elaine: Just another comment about the dog park, I heard KC is attempting to purchase the field at Misty Isle Farms that serves for the sheep dog trials. There is some consideration of that being a dog park if the sale goes through. Apparently, they are working on an agreement with the seller.</p> <p>Sylvia: I am aware of that.</p>	
Pool Lifeguard Recruitment	<p>Elaine: We are really having a problem with adult lifeguard recruitment, which we need for staffing before and during school hours. Kids cannot work until after school – not even an early morning shift before school. We currently have two adults besides Randy. One likes to work as much as possible, but we cannot allow more than 70 hours per month, or we must pay benefits. The other is about to have shoulder surgery so will be out for awhile – also, he has no interest in working early morning hours.</p> <p><u>Early morning lap swim</u></p> <p>I was contacted recently by a guy who really wants a 6:45 – 7:45 am lap swim. He says he knows of 6 – 10 others who do, as well. They are aware of our staffing issue. They have offered to collectively rent the pool for that hour with the idea that the required two lifeguards be paid a considerably higher wage that would come out of the rental fee as an incentive for taking that shift. He suggested \$50 an hour, but Randy and I thought double the current wage at \$35 an hour would work. That is consistent with what we pay the gatekeepers. This one hour high wage might attract more interest, even though their wage would be \$15 - \$17 an hour for the other hours worked. Just like the gatekeeper position – you need a high wage to attract for the unattractive shifts. This higher wage would require your approval.</p> <p>Bob: I thought we had 4 adults now. Eric, Michael, and Dave? And a woman. Michael is having the surgery. Where will these new lifeguards come from? If it comes from the current guards, that would take away from staffing for existing shifts.</p> <p>Elaine: Randy told me we only have 2 adult guards. But at that, currently nobody wants to work that early shift. By offering the higher wage, it would incentivize them to work that early shift. They would then stay on for later shifts but at their regular wages.</p> <p>Bob: It may be, thought, that they would jump at the chance to guard early then leave a hole later in the day.</p> <p>Elaine: The intent is ultimately to recruit more guards.</p> <p>Hans: And we pay \$15 - \$17 currently?</p> <p>Elaine: It currently is less than that. You may recall from the last meeting's pool discussion we want to increase it to the 15 – 17.</p> <p>Hans: At least. With minimum wage at \$15, you can do anything without training for \$15. Lifeguarding is far more specialized. It's a significant responsibility in addition to the training. I almost feel we are under-paying even at that.</p> <p>Bob: Most of these adults are not doing it for the money. They are doing it as a service to the community. I don't know how much that would influence it. Still, the supply is limited.</p>	

	<p>Elaine: This is one strategy we are attempting while satisfying a requirement from users who want that early morning lap swim.</p> <p>Bob: Are these folks commuters? They can't get back for the late afternoon swim?</p> <p>Elaine: I don't know. They are regular swimmers. Randy knows them.</p> <p>Doug: If we entered into this agreement with these swimmers, what if it doesn't pencil out? Are they paying a flat fee?</p> <p>Elaine: Yes. It's the rental fee -- \$150.</p> <p>Doug: We would know ahead of time, then.</p> <p>Bob: That's an expensive lap swim! Let's get with Randy and discuss it as the advisory group.</p> <p>Hans: The pool rate is not on the fee schedule. The admission fees and the pool rental.</p> <p><u>Benefits Policy</u></p> <p>Elaine: Another idea we came up with for attracting lifeguards is to change us paying the lifeguard certification fees up front rather than reimbursing them after having been here for a year (or two summer seasons). If they left within 6 months, we deduct the fee from their paycheck.</p> <p>Bob: That's a good idea.</p> <p>Elaine: You need to move to approve the change to the Benefits Policy.</p> <p>Josh: I move to approve the change to the Benefits Policy to read "Lifeguard certification fees will be paid up front by VPD for those employed a minimum of 6 months (book not included). Certification fees will be deducted from the final paycheck of those lifeguards who do not stay in VPD's employ for a minimum of 6 months."</p> <p>Doug: Second.</p>	<p>Action Item</p> <p>Action Item</p> <p>Motion to approve the change to the Benefits Policy to read "Lifeguard certification fees will be paid up front by VPD for those employed a minimum of 6 months (book not included). Certification fees will be deducted from the final paycheck of those lifeguards who do not stay in VPD's employ for a minimum of 6 months."</p>
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Vaccination Requirement for Kids	<p>Elaine: We discussed requiring vaccinations for kids who participate in VPD indoor camps and activities, like the Ski School. I was tasked with getting guidance from MRC. They suggested we do ask for proof of vaccination. If they don't have it, require proof of a rapid test within 24 hours of the ski bus trip -- for every time. They said to expect pushback, but they feel strongly that we do this. In addition, all would be masked, have assigned seating, no eating or drinking, and sign a health attestation that they are not exhibiting symptoms even if vaccinated. They are looking into access to a free rapid test on Vashon.</p> <p>If we get a positive case on the bus, they said to follow KC guidelines, which is that vaccinated people don't need to quarantine, but they should get tested twice and stay masked for the next 10 days. Let everyone know who was on the bus, and contact MRC. Unvaccinated kids would need to quarantine in the event of an exposure.</p> <p>If just one case is reported, we don't need to shut down the next weeks trip, but everyone needs to get tested. If we see multiple cases from that trip, we would need to cancel at least the next trip.</p> <p>They are expecting another surge this winter, but it is not expected to be as bad as last winter. There likely will be more exposure on the summit than here on Vashon.</p> <p>All that said, they are currently looking into the legality of this and will get back to us. This is just a report at this point and do not recommend making a final decision. But if we can legally require this, we should follow these protocols.</p> <p>Bob: When is the first ski school bus?</p> <p>Elaine: January. So we have some time.</p> <p>Doug: Did MRC say anything about compliance with these requirements? It's hard to imagine kids being on a bus for 2 hours with this working.</p> <p>Elaine: They said to expect some pushback. We have adult volunteers on the busses, so that will help.</p>	Action Item
Hallowtween Report	Elaine: 90ish middle school kids attended. Great turn out. We'll do it again next year.	
Adjourn 8:20 pm	Bob: Motion to Adjourn Doug: Second Pass 5-0	

Minutes by: Elaine Ott-Rocheford