



OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 15, 2020

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Bender called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM

Chair Marie Bender, Vice Chair Thomas Hildebrandt, Secretary Craig Olson, Trustee Carol Lynn Berseth, Trustee Ethe, and Trustee Geraldine Poor participated remotely using a video teleconferencing platform by Zoom.

Councilmember Lisa Anderl was absent.

Staff participating remotely included: Public Works Director Jason Kintner, City Clerk Deborah Estrada, Parks Operations Manager Alaine Sommargren, and Natural Resources Specialist Kim Frappier.

Chair Bender asked that new Trustee Hillary Ethe introduce herself.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES: There were no public appearances

REGULAR BUSINESS:

(I) Election of Officers

- A. It was moved by Hildebrandt; seconded by Poor to:
Elect Marie Bender to serve as Chair through July 15, 2021.
Agreed by unanimous consent. Motion passed 6-0.
- B. It was moved by Bender; seconded by Berseth to:
Elect Tom Hildebrandt as Vice chair through July 15, 2021.
Agreed by unanimous consent. Motion passed 6-0.
- C. It was moved by Poor; seconded by Hildebrandt to:
Elect Craig Olson to serve as Secretary through July 15, 2021.
Agreed by unanimous consent. Motion passed 6-0.

(II) Review and Consider Approving Minutes of the January 16, 2020 OSCT Regular Meeting

The minutes were revised to correct the titles and names of Trustees.

It was moved by Olson; seconded by Berseth to:
Approve the minutes as amended.
Agreed by unanimous consent. Motion passed: 6-0.

(III) City Operations Update

Park Operations Manager Alaine Sommargren presented an update on the Park Operations team during the last six months related to workforce reductions and the move of the team to the Public Works Department. Public Works Director Jason Kintner provided a summary of the organizational changes to the Public Works Department. He explained that the City of Mercer Island is an organization in transition and presented the proposed biennial structure that City Council will be discussing during 2021-2022

budget planning.

Discussion

Trustees discussed the important role that open spaces play in peoples mental health and wellness, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. They also noted the increased pressure parks and open spaces experience as usership increases. Trustee Poor proposed that the OSCT Board draft a letter to council in support of funding the Open Space program. Chair Bender offered to help draft the letter.

Chair Bender voiced support regarding the proposed Sustainability Manager position and inquired how the position would interface with Park Operations. Public Works Director Kintner explained that the Sustainability Manager would work across departments and programs. If this position is approved by City Council, Chair Bender would like to invite that staff member to attend a Trust Board meeting.

Board Direction: Trustee Poor and Chair Bender to draft a letter to City Council in support of funding the Open Space program in the next biennial budget.

(IV) Review and Consider Update to OSCT Bylaws (first review)

City Clerk Estrada facilitated the review of the OSCT Bylaws with Trustees. She noted that most of the updates made during her review were to bring the OSCT bylaws in closer alignment with the ordinance that created the Trust and to comply with the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA).

Trustees provided feedback on each line item within the bylaws. Topics discussed and decisions made regarding the bylaws include:

- Striking the limit to two terms.
- Removal of trustees: Only include language derived from the ordinance and do not include reference to the municipal code. Trustees requested that Staff ask the City Attorney's Office to review the language included in the municipal code in 2021 to determine if it should be added to the OSCT Bylaws.
- Refinement of election procedures.

Board Direction: Request that the City Attorney review the language regarding Removal of Trustees in 2021.

(V) Quadrant Reports

NW Quadrant: Trustee Poor and Secretary Olson

Trustees reported out on trail conditions after the recent large storm event. Secretary Olson noted that there is a Buddha statue and asked if this should be left in place. Trustees agreed that this is acceptable right now and is not causing a disturbance in the park.

NE Quadrant: Vice Chair Hildebrandt and Trustee Berseth
Trustee Berseth noted improvements to trails.

SE Quadrant: Chair Bender and Trustee Ethe

Staff reported that the City had received complaints about manure in the trails. The issue was referred to the City's CRT team who connected with the Saddle Club to remedy the issue. Trustee Ethe noted that she did not observe manure in the trails during her recent site visit.

Natural Resources Specialist Kim Frappier reported that EarthCorps would be hosting a small-scale volunteer planting event in Pioneer NW in honor of The City's 3rd Annual Arbor Day. Councilmember Wendy Weiker is scheduled to do a special planting and Arbor Day address that will be videotaped.

(VI) Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2020.

Adjournment: 7:30 PM

Berseth moved to adjourn; Hildebrandt seconded.

Agreed by unanimous consent. Motion passed: 6-0.

Marie Bender, Chair

Attest:

Kim Frappier, Scribe