



# Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

4:30 p.m.

Vancouver City Hall

Aspen Room

### Commissioners Present:

Cavaness, Fletcher, Wille, Robbins, Luce, Striplin

### Commissioners Absent:

Thompson, Piland and Panter

**Guests:** Jeff Towery and Sean Jansen

### Item 1: Call to Order

Chair Cavaness called the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) regular meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. in the Aspen Room at Vancouver City Hall and online via Microsoft Teams. Commissioners Piland and Panter were absent.

### Item 2: Approval of Minutes

PRAC approved October 15, 2025, meeting minutes by consensus with no changes.

### Item 3: Public Comment

None presented.

### Item 4: Workshops

#### a. Introduction to Deputy City Manager, Jeff Towery

Perlick introduced Towery to the commissioners, sharing some background on his career as a City Manager in Oregon. Towery expressed his excitement to now be part of the Vancouver Community and thanked commissioners for their service in the community.

## Members

**Jaynee Cavaness**

President

**Angilo Fletcher**

Vice President

Jeremy Robbins

Stephen Wille

Valerie Striplin

James Luce

AJ Panter, VPS

Cale Piland, EPS

Jenny Thompson, Parks

Foundation

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Cavaness and others welcomed Towery and highlighted how she has seen the PRCS Department overcome many challenges over the past 8 years, expressing that staff have gone above and beyond thinking outside the box for meeting community needs when facing challenges. Perlick thanked commissioners for their supportive comments.

**b. Parks Foundation Update on Renaissance Point**

Sean Janson, Development Director at the Parks Foundation of Clark County, introduced himself and shared an overview of recent work at the Parks Foundation.

Janson is a former PRAC member and has been with the Parks Foundation since this summer. The Parks Foundation is a nonprofit partner for organizations throughout the county with the purpose of raising private donations, increasing awareness, and assisting with sponsorships and in-kind donations to support park priorities. Projects include trail improvements, benches, and community events.

The Parks Foundation is currently raising funds to transform Renaissance Pointe into a mini park along the waterfront in memory of Detective Jeremy Brown. They have launched a campaign to raise the remaining \$30k, and commissioners were asked to get the project out to their networks. The campaign includes different fundraising elements that are available for different levels of sponsorship. The PFCC will be hosting a party on 12/2 at McMenemy's to celebrate the project, and all are welcome to attend.

The floor was open for questions. Robbins asked about accessibility in the master plan for Renaissance Pointe. Jansen confirmed that the project includes an ADA accessible ramp with ADA accessible pavement. Luce inquired regarding the price of bench sponsorships, and Jansen confirmed that they are \$1000 each.

Cavaness expressed enthusiasm and thanked Jansen for their work at the Parks. She encouraged commissioners to share and post this fundraising opportunity on social media.

**c. VIC Update**

Perlick shared a brief update on the progress of the Vancouver Innovation Center project. Today staff had a walkthrough of the 14-acre site and anticipate that on Friday we will get the keys upon closing. Master plan design and outreach will likely kick off around or after January, once a consultant has been determined.

We are excited to add this site to our community parks. Cavaness added the importance of communicating the minimal removal of site trees when doing outreach. We have spoken to developers about preserving as much as possible.

Luce stressed that VIC is a fantastic opportunity for a new park, but we also need to take care of the existing parks that we already have. Luce asked if the trees are determined by a vote from the public. Perlick confirmed that while these decisions will be part of the master plan approval, there is also a covenant for the site preservation of trees. Given the covenant, tree preservation will be a priority. Cavaness highlighted that there is a wetland corridor that runs onto the parcel, so the existing wildlife will also be part of the considerations. City staff will work toward a recommended design to be presented to PRAC for a master plan approval.

Striplin added that she has been telling everyone about this new park coming on the east side and suggested that it would be valuable for the City and consultants to partner with the conservation district to protect the wildlife that inhabits that site.

Wille visited recently and confirmed that with all the activity, it will be great addition to the parks system. He concurred with the importance of keeping as much of the tree canopy as possible.

## Item 5: Commission and Staff Reports

### a. Director's Report

#### Parks

- Vancouver Innovation Center Acquisition: The playground at Heritage Park is closed through Dec. 8 while we complete a series of improvements to make the space more fun, accessible, and durable for neighborhood families. The project includes adding three new play features for children ages 5–12 to the existing playground and replacing the deteriorating rubber tile surface with Forever Lawn artificial turf.

#### Recreation

- Today we announced exciting changes to Firstenburg and Marshall members. Starting January 2026, we are streamlining our community center memberships into one simplified option that includes access to both Firstenburg and Marshall community centers. Having access to both centers will give members more variety, flexibility and convenience. This change will also align our fee structure and help streamline administration. Right now, we are focused on informing current members. We'll start promoting the new membership to the general public later in December.
- Our Recreation Division is partnering with local organizations to offer winter break camps at Firstenburg Community Center in December. This partnership allows us to continue to meet community needs while supporting local businesses in a way that is sustainable for recreation staff. If you know someone who is looking for winter break fun, send them to [cityofvancouver.us/camps](http://cityofvancouver.us/camps) for information and registration links. There are camp spots for basketball, Lego building and video game design.

#### Cultural Services

- Thanks to the work of Hailey Heath and community volunteers, the Naturespaces area at Oakbrook Park has been installed and is ready to take root over the winter months. The Naturespaces area features over 900 pollinator-friendly plants, large logs and organic material to support soil health and biodiversity.
- The 2025 Vancouver Arts & Music Festival was named Southwest Washington Event of the Year by the Washington Festivals and Events Association (WFEA). The festival also took home the award for Best PR/Media Campaign at WFEA's annual Grand Summit awards ceremony on Oct. 30 in Bellevue, Washington. The Festival showcased more than 60 performances across multiple stages, hundreds of local and regional artists, and generated an estimated \$1.6 million in business sales for the community.
- Save the date for the Community Tree Lighting at Esther Short Park on Friday, Nov. 28. At 3:45 p.m., Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle will rededicate the Salmon Run Bell Tower and Glockenspiel and unveil the new Vancouver flag. After that, the Rotary Club will continue the festivities with music, carriage rides, holiday treats and more. The Farmers Market will also be hosting their holiday market at the Hilton, so it is sure to be an exciting time to kick off the holiday season.

Fletcher approved of the notion to expand the reach of the community center membership, as it extends the range of events that members can enjoy. He asked if we have any community partners we can work with to compliment the membership benefits and increase opportunities to the different community facilities/amenities within the city. Perlick will take under advisement as we value the community aspect.

Striplin concurred that this would increase the revenue (for City and partners) and reach beyond our current membership.

Luce asked about talking points regarding parks funding advocacy; Perlick shared that we are working at developing messaging as we approach our city budget. He is working with Stokke on a pre-budget memo to capture we are, the current needs, and how the successive impacts on budget have looked. Striplin shared that she is happy to volunteer to help with any collection and organization with this effort.

A commissioner appreciation gathering will be held on 12/11, combining 2 amazing PRCS commissions to recognize their work.

**b. Chair Report**

Cavaness shared that she went to Nature Haven a few weeks ago to attend the cocoon workshop. The project was highly recommended for supporting bees.

Party at the Plaza, sponsored by CCU, will be held at Providence Academy on Friday 12/5 from 4pm-8pm, featuring tours, hot cocoa and kids' activities.

The upcoming City Council community forum is a great opportunity to ask questions, advocate for advisory groups, and hear community concerns. It will be held on 11/24 at City Hall from 6:30-8pm.

The Tree Lighting Festival will be held at 6pm on 11/28.

**c. Evergreen School District Report**

None presented.

**d. Vancouver Public School Report**

None presented.

**e. Parks Foundation Report**

None presented.

**Item 11: Open Discussion & New Business**

Luce asked for clarification on the City Council Open Forum. Perlick shared that in addition there are also designated nights for the public to provide feedback after the regular business meeting.

Wille expressed interest in any updates from the Countywide Parks funding. Perlick shared that they have held one meeting so far, but it has been positive for dialogue and open discussion. They are organizing and discussing options, researching initial findings. More information will be shared at a future presentation

Fletcher gave a shoutout to FCC for the upgrades to the slide and enthusiastic feedback from users regarding the friendly staff and clean facilities.

Robbins gave a shoutout to Brosius, Meade, and community center staff. The north Portland aquatics center staff did a tour and shared that this was informative for their master planning, operations, and accessibility. It was recognized as a best practice facility.

Robbins commended that there are people at Oakbrook Park every day, regardless of the weather. He shared compliments to everyone that has been involved. Word is out that Vancouver has great parks, and this is a gem in our system.

**ADJOURNED**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28pm

**PUBLIC NOTICE:** Commissioners from the Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission and the Culture, Arts & Heritage Commission are invited to attend an optional holiday social gathering to acknowledge offboarding members on December 11th. In accordance with Section 42.30.070 of the Open Public Meetings Act, no action as defined in the Act will be taken during this social event