

Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 17, 2026

4:30 p.m.

City Hall

Aspen Room

Commissioners Present:

Luce, Robbins, Striplin, Thompson, Wille

Commissioners Absent:

Fletcher, Piland and Panter

Item 1: Call to Order

Chair Thompson called the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) regular meeting to order at 4:32p.m. in the Aspen Room at City Hall and online via Microsoft Teams. Commissioners Piland and Panter were absent.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes

PRAC approved May 20, 2026, meeting minutes by consensus with no changes.

Item 3: Public Comment

None Presented

Item 4: Workshops

a. Budget Update

Perlick and Stokke provided an overview of the PRCS 2027-2028 Biennial Budget process.

The City budgets on a biennial, 2-year basis. We are currently preparing the budget request for 2027-2028. Operating and capital requests are included; Capital includes a number of dedicated available revenues. Operating is generally supported by the City's general fund.

There is a projected deficit in the biennium. The current process does not include a request for reduction packages.

Members

Jenny Thompson

President, PFCC

Angilo Fletcher

Vice President

Jeremy Robbins

Stephen Wille

Valerie Striplin

James Luce

AJ Panter, VPS

Cale Piland, EPS

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Key process steps and presentation dates:

- Budget prioritization process NEW – Submitted in May
- Operating and capital budget submission – July 12
- Oct 1 – City Manager Recommended Budget Published
- Oct 12 – City Council Operating Budget Workshop
- Oct 26 – City Council Capital Budget Workshop
- Nov 2 – City Council 1st Reading – Biennium Budget
- Nov 16 – City Council Public Hearing and Adoption of Biennium Budget

A high-level overview of General, Street, and Fire Funds forecast was shared. The first set of measures focuses on FTE positions in the department. These numbers have been consistently reported over time. Department staffing has been reduced by 35.5 FTEs despite population growth of over 47,000 residents in that time period. This is a reduction of 37.5% in department FTEs from 2007-2025.

Budget Prioritization Process includes:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| • City Events | • Parks Capital Repair | • Aquatics Programming |
| • Community Event Permitting | • Parks Acquisition | • Youth and Teen Programming |
| • Inspire Vancouver | • Parks Planning and Funding | • Fitness and Adult Programming |
| • Arts Hub | • Parks Reservations and Parking | • Free & Subsidized Programs |
| • Volunteer Program | • Firstenburg Community Center | • Historic Reserve & Historic Trust Management |
| • Major Park Development | • Marshall Community Center | |
| • Playground Replacement Program | | |

Staff shared PRCS values and approach, highlighting initial thoughts on development of the budget proposal:

- Optimize available general fund / baseline to cover existing core services.
- Live within existing FTE count and adjust to meet emerging needs.
- Holding some current vacancies.
- Targeted requests aligned with City Council priorities.
- Optimize capital revenues to deliver existing projects.
- Request funds for significant capital maintenance and repair.
- Be prepared for targeted service reductions to address deficit.
- Consider capacity needed to plan for new funding opportunities and annexation.

Suggested role of PRAC, and opportunities to impact the process:

- Discuss feedback and overall approach today
- Update at July meeting to review initial budget submission
- Monitor City Council budget presentations
- Community forums
- Testify to Council

- PRAC position or letter
- Work on dedicated funding options

The floor was open for discussion. Luce asked for updates related to impact fees on commercial PIF. Perlick confirmed that we are revisiting indexing for non-residential impact fee programs that could be implemented in 2027. For multi-family and affordable housing, applicants can apply for deferral for impact fees as an incentive.

Wille asked how much funding comes from grants or outside sources for new projects, since most new projects would be put on hold. Perlick commented that state grant programs that are focused on park development are often competitive and require a high match, however we will have a new staff member in the Parks Planner position to review those opportunities more strategically. We do anticipate seeking more funding in the coming biennium.

Robbins asked about newly started projects with multi-phases, such as The Heights, being paused because of the pause on projects. Perlick confirmed that we are maximizing our funding to complete as much work as possible in the current biennium so that we can complete most of the work. We anticipate our playground replacement program will be continued at the same level. We anticipate continued partnerships for our programming.

Striplin asked for clarification around the PRAC position letter and advocacy support. Perlick recommended gathering more information on impacts and options before touching on additional dedicated funding. Striplin asked for the best practices in engaging their community neighborhoods with information.

Thompson asked staff to send commissioners dates and times for upcoming critical milestones in the budget process. Thompson reminded commissioners to monitor city emails for timely communications.

b. Clark County Sustainable Parks Funding Team Update

Perlick shared a snapshot of the regional funding task team. The Clark County parks system is not meeting its existing needs due to a lack of available funding, rising costs, and rapid population growth. For the past 5 years, the County has had to use reserve funds just to cover the basic services at our Regional Parks.

An overview on national benchmarking vs. regional expenditures was shared. Each park system compared their metrics to the national median for communities of their size. All park systems are below the national median for operating expenditures of similar populations.

All park systems are below the national median for regional FTEs per 10,000 residents.

Future needs:

- County expected to grow 34% over the next 20 years
- Parks systems need to grow to match these needs

Staff shared an overview of a funding model comparison between a Metropolitan Parks District (MPD) funding structure and a Regional Levy (county-wide). The existing MPD map shows the Greater Clark Park district boundary.

Recommended Actions:

1. **Conducting mark research** to provide data, feasibility evaluations, and **conducting public education** and other preparatory work needed for County Council to make a decision on the potential future ballot measure.

2. **Determining viability and process** for adopting either funding mechanism by conducting formal legal reviews.
3. **Developing a framework for revenue sharing** by directing county staff to continue to work with city representatives so that city park providers can also benefit from a potential revenue source dedicated to parks.

Next Steps:

- Do you feel the project will provide the appropriate information for further Council discussion?
- What specific information will be helpful for your decision-making?

An open discussion was held regarding next steps. Striplin asked if the City and County have similarly aligned values for public education purposes, and how to engage volunteers, ambassadors, and partners with talking points to advocate in the community. Perlick shared that there are a lot of shared language, standards, and common goals since we used to have the same impact fees.

Robbins expressed concern that while cities like Camas and Ridgefield would be opening new parks, other cities would have less infrastructure and buy in; the County doesn't have a lot of resources to generate funds. He hopes that research will add more clarity.

Luce compared the merits and processes of the different approaches for MPD or a Regional Levy. If we are to be joint City-County effort, it would simplify the process. He is curious to see how members of City Council will weigh in.

Thompson added that it would be advantageous to make a decision as quickly as possible based on our sense for buy-in and engagement from other cities.

Striplin asked how PRAC can support this effort moving forward. Perlick has committed to sharing updates on public research and the status of presenting to the other cities.

c. Playground Replacement Update

Snyder shared an update on Franklin & Bella Vista play equipment replacements based on need from recent evaluations.

Franklin Park is a 12-acre park that serves the Fruit Valley and Northwest neighborhoods, with the current play equipment installed in 2007. The equipment is in poor condition and does not meet current ADA standards and will become a safety concern if not replaced. The budget is \$500,000, focused on play equipment replacement and may include adding a few amenities to improve accessibility.

Several survey questions were shared with neighbors to collect feedback on play equipment preferences. Common equipment theming included:

- Views and Vistas – Tall towers, platforms, and rope climbers
- Sky's the Limit – Planes, hot air balloons, gliders, and motion
- Lakes and Waterways – Frogs, fish and slides (neighbors were most partial to this option)

Equipment replacement timeline;

- April/June 2026

- Project start
 - Public survey
 - Design
- July – December 2026
 - Share playground design with PRAC
 - Apply for permits
- Spring – Summer 2027
 - Secure contractor
 - Start construction
 - Project complete

The floor was open for questions and discussion regarding Franklin Park play equipment replacement.

Snyder shared an overview of Bella Vista Park Play Equipment Replacement. A 5.3-acre park serves the Bella Vista neighborhood in east Vancouver. The equipment was installed in 1999 and is in poor condition and does not meet current ADA standards. Budget is \$500,000, focused on replacing play equipment and may include adding other amenities to improve accessibility.

Several survey questions were shared with neighbors to collect feedback on play equipment preferences. Common equipment theming included:

- Insects and Bugs – Flying insects, crawling bugs, spiderwebs, leaves
- Fantasy Forest – Mushrooms, whimsical, fantastical creatures (neighbors were most partial to this option)
- Farm Life

Equipment replacement timeline;

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The floor was open for questions and discussion regarding Bella Vista Park play equipment replacement.

Striplin expressed excitement for the upcoming replacements as a neighbor at Bella Vista, and to share updates on accessibility improvements with the neighborhood association. Striplin was curious about emails and ways to amplify communications as part of the information sharing process. Snyder shared that mailings, emails, posted signage are currently shared. Burton followed up that we can extend survey timing, and we have school flyers and communications on Next Door; we would love to hear more ideas on ways to communicate with more neighbors. Commissioners expressed enthusiasm for the upcoming phases.

Item 5: Commission and Staff Reports

a. Director's Report

Gutierrez shared an update on the VIC online open house that will be open through 6/22. We are in the early stages of community engagement, and commissioners are welcome to share surveys with their networks on [Be Heard Vancouver](#). Gutierrez shared an interior view of the park trails, outlining the highly forested grounds and open meadows of the site, as well as the community park edges – noting that noise is reduced the farther you travel from the property edge. Save the date for Saturday, August 15, October 3, and November 21 to review next steps for the project onsite.

Parks: We are briefly closing two neighborhood playgrounds in July to complete surfacing improvements. The work will be completed at My Park in the Harney Heights neighborhood, and Gretchen Fraser Park in the East Mill Plain neighborhood from July 6-21. We will be removing the aging rubber tiles and replacing it with Forever Lawn artificial turf to improve accessibility and durability.

Recreation: Summer camps at Marshall Community Center start on Monday. Our camps at Fircrest Elementary and ATR camp will begin on June 29. Both our Marshall and Fircrest Day Camps for ages 6-10 are full. There is still some space available in ATR camp.

We also have our free Summer Playgrounds programs at Crestline, Evergreen and Hough starting June 29. New this year is a three-session Kids Climb Camp at Firstenburg, which is also fully registered.

The summer pool schedules will start June 29, and we are already seeing a lot of interest in summer swims. I'm excited to share that the Aquatics team has been working hard to increase program capacity, so June through August we will be almost doubling the number of swim lessons we offer. We're also expanding afternoon water exercise programs, lap swims and community access at Marshall Pool

Cultural Services: It's officially event season! Our summer concerts and movies will start in July but before then, we have some fun free community events with partners.

July 20:

- Juneteenth Freedom Celebration at Esther Short Park from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. We're partnering with Odyssey World International Education Services for this event.
- Pollinator Festival at Marshall Community Park from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We're partnering with Vancouver Bee Project for this event.

July 3:

- Vancouver Celebrates America 250 at Fort Vancouver Parade Grounds from noon to 11 p.m. We're partnering with the Historic Trust, and National Park Service for this event.
- More information about all these events is on the City's website calendar.
- The Pollinator Festival will take place on June 20th at Marshall Park.

b. Chair Report

Thompson challenged commissioners to volunteer for at least one event this summer.

c. Evergreen School District Report

None presented.

d. Vancouver Public School Report

None presented.

e. Parks Foundation Report

The Historic Trust is also doing a concert series, starting June 26.

The Parks Foundation is holding its annual cornhole tournament on August 1 at Esther Short Park.

Item 11: Open Discussion & New Business

No new business.

ADJOURNED

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm