



Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

A Regular Meeting of the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District Board of Directors was held electronically on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 5:30 pm.

Present:

Felicita Monteblanco	President/Director
Barbie Minor	Secretary/Director
Alfredo Moreno	Secretary Pro-Tempore/Director
Heidi Edwards	Director
Tya Ping	Director
Doug Menke	General Manager

Agenda Item #1 – Call Regular Meeting to Order

A Regular Meeting of the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District Board of Directors was called to order by President Felicita Monteblanco on Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at 5:30 pm.

Agenda Item #2 – Proclamations

A. National Developmental Disabilities Month

Jared Grafenauer, adaptive and inclusion specialist, read into the record a proclamation on behalf of the THPRD Board of Directors declaring March as National Development Disabilities Month.

B. Women’s History Month

The board members read into the record a proclamation declaring March as Women’s History Month. General Manager Doug Menke offered comments recognizing the strong female leadership at THPRD, including on its board of directors, as well as the recent promotions of four staff members into key management positions: Aisha Panas, deputy general manager; Lulú Ballesteros, equity & engagement manager; Emily Kent, Sports & Inclusion manager; and, Kristin Smith, Recreation manager.

On behalf of President Monteblanco, Heidi Edwards provided a brief overview of the activities and events THPRD is hosting in honor of National Developmental Disabilities Month and Women’s History Month.

Agenda Item #3 – Audience Time

Tom Hjort, 15715 SW Division Street, Beaverton, is before the board of directors this evening as a member of the Friends of Cooper Mountain Nature Park (CMNP). Tom stated that the Friends of CMNP request that THPRD place Cooper Mountain as a line item under Metro Local Share dollars in its upcoming 2023-24 budget. The group is asking Washington County, City of Beaverton and City of Tigard, to do the same. Though Metro has the primary responsibility, it is looking to partner with benefiting jurisdictions in securing lands on Cooper Mountain and THPRD’s local share dollars are an appropriate funding source by which the district can participate in expanding CMNP. Setting aside local share dollars for this purpose meshes perfectly with the intent of the 2019 Metro Parks and Nature bond measure. Expanding CMNP will exponentially increase its value as home for a diversity of birds and animals, as well as rare native plants. According to Metro, the minimum size needed to protect habitat and diversity is 700 acres; the CMNP occupies only 231 acres. The park is also accessible to a large and diverse urban and suburban population of 200,000 to 250,000 people. Few, if any, large natural areas exist near THPRD that are suitable for creating a nature park, and the opportunity to expand CMNP will soon be lost due to the planned development of 5,000 home sites near its boundaries.

Tya Ping read into the record written testimony received from the Friends of Cooper Mountain Nature Park (CMNP) requesting that THPRD place Cooper Mountain as a line item under Metro Local Share dollars in its upcoming 2023-24 budget. The testimony noted that last year, THPRD received an allocation of \$8,628,870 from Metro designated to support THPRD's Local Share projects. Subsequently, THPRD approved four needed park, trail, and natural area capital projects. THPRD has consistently directed attention to the need to expand CMNP and last October, the Friends of CMNP issued a Request for Action to Metro regarding Metro's land acquisition effort in the Cooper Mountain target area. In the 28 years since the initial Metro natural area bond measure, only one-third of Metro's 700-acre natural area core component acquisition goal for the 5,000-acre Cooper Mountain target area has been purchased. The preponderance of sensitive natural resource areas on Cooper Mountain remains unprotected and development is on the horizon with the City of Beaverton's impending annexation of the area. This past April, the Metro Council re-stated within its 2019 Parks and Nature Bond Measure Refinement Plan resolution its intention that the Cooper Mountain target area host a "regionally significant natural area with a core component of 700 acres to support a diversity of plant and animal life and sustain key biological features." However, as previously mentioned, progress toward this 700-acre objective has been stalled for years. Metro has indicated that it does not want to fund all the necessary acquisitions on Cooper Mountain alone and would like to see partnering by the benefiting local jurisdictions. Friends of CMNP recognize and appreciate that Metro must take the lead in the bond-funded acquisition of additional land for the nature park and likewise believe that local jurisdictions, namely Beaverton, Washington County, Tigard and THPRD, need to commit dollars and resources in support of the target area objectives for Cooper Mountain. The best path by which THPRD can do this is through THPRD's dedication of a significant percentage of its Local Share funds to Cooper Mountain.

President Montebianco addressed this evening's testimony, noting that the board appreciates the activism and passion for Cooper Mountain Nature Park and that the board has also been active in this effort; more information as to those efforts will be provided during the board's committee liaisons updates next. She appreciates the Friends of CMNP's enthusiasm, support, and keeping the district accountable.

- ✓ General Manager Doug Menke added that the district's local share projects were presented to Metro and accepted, but there might be additional local share funds available as the projects progress. However, the district's system development charge funds would be an appropriate source for CMNP land acquisition efforts and district staff plan to bring recommendations and options for the board's consideration in the next few months.

Agenda Item #4 – Board Time

A. Committee Liaisons Updates

Alfredo Moreno provided the following updates and comments during board time:

- ✓ Participated in a recent tour of Cooper Mountain Nature Park where attendees included a cross-section of elected officials and/or their staff from state, regional, county, and city levels. The common impression is one of awe for the site's uniqueness. The board plans to continue to connect our local decision makers with the physical park and share the opportunities available to make it a crown jewel for generations to come.
- ✓ Recognized that today is International Women's Day and described the strong female leadership in our region at this point in time. He expressed appreciation for his fellow board members, as well as other female elected officials, volunteers, and public servants who are improving our communities and building the path for future female leaders.

Ty Ping provided the following updates and comments during board time:

- ✓ Recently met with City of Beaverton Councilor Allison Tivnon who raved about her tour of Cooper Mountain Nature Park, who plans to take family members there. She thanked district staff for all of their educational efforts in helping impact what a special site it is.

- ✓ The most recent Nature & Trails Advisory Committee meeting included a review of the Nature & Trails Functional Plan for the benefit of the committee's new members and brainstorming the committee's focus areas for 2023.

Heidi Edwards provided the following updates and comments during board time:

- ✓ Thanked President Monteblanco and district staff for the coordination efforts in scheduling the tours of Cooper Mountain Nature Park and commented on the timing of it being budget season in regards to the requests for funding of the expansion efforts.
- ✓ The Fiduciary Committee is working on the development of a FAQ so that the district's pension plan can be better understood by its participants. She thanked district staff for their help in putting together this information.

President Monteblanco thanked her fellow board members and district staff for the various ways they show up and engage to serve the community.

Agenda Item #5 – Consent Agenda

Alfredo Moreno moved that the board of directors approve consent agenda items (A) Minutes of February 8, 2023 Regular Board Meeting, (B) Monthly Bills, and (C) Monthly Financial Statement, and (D) Heckman Lane Neighborhood Park & Community Trail Consultant Contract. Tya Ping seconded the motion. Roll call proceeded as follows:

Heidi Edwards	Yes
Barbie Minor	Yes
Tya Ping	Yes
Alfredo Moreno	Yes
Felicita Monteblanco	Yes

The motion was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Agenda Item #6 – Unfinished Business

A. Strategic Plan Development

As stated in the memo included within the board of director's information packet, with the culmination and adoption of the district's updated 2023 Comprehensive Plan, staff have been hard at work drafting the accompanying Strategic Plan which will help them to carry out the initial recommendations identified in the comp plan over the next three-to-five-year period. A working group has been formed with staff representatives for the further development of each of the ongoing and near-term recommendations identified in the comp plan. This working group will develop action plans, identify ownership responsibility, and describe milestones for each ongoing and near-term recommendation noted in the comp plan. District staff anticipates bringing a draft Strategic Plan before the board for consideration of adoption at its April regular meeting.

Aisha Panas, deputy general manager, and Bruce Barbarasch, Nature & Trails manager, provided an overview of the Strategic Plan development process and timeline via a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was entered into the record, and offered to answer any questions the board may have.

President Monteblanco commented that she likes the idea of having stretch goals and thanked district staff for their work on this document.

B. 2023 Legislative Update & Resolution Establishing Legislative Advocacy Procedures and Advocacy Priorities

Aisha Panas, deputy general manager, and Kylie Grunow, state legislative consultant for the district, provided a detailed update on current legislative activities via a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was entered into the record, and which included the following information:

- 2023 THPRD Legislative Priorities
 - Position statements guide advocacy efforts
 - Federal and state legislative platforms have been updated
 - Added: Climate Adaptation & Community Resiliency
- Federal Activities
 - Funding opportunities announced – Senate & House
 - Connecting federal lobbyists with grants administrator
- State Legislature Session Update
 - Working with ORPA and SDAO to monitor and track bills
 - Upcoming deadlines:
 - March 17: all bills must have a work session posted
 - April 4: all bills must have moved from first chamber
- Bills of Interest: Local Agency Control & Authority
 - SB 858: Authorizes formation of children’s service districts and is unchanged from last year’s bill
 - THPRD submitted a letter in opposition, along with ORPA, SDAO, etc.
 - HB 3515: Provides that cities with a population greater than 600,000 may refer a ballot measure to electors to form a park and recreation district with the city council to govern
 - Put forward by Portland Parks & Recreation
 - THPRD, ORPA, SDAO and others have concerns about precedent and unintended consequences.
 - ✓ President Monteblanco commented on the intent versus impact of this bill, noting that while the district wants to support our partners at Portland Parks & Recreation to be able to do their important work, there are some education opportunities in terms of the potential impact of this bill. She would consider opposing this bill as drafted.
 - ✓ Tya Ping asked for clarification regarding how this bill might directly impact THPRD. Discussion took place regarding the amendments that have been suggested so far, such as clarifying that this bill would apply only to areas for which no current special district currently exists, and concerns regarding the potential for encroachment into or the taking over of existing special districts, as well as the educational opportunity regarding the role of special districts. Tya supports opposing the bill as currently drafted.
 - ✓ Heidi Edwards, Barbie Minor and Alfredo Moreno expressed agreement with previous comments and also oppose the bill as currently drafted.
 - Others: HB 2011 (worker protection), HB 3205 (pay equity), SB 754 (recreational liability).
- Bills of Interest: System Development Charges (SDCs)
 - HB 2984: Allows conversion of commercial buildings to workforce housing; prohibits, for such conversions, local governments from enforcing parking minimums and suspends collection of system development charges
 - THPRD submitted a letter outlining concerns with prohibition of SDCs
 - HB 2260: Relating to SDCs and affordable housing; this was a placeholder bill from Representative Lively as a follow-up to last year’s SDC study
 - This bill was recently pulled from hearing and will likely not be moving forward; instead, a workgroup will likely be formed and THPRD has expressed interest in participating
 - SB 998: Another SDC related bill, but part of a bigger housing package so unclear of trajectory

- Bills of Interest: Equitable Access to Parks & Recreation
 - HB 2717: Establishes oversight of outdoor preschool programs by Office of Child Care; prescribes requirements for licensure as outdoor preschool program
 - Amended to clarify that it will not change licensure for government agencies or recorded programs
 - HB 3212: Directs Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to conduct study to determine feasibility of authorizing use of electric assisted bicycles on public trails that allow for use of nonmotorized bicycles
 - ORPA is considering potential amendments to study to address consistency of rules and support equity/access
 - Various housing and homelessness bills are in process and being monitored
- Bills of Interest: State Funding for Trails, Parks & Recreation
 - SB 5527: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department agency budget bill
 - THPRD is monitoring with ORPA
 - SB 531: Establishes Summer and Afterschool Learning and Enrichment Grant Program
 - THPRD submitted letter of support for the funding and outlined how the district utilized funding during 2021-2023 biennium
- Bills of Interest: Climate Adaptation & Community Resiliency
 - HB 3016: Establishes Community Green Infrastructure Grant Program, Infrastructure Fund, and Task Force Directs State Forestry Department to acquire and maintain urban tree canopy assessment tool; directs department to develop emerald ash borer assistance program
 - THPRD submitted letter of support
 - HB 2835: Directs Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to establish pilot program to award grants for recreational fishing facilities within urban growth boundary
 - As written, grants could only go to cities, counties, and nonprofits; THPRD is working with the sponsor and ORPA to broaden eligibility
 - Monitoring bills that offer rebates for electric vehicle purchases, emissions changes, community resilience hubs, address carbon sequestration, and policymaking around climate
- Legislative Advocacy Procedures Resolution
 - Outlines the district's legislative priorities
 - Describes and streamlines advocacy and reporting process
 - Identifies "district officials" who may advocate on behalf of THPRD

Aisha and Kylie concluded their presentation by noting that legislative visits in Salem are being coordinated for the board members' participation on April 5 and offered to answer any questions the board may have.

President Montebianco commented that she appreciates the efficiency provided by the resolution under consideration this evening. Regarding the SDC legislation in process, she believes that THPRD has set a good example through its thoughtful SDC policies and although she understands the reasons behind wanting to cut SDCs in order to enable affordable housing, she would at least like to hear more conversations from our elected officials regarding what it would mean to cut SDCs.

- ✓ Kylie expressed agreement, noting that if a workgroup is formed, that would be a great place for the district to contribute and share some of the good work and challenges that it has gone through in this area. When the draft SDC study was presented in October, THPRD shared feedback which resulted in some changes recognizing the critical roles SDCs play in particular for parks and recreation.

Barbie Minor moved that the board of directors approve Resolution No. 2023-03 to establish legislative advocacy procedures and advocacy priorities. Heidi Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call proceeded as follows:

Tya Ping	Yes
Alfredo Moreno	Yes
Heidi Edwards	Yes
Barbie Minor	Yes
Felicita Monteblanco	Yes

The motion was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Agenda Item #7 – New Business

A. District Budget Priority FY23/24 Update: Sustainable Operating and Financial Models – Future Planning

Aisha Panas, deputy general manager, and Holly Thompson, Communications director, provided a detailed update on staff's work on one of the district's budget priorities for next fiscal year, *Develop Sustainable Operating and Financial Models for the Future*. The presentation was provided via PowerPoint, a copy of which was entered into the record, and included an overview of the district's operating budget challenges and a high-level outline of options the district may wish to explore to ensure the necessary funding to maintain existing service levels:

- Why are we prioritizing future budget planning?
 - A need to balance our services, big ideas, and commitment to community vision within the constraints of our budget
- What is causing pressure on our budget?
 - Pandemic (closures & changes to demand), inflation, labor market, part-time pay increases, class/comp increases for full-time employees, new parks & trails, pension funding, pay equity
- How are we doing compared to our partners?
 - Washington County: \$25 million shortfall
 - City of Beaverton: \$10 million shortfall
- Where does the district stand today financially?
 - General Fund revenue is down \$8.4 million (10.1% of budgeted amount)
- Where do we stand in terms of facilities & operations?
 - All of our facilities are still operating very different versus pre-pandemic
- Where do we stand in terms of programming?
 - With limited resources we are leading with our values:
 - Funding mobile recreation free programming
 - Reduced staffing means less programming options
 - Expanding Centro de Bienvenida and access to Financial Aid Program
 - Changes to events (smaller, co-produced, culturally specific)
- Where are we in terms of personnel?
 - Low staffing levels = salary savings but hinders our ability to offer programming or earn revenue, which is leading to overall shortfalls
- Looking ahead we must adjust our approach
 - Within 5 years without course correction, we would need to cut \$16 Million or 21% of our annual budget to balance
- Where do we go from here?
 - Building a plan of action
 - Good news: we've got some time
 - Look to our Values and Priorities and let them guide our choices
 - Identify opportunities to increase revenues
- Leading with our Values
 - Leading with Equity with Special Attention to Racial Equity

- Environmental Stewardship
- Commitment to Community Vision
- Leading with our Budget Priorities
 - Invest in our Employees & Technology
 - Focus on Strengthening Programming Opportunities
 - Develop Sustainable Operating and Financial Models for the Future
- Revenue enhancement activities
 - Financial Futures Work Group
 - Investigating expanded revenue opportunities
 - Rethinking district's revenue approach (cost recovery)
 - Balancing our equity values within resource constraints
 - Focus on sustainable revenue options versus one-time fixes
 - Area partners rely on Operating Levies
- Next steps
 - What size/scope do we want THPRD to be?
 - Is our goal to maintain what we have today?
 - What would we look like if we were sized within a smaller budget?
 - Levy option/research
 - What would a levy option look like?
 - Timing & public involvement approach
 - Strategy to mitigate harm to most cost-sensitive patrons

Aisha and Holly concluded their presentation by noting that district staff will plan to present to the board on this topic again in April taking into consideration the board's feedback this evening, and offered to answer any questions they may have.

Tya Ping inquired whether the district would still have a future budget shortfall if participation and programming numbers were back to pre-pandemic levels.

- ✓ General Manager Doug Menke replied that while it would help, it wouldn't be enough to make up the full difference. A more thorough comparison of this information could be provided at the April meeting.

Tya asked whether the district has considered offering programming that would provide more consistent revenue streams, such as fulltime preschool or childcare services, that have more reliable participation numbers. She described an idea of dedicating a few of the district's existing centers to such models, including some traditional programming for these age groups.

- ✓ Aisha described how the district's service assessment model consistently evaluates the success of our programs in order to enable the district opportunities to adjust. For example, pre-pandemic the district's afterschool programs were at capacity and the district was exploring options for expansion; however, post-pandemic, these programs have not been as popular. District staff is exploring all types of revenue producing opportunities for which we can successfully staff in order to bring in additional revenue.
- ✓ General Manager Doug Menke added that the diverse population the district serves also results in a great diversity of programming opportunities, including creating opportunities for the community to try new experiences.

Tya referenced the district's Vision Action Plan, the bulk of which was completed before the pandemic, and inquired whether the district should reengage the community to reconfirm what matters most to them now in relation to what they may be willing to support via an operating levy and different funding levels.

- ✓ Holly described the philosophical interpretation of the Vision Action Plan, noting that the purpose of the plan is to give the district a good foundation in understanding its community's priorities over the next 15-20 years. The information within the plan serves the district well today, even post pandemic, because it is purposefully broad in its overarching areas like diversity, access, and environmental stewardship. How the district actualizes those ideals is decided via the public involvement processes for specific

projects. The district will utilize the vision in terms of what the community expects from it, while also starting the conversation regarding the realities of our revenues and expenditures and the resulting public outreach will help clarify how the community wants the future of THPRD to look. Lastly, Holly added that the five-year projection presented this evening was taking into consideration full program utilization and full staffing levels.

Heidi Edwards commented that wages, benefits, and utilities are likely to continue increasing, and are being experienced across the public and private sectors. While district staff can be creative in programming and revenue generation opportunities, she is unsure whether that alone will be able to keep pace with these escalating costs. She feels reassured by the community's past support of its local government agencies through approval of funding measures. The recent communications received from the public wanting more programming, such as swim lessons and expanded hours at the Elsie Stuhr Center, are a good public engagement opportunity to express why we can't provide those services right now. She feels optimistic about moving forward with an operating levy and looks forward to learning more about the numbers needed by which to maintain the district, or hopefully improve upon current service levels.

Alfredo Moreno stated that he believes that any investment in THPRD would be an extremely wise investment by the community as it is a well-run organization with plenty to offer and highly utilized by the community. As a board member, he is confident in district staff and the district's ability for a successful operating levy. He feels that it will be important to be able to describe to the public what other actions the district will be taking, in addition to an operating levy, to show that the district is doing its part while also asking the public for an additional investment.

Barbie Minor described how the district has done such a good job working within its funding limitations for so long that the realities of these struggles haven't been exposed until now. While she is grateful staff are so programmatically creative and able to scale back at the same time, such efforts are not going to be able to solve the overall budget shortfall. She would like to see the district remain accessible and thoughtful around programming for everyone, and at the same time let the data show where the public sentiment may be and what the options are. She looks forward to seeing what the revenue enhancements may be in addition to consideration of a levy.

President Montebianco expressed agreement with the board members' comments, noting that she struggles with what an operating levy might mean in terms of the cost to a community member to live here. However, she also acknowledges that in a growing community and in an organization that values pay equity, some tough decisions need to be made. She would like to better understand realistically what the district's other options are in order to be as informed as possible so that if the board decides to move forward with an operating levy, it can also talk about the tough considerations and discussions that were had prior to making that decision.

General Manager Doug Menke commented that we all have a vision of what the park district is, and the reality is that to positively impact quality of life long-term requires an investment from the community and THPRD is the right player to invest in.

Agenda Item #8 – Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Felicita Montebianco, President

Barbie Minor, Secretary

Recording Secretary,
Jessica Collins