



## 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, April 12, 2023. Work Session 5:15 pm; Executive Session 6:15 pm; Regular Meeting 7:15 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 – Work Session: District Budget Priority FY23/24 Update: Sustainable Operating and Financial Models – Future Planning**

A Work Session of the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District Board of Directors was called to order by President Felicita Monteblanco on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at 5:15 pm.

General Manager Doug Menke provided opening comments and introduced the district's management team members to make a presentation regarding the planning efforts currently underway for future sustainable operating and financial models, which was initially presented to the board at their March 8, 2023 meeting. Aisha Panas, deputy general manager; Holly Thompson, Communications director; Christine Hoffmann, Human Resources director; Jared Isaksen, Finance director; Julie Rocha, Sports & Inclusion director; and Sabrina Taylor Schmitt, Recreation & Aquatic director, provided a detailed update on staff's work in this area via a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was entered into the record, and which included the following information:

- Recap of March Meeting
  - Within five years, if no action is taken, THRPD will need to cut its budget by 21%
- Revenues: Where does our funding come from?
  - Property taxes: 53%
    - Measure 50 (Passed in 1997) limits growth to 3% of assessed value
    - THRPD's property tax rate = \$1.31 per \$1,000 (operations and capital)
    - Assessed value vs. real market value
    - Can't grow property taxes to meet operational needs without voter approval
  - Cash carryforward: 26%
  - Program revenue: 19%
  - Other revenue: 2%
  - Total operating revenue: \$73.4 million
    - Inflation alone is more than 3% and a majority of the district's revenue is limited to a 3% growth rate
- Expenses: How is our funding distributed amongst divisions?
  - Recreation Services: \$29.6 million
  - Park Services: \$16.4 million
  - Communications: \$7 million
  - Finance Services: \$3.7 million
  - Human Resources: \$2.9 million
  - General Manager: \$639,000
  - Board of Directors: \$470,000

- Reductions in Spending
  - What might THPRD look like if we have a \$16 million (21%) budget deficit?
    - Each director provided example scenarios of budget cuts by division if the district's budget needed to be reduced by 21%
    - Things considered for this exercise:
      - Our mission
      - Our values
      - The complexity of cuts to Recreation
    - THPRD is a park and recreation district serving all ages, all abilities, and all people in a myriad of ways
- Revenue Enhancement Ideas
  - Events, places, and programs
- Potential Revenue Gains
  - None of the revenue enhancement ideas, even when combined together, would provide the certainty and stability needed to address the district's future funding challenges
- Local Option Levy
  - Our service area has a strong history of supporting local option levies
- Strategies to Evaluate & Mitigate Financial Impact of Levy
  - Property tax support enables free district programming
  - Community investment in system ensures meaningful access
  - We can mitigate affordability issues with a levy
  - Expand access by increasing amounts, methodology of program, and adding culturally specific partnerships
  - Continue to reduce barriers
  - Without a levy our mitigation options are very limited
- Next Steps & Management Team Recommendations
  - Continue with revenue enhancement strategies
    - Financial Futures Work Group to keep refining ideas
    - Continue to explore levy concept
    - Work with outside professional services to gather more research
  - Keep board, staff, and community updated
    - Board: May progress report update & June work session discussion – staff will be looking for board support for public engagement
    - Staff: Continue staff engagement (163 staff attended four information sessions last month)
    - Community: Started adding messaging on budget challenges in public communications
- High Level Overview of Levy Timeline
  - March – June: Defining the need & identifying options
  - July – December: Community engagement
  - January – May: Public information campaign
  - May 21, 2024: Target election date

The management team concluded their presentation and offered to answer any questions the board may have.

Alfredo Moreno commented on the impact of seeing the example budget cut scenarios as presented this evening, noting that he supports the continued exploration of a local option levy. He advised that it will be important to be able to articulate to the district's taxpayers the other meaningful steps the district is taking in order to address funding issues in addition to asking for additional community investment via a levy.

Heidi Edwards commented that, as difficult as it was to see, she appreciated seeing the tangible impacts of a budget deficit of this size and recognized that it must be difficult for district staff to see, as well. She believes it will be important for the community to understand what exactly is at stake and agrees with Alfredo that the messaging should also articulate what the district is doing to be innovative. She supports moving forward in continuing to investigate a local option levy and appreciates the language used this evening around it being an investment in the community.

Tya Ping described how fees for some THPRD programs are higher than similar programs being offered by others in the area, such as gym memberships and summer camps. She supports moving forward with exploring a local option levy and wonders if approval of such a levy would help bring the district's prices into a more competitive range, noting that it causes confusion when a public agency that receives tax support has program fees higher than others that don't.

- ✓ Heidi referenced the district's value of supporting its employees in pay, benefits, promotional opportunities, and more, noting that, unfortunately, in this economy it is easy for others to pay very little for employees. While there may be more affordable services out there, the district also wants to retain long-term, well-trained employees.

Barbie Minor expressed support for moving forward in exploring a local option levy and understands her fellow board members' concerns around messaging. She advised that simplicity is key in terms of messaging to the community regarding the district's budget struggles. While she appreciates and looks forward to hearing more about some of the revenue enhancement strategies, it's clear that it will take more than that to solve the district's budget challenges.

- ✓ Holly Thompson, Communications director, provided an overview of the communications philosophy being considered for a potential levy and her history in working on such measures, noting that the strategy will be data-driven and based on listening to the public and what connects with them most.

President Monteblanco expressed support for continuing to explore the possibility of a local option levy, but noted that a few things give her pause, including what this would mean for our community in terms of cost of living. The presentation this evening painted a clear picture of the tough decisions that are ahead and what the long-term impacts of a budget deficit of this magnitude might be. She is also cognizant of what other measures might be on the ballot in May 2024 and how THPRD can stand out, and at what point there might be voter fatigue. She is mindful of both the challenges and opportunities in these upcoming discussions and decisions and looks forward to learning more.

General Manager Doug Menke thanked the board members for their feedback this evening, noting that staff will continue to gather information and research for the board's consideration.

### **Agenda Item #2 – Executive Session (A) Legal (B) Land**

President Felicita Monteblanco called executive session to order for the following purposes:

- To consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed, and
- To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

Executive Session is held under authority of ORS 192.660(2)(e) and (h).

President Monteblanco noted that the news media and designated staff may attend executive session. Representatives of the news media were directed not to disclose information discussed during executive session. No final action or final decision may be made in executive session.

### **Agenda Item #3 – 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, April 12, 2023, at 6:15 pm.

**Agenda Item #4 – Action Resulting from Executive Session**

Tya Ping moved that the board of directors approves the settlement agreement and authorizes the general manager to execute the settlement agreement and take all actions on behalf of the district necessary to implement the agreement. Heidi Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call proceeded as follows:

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

The motion was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**Agenda Item #5 – Proclamations**

**A. National Arab American Heritage Month**

The board members read into the record a proclamation declaring April as National Arab American Heritage Month. Rita Salmo, office tech at the Babette Horenstein Tennis Center, then read the proclamation in Arabic.

**B. National Autism Awareness Month**

The board members read into the record a proclamation declaring April as National Autism Awareness Month.

**C. National Volunteer Month**

The board members read into the record a proclamation declaring the month of April as National Volunteer Month.

President Monteblanco provided a brief overview of the activities and events THPRD is hosting in honor of National Arab American Heritage Month, National Autism Awareness Month, and National Volunteer Month.

**Agenda Item #6 – Presentation: Volunteer Program Update & Volunteer of the Year Award**

Lulú Ballesteros, equity and engagement manager, provided a detailed update on the district's volunteer program via a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was entered into the record, and announced the winner of this year's Volunteer of the Year award: Margaret Armstrong. Lulú noted that Margaret was nominated by district staff who worked closely with her at the Tualatin Hills Nature Center and was selected for the award by the district's Programs & Events Advisory Committee. Lulú provided an overview of Margaret's extensive volunteer service with the district, including as a founding member of the Friends of the Tualatin Hills Nature Park, noting that she has given decades of meaningful volunteer service to the district.

- ✓ Margaret thanked the district for this honor, noting that she is grateful for the years of experience with the district's amazing staff and her fellow volunteers.
- ✓ President Monteblanco thanked Margaret for helping shape one of the district's most wonderful places, the Tualatin Hills Nature Park.
- ✓ General Manager Doug Menke commented that he has known Margaret for many years and that not only has she made a positive impact for THPRD, but her work within the Beaverton School District is also outstanding. He expressed gratitude for Margaret's positive impact on the Tualatin Hills Nature Park that's taken place over so many years.

**Agenda Item #7 – Audience Time**

Secretary Minor read into the record written testimony received from Amanda Anderson who is requesting additional information regarding the seismic improvements that were to be made to the Garden Home Recreation Center as part of the district's 2008 Bond Measure. After her review of the Peterson Structural Engineers report and the limited information available regarding the

work completed at the center, she has not been able to confirm that this goal was achieved. She requests confirmation that the Garden Home Recreation Center was seismically upgraded to make it safe for patrons to visit, noting that the center is home to a variety of preschool, after school, and similar programs. If THPRD does not believe the building would be safe in a seismic event, then an outreach program to disclose that information to the public would be important. Further, if the facility was not made safe by the completed upgrades, then it is not clear what purpose the 2008 bond funds designated for seismic upgrades served in relation to the center.

- ✓ General Manager Doug Menke noted that district staff has been in correspondence with Amanda and are in the process of researching her inquiry. The district can confirm that there were seismic improvements made to the Garden Home Recreation Center but are researching the extent of those improvements and will provide the information to the board once it is available, as well.

## **Agenda Item #8 – Board Time**

### **A. Committee Liaisons Updates**

Barbie Minor provided the following updates and comments during board time:

- ✓ The most recent Programs & Events Advisory Committee meeting included a presentation on the district's adaptive and inclusion services.
- ✓ In honor of National Volunteer Month, congratulations to THPRD Volunteer of the Year award winner, Margaret Armstrong, and a big thank you to all THPRD volunteers.
- ✓ Encouraged the public to vote in the upcoming May election, noting that there is still time to register to vote if need be.

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

- ✓ In honor of National Volunteer Month, thank you to all THPRD volunteers and Melissa Marcum, the district's volunteer services specialist.
- ✓ Along with board members Felicita and Alfredo, and district staff, she participated in the recent visits to our legislators in Salem to advocate for THPRD initiatives.

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

- ✓ The most recent Nature & Trails Advisory Committee meeting included a review of the Nature & Trails Functional Plan and habitat inventory, resulting in much discussion on potential ideas for challenge grant funds.
- ✓ Encouraged the public to take advantage of the district's summer programming, noting that summer registration opens this Saturday.

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

- ✓ Enjoyed the legislator visits in Salem, noting that he was impressed by the elected officials representing Washington County who were accessible, empathetic, and collaborative.
- ✓ Reflected on this evening's proclamations and the work THPRD does to champion voices based on the values of the district and thanked district staff and our community for supporting these efforts.

President Monteblanco provided the following updates and comments during board time:

- ✓ Her biggest takeaway from the visit to Salem was the respect and appreciation THPRD receives as an agency and the familiarity of the legislators with THPRD parks and facilities as they themselves are users, noting that it takes effort to build these types of authentic relationships and connections for which she is appreciative and grateful to district staff and her fellow board members.

## **Agenda Item #9 – Consent Agenda**

**Alfredo Moreno moved that the board of directors approve consent agenda items (A) Minutes of March 8, 2023 Regular Board Meeting, (B) Monthly Bills, (C) Monthly Financial**

**Statement, (D) Resolution Authorizing Application to Local Government Grant Program, and (E) Bronson Creek Greenway Enhancement Construction Contract. Tya Ping seconded the motion. Roll call proceeded as follows:**

<b>Heidi Edwards</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tya Ping</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Barbie Minor</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Alfredo Moreno</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Felicita Monteblanco</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**The motion was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

### **Agenda Item #10 – Unfinished Business**

#### **A. 2023 Strategic Plan**

As stated in the memo included within the board of directors' 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. An initial presentation on this work was provided at the board's March 8, 2023 board meeting. The proposed Strategic Plan is included within the board of directors' information packet for consideration of adoption this evening.

Aisha Panas, deputy general manager, and Bruce Barbarasch, Nature & Trails manager, provided an overview of the Strategic Plan development process 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 expressed support for the plan as presented, noting that she likes having the stretch goals included, and thanked district staff for their work on this document. She noted the reference to crime prevention design within the plan, adding that she would love to learn more about this in the future.

Barbie Minor expressed appreciation for how the 2023 Comprehensive Plan and the Strategic Plan being presented this evening so clearly tie back to the district's values, noting that the information is also presented in an accessible and easily understandable way.

**Barbie Minor moved that the board of directors adopt the 2023 Strategic Plan. Heidi Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call proceeded as follows:**

<b>Alfredo Moreno</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tya Ping</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Heidi Edwards</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Barbie Minor</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Felicita Monteblanco</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**The motion was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

#### **B. General Manager's Report**

The following presentation was provided as listed within the General Manager's Report included in the board of directors' information packet:

- Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Update
  - Aisha Panas, deputy general manager, provided an update on the district's CAPRA reaccreditation process and next steps, via a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was entered into the record.
    - ✓ General Manager Doug Menke acknowledged Aisha's leadership through this process, noting that he is confident that the district will be reaccredited due the thorough and extensive work done by staff, adding that this type of

process builds confidence in the district not only with the community, but when the district seeks grant funding, too.

Heidi Edwards expressed gratitude for district staff's efforts on this project and described wanting to identify staff within the organization who aspire to move forward in parks and recreation and who would benefit through professional development opportunities.

- ✓ Aisha expressed agreement and described a new operational procedure that was recently approved by General Manager Doug Menke around employee development opportunities.

Alfredo Moreno expressed appreciation to district staff for their commitment and buy-in to this process, adding that he is impressed by the fact that THPRD is one of under 200 accredited agencies across the nation, which not only inspires confidence, but also offers assurance regarding the quality of work in guiding the district's future in terms of best practices.

**Agenda Item #11 – Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

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Felicita Monteblanco, President

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Barbie Minor, Secretary

Recording Secretary,  
Jessica Collins