



# Monthly Executive Summary August 2010

City of Spokane  
Leroy Eadie  
Director of Parks and Recreation  
September 9, 2010

### **Department highlights for the month include:**

- Grand opening and Park Bond Celebration at the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex was an absolute success. Many thanks to the Mayor, Park Board, Park Bond Citizen Advisory Committee, Northwest Neighborhood, and Parks Staff for making it such a great day.
- Parks Staff (Leroy and Pamela) participated in an application presentation in Olympia to the Recreation and Conservation Office for a 1 million dollar ALEA (Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account) grant to help pay down the dept service on the YMCA property therefore requiring less Conservation Futures Funding. Pamela McKinzie and Spokane County Park's staff John Bottelli put together an exception application and presentation.
- On August 10<sup>th</sup> Leroy, Taylor Bressler, and Garrett Jones had the opportunity to meet with the Emerson/Garfield Neighborhood to discuss issues and improvements at Corbin Park. Many topics were discussed including new lighting, replaced drinking fountains, tennis court improvements, and improved communication between the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department and the citizens of the Emerson/Garfield neighborhood.
- Parks Director Leroy Eadie participated in the Office of Neighborhood Service's "Meet and Eat" program on August 25<sup>th</sup>, which is an opportunity for citizens to ask questions of department directors. The program was held at the Downriver Golf Course on a beautiful summer evening. Thanks to Steve Conner and his staff for being such gracious hosts.
- Leroy Eadie, Craig Butz, and Carl Strong held a meeting on August 26<sup>th</sup> with the softball user groups to take input on the adopted facility use fees for the Dwight Merkel Softball Complex. It was a lively meeting with a lot of excellent input from the softball user groups.

### **Finance:**

- Tested Golf Point of Sale system upgrade in simulated environment for transmission speed and features. Tests were positive. High speed connections are now in place at all courses staff now setting implementation timeline and detailing process needed.
- Testing new version of the Financial Management System which adds some new very useful features including interfaces with Microsoft Office 2007.
- Prepared first draft of Proposed 2011 budget and presented to staff and then Park Board Finance Committee (Park Fund) and Park Board Golf Committee (Golf Fund).
- Provided purchasing and accounting support for the opening of the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex.

**Golf/Administration:** Report not available.

### **Marketing/Communications:**

- Twenty-three news releases including: First Event at Merkel complex - Girls 12U Fastpitch; Bring some Binoculars and Become a Duck Watcher; Park Bench Cafe Guest Appreciation Night; Soccer Camp Seattle Sounders FC Summer 2010b; Dwight Merkel - the Man Behind the Name; Under the Freeway Skate park; BMX at Dwight Merkel Complex Begins Saturday; Doobie Brothers Concert in Riverfront Park; Skate Park at Dwight Merkel Complex Grand Opening; IMAX Everest Special Engagement; We'll See You Tomorrow - Grand Opening of the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex; Kids Day in Riverfront Park; Manito 20th Anniversary; Merkel Grand Opening Photos on Facebook; City Golf Championship August 27-29; Merkel BMX Track Public Access Schedule; Pow Wow Set for Riverfront Park; Last Days to Swim in Aquatic Centers; Pony Rides at Riverfront; Southside Senior Activity & Community Center Founder's Day Aug 21; Merkel Public Meeting to Discuss Fees; IMAX See Any 4 for Five Dollars Each.doc; Pow Wow Weekend at Riverfront Park.doc
- Eight e-Newsletters were issued in August including: Aug 04 Outdoor e-Newsletter- 5 Reasons Not to Sit at Home this Weekend; Aug 08 Riverfront Park & Adult & Family Programs e-Newsletters; Aug 11 Outdoor e-Newsletter- 4 Labor Day Weekend Options Under \$40; Aug 11 Youth e-Newsletter - Finish Off Summer in Style; Aug 13 Older Adults e-Newsletter - Stay Active & Have Fun; Aug 18 Youth e-Newsletter - Feel Fit. Fight Fat. Frequent Fun!; Aug 18 Outdoor e-Newsletter - Raft on the Clark Fork - Last one of the season; Aug 24 Outdoor e-Newsletter- Get Ready for Bicycle Wine Tours.

- Daily updates to the web site have included updated information about Aquatic Centers seasonal closures; Merkel Grand Opening; Summer Parkways; Free Music Fridays at the Park Bench Café; Manito Park's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and fall plant sale; events at Manito; completion of Washington Monument relocation; Mirror Pond and Please Don't Feed the Ducks campaign.
- Merkel Grand Opening August 7 was a great day and grand celebration! Donor Recognition banners were produced and posted at each of the six pools and at the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex. A list of donors and information about Dwight Merkel (the man behind the name) were posted at the ribbon-cutting.
- The September program of Walk in the Park will feature a PPT presentation by Rebecca Madany on the 2011 Park Budget, and Craig Butz interviewing Carl Strong with an update on Merkel & Youth Baseball fields renovation.

### **Park Operations:**

- August was a busy month in parks as usual. Some of the larger events held include the Hillyard Festival at Harmon Park, the Friends of Manito Twentieth Anniversary and Manito Park Celebration, and the Friends of Manito Plant Sale.
- Staff has been working with Spokane Public Schools, various parochial schools, and SYSA on scheduling a variety of cross country meets in parks for the coming two months.
- The Spokane Symphony will not have their annual Labor Day Concert at Comstock Park for the first time in many years. Like many organizations, the Symphony had to drop some activities due to financial issues. Two other orchestras expressed some interest in picking up the concert but found the timeline too short to make anything happen. At least one of these groups is hoping they will be able to do something next year.
- Staff has been working with Wastewater Management to develop a stormwater management plan for park facilities. The Park Operations Complex is probably the area of greatest concern but appears to be ahead of the game on most issues.
- Our two way radio communications with employees working out in the field is undergoing some changes. Staff has been attending meetings to find out how this service will be provided in the future and what kind of equipment changes will be required.
- Staff has been working with Civil Service on testing for our currently vacant Craft Specialist – Plumber position. We hope to round out the job duties of this position to include some ability to take on work associated with other trades such as HVAC repair.
- A Request for Quotes was developed and sent out for putting metal roofing on a part of the Park Operations storage building. This will be the final phase in replacing worn out asphalt shingles that were on the buildings when purchased about twelve years ago.
- Asphalt companies are submitting quotes for re-paving the east parking lot at Grant Park. The asphalt is in very bad condition and is used by park patrons, Perry Street businesses and Grant Elementary School. The School District has agreed to replace the playground equipment that serves the school and park if we repair the parking lot.
- Staff has been working with St. Aloysious School on replacing the ball diamond backstop in Heath Park. Materials have been salvaged and donated from our ball diamond improvements being done at Chief Garry and the work will be completed at no cost to our Department.
- We have been working with Engineering Services and the Water Department on correcting high water pressure problems at the new Fish Lake Trailhead. The high water pressure present at this location was creating problems in the restroom plumbing and irrigation system. This work is being done as a part of the cost of developing the trailhead.
- Staff met with Avista Utilities on their request for a power line easement in Highbridge Pak near the pump station for Indian Canyon Golf Course. This area has existing power poles but no formal easement. The easement request will be reviewed by Legal staff and presented to Land Committee.

### **Planning/Project Management:**

- There are three remaining Eagle Scout projects to complete. mileage markers along the Fish Lake Trail; the redesigning of the signage system and bench placement on the Ped / Bike Loop at Upper Lincoln Park off of Southeast Blvd; and the continuation of a displayed map of the bike trails off of High Drive down to the Latah Creek. Installation of the trail signage has been delayed. The interested members of the adjacent Neighborhood are expecting that the project will be finished by the end of next month. The project is now a dual project with the brother of the original Eagle

Scout candidate recording the map information and developing the kiosk enclosure and painting the structure.

- The basketball court planned for Mission Park has not been started.
- Waiting for park furniture delivery to arrive for the Fairview Park furniture installation.
- Commemorative plaques for the new Aquatic Centers have been installed and the old plaques are being cleaned and repaired in preparation to be hung adjacent to the new plaques.
- Another memorial bench has been offered to be placed along High Drive adding up to three this season.
- The pancake shelter for Polly Judd Park has been funded and an Architect has been contracted to design and supervise the construction of the shelter. Meetings with the Neighborhood will occur this coming month on site.
- The North Bench /West Central shelter has taken a different direction theme wise as new members have been added to the West Central Neighborhood Park Committee. The concept has gone from a shelter to a gathering ring not unlike the Spokane Tribe has proposed for Chief Garry in Garry Park. A meeting with the Park Committee will be held next week.
- The Corbin Park Lights are scheduled for installation now that a contract has been cleared with CD and the respective Departments. We hired the contractor at a fine price compared to the bids received. On the subject of park light standards, the seasonal painting crew has tackled a fair number of galvanized cobra head light standards that have been installed in various Parks during the past years. A coat of black paint on the galvanized metal poles has transformed the mundane looking light poles into a nice relatable Park features.
- Staff has been involved in the Avista project that will determine a suitable year round water flow over the river bed from the head dam behind the Hotel down to the reservoir below Monroe Street. Observed were various control flows uninterrupted and flows that were directed by low weirs and sand bag dams. If all the permit condition are met, the increased year round daylight flows be a great experience for Riverfront Park users.
- Planning directed the volunteer installation of two Peace Poles, one at Manito at the east end of the Mirror Pond and the other in the landscaped area in front of the Post Street power.
- The contractor is a week away from completing the renovation the landscaped area along Coeur d'Alene Street in the Brownes Addition. The formal access to the trail system down to Latah Creek has been redirected and stair stepped down to across the blown out areas. There is a plan have interpretive material at the top of the access describing the trail improvements and the connections to near by trail routes to the West Central Neighborhood Bridge and the Fish Lake Trail.
- Staff site walked the Dog Park to determine the fence line based on a level route for circumference of the dog area. There was a slight reduction of area determined on the master plan but enough for a workable enclosure. Plans now include laying out the fence up to the retaining wall below Government Way. The wall will be the west boundary of the Dog run area.
- All POs written for the equipment at Merkel Complex arrived prior to the Opening on August 7 and the materials and machinery seems to be very suitable to the Complex's operation.
- The Ben Burr Trail Head renovation is under construction and the first work to be started is the approved removal of trees at areas where the trail bed will expand to 12 feet. Plans are being reviewed by the Urban Forestry Department.
- The River walk project in Peaceful Valley has cleared the CD Office and contract approval. Construction will start next week. The Department of Ecology has granted \$20,000.00 to the Neighborhood for native plant introduction and restoration and paper work is being completed so the Park Department will be the recipient and monitor the project development and execution. There is no time frame on project. There have been conversation with the Design Firm that developed the Riverwalk Plan with the intention change plans for planting areas along the river bank.
- The Over Look Project in CdA Neighborhood is going well. There was a brave effort to remove an active bee hive from a dying street tree. Elaborate plans were developed and executed with out a single sting or incident. How the bees reacted but they stayed in the log that was cut from a 10 foot long section of the tree trunk. Garret coordinated Bee keepers and arboriculturist that were willing to do the odd job to save a valuable bee hive.
- Staff is planning put together a load of goods graphics and signs for the Merkel Opening. All the names and information was accurate and good looking. Gate decorations and balloon displays added to the openings success.

- A Power Point Presentation was created that was presented in Olympia for the application of a grant that would provide funding the site restoration off the YMCA located in Riverfront Park.
- Base plans have been provided to the Storm water Management group which included all maps for Park facilities that have material storage and activity on the paved surfaces that would contribute to storm water contamination if flooded.
- The Disc Golf Group contact has been low but I have seen a lot activity at all the courses.

#### **Recreation/Entertainment Services:**

- The BMX track at the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex saw 182 riders during the Grand Opening which is the *largest BMX race ever held in the Inland Northwest* according to the ABA.
- Riverfront Park Food Service catered 1900 sandwich meals on 8/15 for the National Rural Letters Carrier Convention and set up a lunch tent across from the Convention Center to cater to the NRLC Convention from August 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>. The gross revenue for related activities during this convention was \$20,000.
- On August 6<sup>th</sup> Manito Park Bench Café “hosted a successful Guest Appreciation Night” with free music, snacks and drinks and a beer and wine garden.
- The Outdoor Recreation Program hosted 20 private group contracts for canoe and kayak trips during the month. Trips were operated to locations such as the Little Spokane River, Upper Spokane River, Badger Lake and Horseshoe Lake. Total Contracted trip attendance was nearly 300 participants!
- Hillyard Senior Activity Center hosted its annual Volunteer and Staff Dinner on Monday evening August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Recognition will be given to Kay McKay and Virginia Butt, HSC Volunteers selected as the 2009-10 Volunteers of the Year!
- The Corbin Kids Summer Camp program ended on Friday, August 27, 2010. 126 programs were held for children ages 3-5 and 6-11 in art, history, literature, and science.

#### **Urban Forestry:**

- Mike Sanborn will begin as a new Temp/Seasonal arborist on September 7<sup>th</sup>. His duties will include street tree licensing, permitting, code enforcement, sign clearance, and inventory.
- There are 4 vacancies on the Citizen Advisory Committee: Historic Preservation, Community Assembly and two Members-at-Large.
- Staff scheduled to participate in several training opportunities this fall including the ISA Training Conference, the Green Industry Series, WSU Extension Series and Community Canopy Wrokshop series.
- Interview with Down to Earth NW magazine published at <http://www.downtoearthnw.com/stories/2010/aug/27/urban-forestry-programs-help-connect-communities/>
- Utility Billing donation tests are complete and successful. All systems are prepared for a September 1<sup>st</sup> start. Program information has been posted on the website. Promotional inserts have been printed and delivered to the mail room. [http://spokaneurbanforestry.org/uploads/forestry\\_page\\_content\\_body/Urban%20Forestry%20Utility%20Insert.pdf](http://spokaneurbanforestry.org/uploads/forestry_page_content_body/Urban%20Forestry%20Utility%20Insert.pdf)
- Neighborhood Councils are responding to our invitation to speak at their meeting about the Urban Forestry program and the *NeighborWoods* stewardship program. September engagements scheduled include Browne’s Addition, Five Mile Prairie, and Rockwoods.
- Meeting scheduled with The Lands Council to discuss a partnership agreement.
- Finalized tree specifications and street tree process agreement with Engineering Department, Design and Construction.
- Tree removal and inventory at Fire Station 16 finished.
- Clearance pruning related to Park restroom renovations completed.
- Water Department land at 14<sup>th</sup> & Grand inventoried; and staff trained about proper mulching.
- Completed clearance pruning on Up River Derive as requested by Avista.
- Completed clearance on the Centennial Trail between Mission and Greene St.
- Performed fuels reduction and thinning on approximately 1 ½ acres at camp Sekani.
- Pruning of Logan Peace Park, Pioneer Park Heritage Tree.
- Removed one Willow and one Blacklocust at property next to Drumheller Springs.

- Removed 6 trees at RFP that were dead or in decline.
- Treated volunteer black locust at the Veterans Court shelter to help enhance the view of the falls.