



# Monthly Executive Summary December 2010

City of Spokane  
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Director of Parks and Recreation  
January 13, 2011

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

- Park Board held an almost four hour board meeting in December and accomplished everything on their agenda. We had a busy year last year, and I'm proud of the policy and budget work accomplished by this volunteer group of citizens. In particular it was great to update the Park Board Rules, something that has been on the to-do list for many years.
- Work has continued on developing a new Park Board Policy on Community Gardens on Parks and Recreation property. It is anticipated that this policy will be brought to the Land Committee in February.
- It appears that the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department was able to finish the year without dipping into Fund Balance or going over budget. Thanks to all the staff that tightened the belt, grew revenue and put their capital projects on hold the last quarter of 2010.

### **Finance:**

- Finalized Contract Flowchart to help staff with contract processing.
- Finished testing of Version 36 of Financial Management system – new version installed and staff learned about new features.
- Balanced various accounts in preparation for year end close, including outstanding purchase orders.
- Resolved a number of contract issues to wrap up the year and begin processing contracts for 2011.
- Golf Point of Sale was updated and gift card sales were set up. Arranged for the front desk to be able to enter gift certificate and card sales directly into upgraded system.
- Arranged for transition of Accountant I positions to Centralized Accounting/Internal Service Fund.
- Prepared numerous budget transfers to enable payment of invoices and employees.

### **Golf/Administration:**

- Golf courses remain closed.
- We continue to remove brush and clear areas to produce more sunshine and warmth in an effort to get frost off our greens earlier during the shoulder seasons.
- Staff continues to work on other winter projects such as ball washer repairs, painting, shop inventory, removal of dead trees and general clean up.
- We received the gift cards and discount cards for our upgraded Point of Sale. Initial reports indicate they are all well received and Christmas sales should be good.
- The YMCA demolition/restoration is progressing according to plan. We have contracted with Robert W. Droll, ASLA, for demolition and restoration design.
- The SEPA checklist has been submitted, and we are in the 14-day comment period. Initial discussions with WDFW indicate an HPA will be required; although we have no official word we are working on the process in anticipation of the requirement.
- We presented our case to the Landmarks Commission on Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> and had a unanimous vote that the building did not qualify for the historic register.
- The bid documents for demolition will be advertised beginning January 29<sup>th</sup>, with bid openings to take place January 10<sup>th</sup>. Depending on the status of the SEPA and HPA, our schedule places the abatement to begin the week of January 24<sup>th</sup>.
- We are meeting regularly with Avista, MIS and Qwest to ensure utilities to the building are removed and relocated. Avista and MIS are confident they can address their needs within the proposed schedule, however, Qwest could potentially delay our schedule.

### **Marketing/Communications:**

- 15 News Releases issued November 30 – December 29, 2010 including: Friends of Manito Mirror Pond Check Presentation; Holiday Gifts for Golfers from Spokane Parks and Recreation; Holiday Lights at Manito; Holiday Gift Guide; Riverfront Holiday Tree Damage Repaired; Canine Cookies Sinto Fundraiser; Snow Removal at Merkel and Albi; Skate With Santa December 11<sup>th</sup> at the Ice Palace; Aquatics Season Pass Now Available – Lowest Price for 2011 Swimming; New Gold Golf Card; Riverfront Tree Removals; Winter Break Youth Camps; Hurry – This FREE Holiday Lights Show at Manito Ends the 19<sup>th</sup>; Riverfront Holiday Hours of Operation; New Interactive Program Guide Debuts.

- We are continuing our popular “Walk in the Park” program produced and distributed via City Cable Channel 5. The first program of the year will feature social marketing strategies we are employing to enhance revenue generation, as well as an update on winter activities through our Outdoor Program and at the Ice Palace in Riverfront Park.
- Also, here’s a reminder that the City of Spokane’s web site video page now includes Park Board Meeting videos as well as a new section featuring the Department’s Walk in the Park videos, all available on-demand at <http://www.spokanecity.org/services/citycable5/streamingmedia/>
- Significant efforts were made by all staff to develop, produce and implement a strategic co-promotional campaign for holiday sales of Riverfront and Aquatics season passes, golf play cards and passes, and special package pricing for attractions. Marketing channels included: Spokesman-Review Gift Guide December 11<sup>th</sup>; Inlander print ad for two consecutive weeks; school flyers; news releases; social media including Facebook & Twitter; e-Newsletters (customer distribution lists); Radio buy and trade for time with on-air promotions & contests; web site seasonal graphics and extended information.

### **Park Operations:**

- Manito’s Holiday Lights display in the Gaiser Conservatory was very popular this year and set new records for attendance and donations. Attendance has grown steadily over the years from fewer than 500 people in 1997 to over 7,600 people this year.
- An unofficial website for Manito Park continues to cause problems. They published an incorrect schedule for the Holiday Lights display that resulted in people showing up to locked doors. Unfortunately, the public assumes that this website is affiliated with the Parks Department and that we are at fault for the inaccurate information. There has been some frustration trying to deal with this website but we are hopeful some changes can be made with the assistance of our legal department.
- The new greenhouse at Manito Park is complete and has already been put in use. This project was funded with the 1999 Bond Issue.
- There has been some confusion over the years among citizens, park staff and Friends of the Centennial Trail on which route is the official Centennial Trail as it goes through the Riverpoint development. Thanks to research done by Friends of the Centennial Trail staff and Washington State Parks the matter has been clarified. The official Trail short cuts through the Riverpoint development, under an overpass. The section of trail that follows the riverbank around the point belongs to the homeowners association.
- Park Operations staff has been busy with snow and ice removal on sidewalks, roadways and parking lots. Street plowing operation often push snow back onto the sidewalks, causing us to have to go back a second time. The second round is usually more difficult and time consuming because of the frozen and compacted berms.
- The annual fire sprinkler and alarm system inspections were completed this month as required by the Fire Department. There is some consideration for moving this to a summer month schedule, which would allow for a more thorough testing of the sprinkler systems.
- Installation of new metal roofing on a portion of the Park Operations shop building was completed during a break in the weather. This project was part of the 2010 capital improvement funding. Starting 10 years ago, all pitched roof sections now have metal roofing to replace the failing three tab shingles that had numerous leaks.

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

- The State Parks gave the Outdoor Program permission to use their snowmobile for grooming Nordic Trails within Spokane. Mike Aho and Ryan Griffith groomed the Riverside State Park 7-Mile Centennial Trail Head. The funding for the maintenance of the grooming equipment has been donated by *Fitness Fanatics*.
- The Riverfront & Recreation programs began a new marketing opportunity with a national marketing firm called *Groupon* on Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The company emails 40,000 Spokane/Coeur d’Alene residents with a daily special. Riverfront Park offered 2 for 1 Winter Day passes and 2 for 1 Summer Day passes resulting in an overwhelming 1,350 sales and over \$14,000 in revenue. Recreation will have an offering in March.
- The Corbin Art Center’s “Kids Holiday Break Camps” met and exceeded enrollment projections. As of December 20<sup>th</sup> there were 170 registrations in the various two-week programs.

- Corbin Senior Activity Center's "Holiday Bash" sold out. Everyone enjoyed delicious food, and the entertainment consisted of holiday music provided by Doug Scott and Ruby Devine.

**Urban Forestry:**

- Awarded an AmeriCorps service position for an Education and Outreach Coordinator to serve full-time February 7 – December 15, 2011 at the cost of \$14,950.
- WSU has cancelled the 2011 Turf, Tree and Landscape conference scheduled for February due to budgetary concerns.
- The Urban Forestry Tree Committee (UFTC) & Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) agreed to share meeting time and space to improve communication and efficiency.
- 3 trees were approved for Heritage Tree designation – an arborvitae and a larch, both at Coeur d'Alene Park, and a Swiss stone pine at Finch Arboretum.
- A subcommittee was formed to explore ways to improve the street tree permitting process, specifically in its relation to the street obstruction permit process.
- A subcommittee was formed to explore formation of a 501(c) 3 non-profit group in support of Urban Forestry.
- Taped interview given to KHQ-TV on December 9<sup>th</sup> regarding a study indicating that Wi-Fi radio may cause damage to trees. Broadcast same day.
- Interview given to KYRS Radio on December 13<sup>th</sup> regarding the Urban Forestry program in general and utility bill donation. Broadcast December 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Love morning segment with KXLY Radio on December 15<sup>th</sup> regarding the Riverfront Park tree removals.
- Taped interview given to KHQ-TV on December 17<sup>th</sup> regarding the Riverfront Park tree removals. Broadcast same day.
- Consulted on YMCA demolition project for tree protection and select removals.
- Met with the Engineering Team on the following projects: 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. Water Main, Grand Blvd. repaving, Post Street repaving.
- Working with The Lands Council on their new project: Ponderosa Pine Matching Project Challenge.
- Mike Sanborn has been assigned to attend all Pre-Development and Pre-Construction meetings to convey Urban Forestry permit requirements and planting specifications.
- Removed 26 trees from Riverfront Park's Red Wagon area due to overcrowding and poor health/pollution damage.