



PARK BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS — February 5, 2024 —

The following information is intended to provide a brief overview of the Board's governance work at the Committee and Board meetings. The full agenda, meeting materials, video clips and official minutes can be found on the [Park Board website](#).

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Bastyovanszky [highlighted recent events](#) attended by commissioners:

- Sunset Seniors Centre Public Information Session – Commissioner Virdi joined Vancouver-Langara MLA Michael Lee at the Sunset Seniors Centre Public Information Session. The new 10,000 sqft facility will include multipurpose rooms, a commercial kitchen, a lounge, and support spaces.
- India's Republic Day Reception 2024 – Commissioners Haer and Virdi attended the India's Republic Day Reception 2024. The national holiday is celebrated annually to commemorate the adoption of the constitution of India on January 26, 1950.
- Canucks – Lunar New Year – Commissioner Jensen, along with City Councillors Fry and Boyle, enjoyed the Vancouver Canucks game against the Columbus Blue Jackets on January 27, which also marked the celebration of Lunar New Year and the Year of the Dragon.
- 2024 State of the City Address with Mayor Ken Sim – Commissioner Virdi, alongside School Board Trustee Victoria Jung, joined Mayor Sim at the 2024 State of the City address.
- West End Community Centre AGM – Chair Bastyovanszky swore in the new Board Members at the West End Community Centre AGM.
- Oppenheimer Park – Chair Bastyovanszky visited Oppenheimer Park alongside community leaders Amanda from First United, Nisga'a member and Western Aboriginal Harm Reduction Society founder Chris Livingstone, and former Park Board Chair Sarah Blyth.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

The General Manager and Leadership Team presented an overview of the [GM's Report](#):

- s̱əq̱əlxənəm ts'exwts'áxwi7 (Rainbow Park) – IAKS 2023 Award – The International Associations for Sports and Leisure Facilities gave Vancouver's s̱əq̱əlxənəm ts'exwts'áxwi7 an award for Community Outdoor Grounds and Public Areas.
- Year in Review – Staff presented highlights of notable events and accomplishments of the Board of Parks and Recreation in 2023. This included:
 - Polar Bear Swim – Over 8,000 participants joined the Annual event at English Bay Beach.
 - Aquatics – Indoor aquatics expanded training to cultivate new lifeguards and hired an Adapted Aquatic Leader for tailored swimming lessons, now available at 5 indoor pools.
 - Sunset Arena Plant Upgrades – In Summer 2023, upgrades to the Sunset Ammonia Refrigeration Plant improved safety and energy efficiency for the Sunset Arena rink and community.
 - West End Waterfront Plan – The West End Waterfront plan engaged community members to shape future public spaces together.



- Opening of Promontory Park – Promontory Park in East Fraser Lands is now open, linking Champlain Heights to the riverfront for the growing neighborhood.
- Opening of Champlain Heights Playground – A new playground opened in Champlain Heights with diverse amenities and ample shade.
- Marpole Community Centre soil turning – City and Park Board officials, along with Marpole-Oakridge Community Association partners and the public, broke ground at Oak Park to commence construction on the Marpole project.
- Water Priority Action Plan Board approval – The Water Priority Action Plan, approved in December 2024, guides decisions on drinking water use in parks and recreation facilities from 2023 to 2028.
- Urban Forestry: Stanley Park Forest Management – Progress was made by the Urban Forestry team on the hemlock looper moth issue in Stanley Park. Completion of all tree removal along the Stanley Park Causeway is expected next week, with planting scheduled for spring.
- Sports Fields Strategy – The second and third phases of engagement concluded for the development of Vancouver's Sport Field Strategy, a comprehensive 10-year plan.
- Vancouver Aquatic Centre Renewal – \$140M in funding from the 2023-2026 Capital Plan was approved for the construction of a new Vancouver Aquatic Centre.
- Summer Water Restrictions and Fire Risk Mitigation – The Park Board collaborated with Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services to reduce wildfire risk in Stanley Park.
- Sports Field Upgrades – The newly formed Sports Field Improvement Group is enhancing safety and playability across citywide sports fields. In 2023, they completed 18 ball field projects and a major full-field renovation.
- Meadows and Naturalized Areas – 27 park sites and 3 golf courses were naturalized with pollinator meadows citywide, attracting bees, butterflies, and birds.
- Storm, Snow and Ice Response – The snow and ice control schedule maintained park access roads, walking areas, and pathways in downtown throughout winter.
- Work with vulnerable populations and folks sheltering in parks – City-supported Park Rangers engage with vulnerable populations in Vancouver's parks, ensuring accessibility for everyone during both day and night.
- Alcohol on Beaches pilot – Staff are currently reviewing findings from the pilot allowing alcohol consumption at select Vancouver beaches, which ran from June 1 to September 4.
- Removal of Stanley Park temporary bike lane – The Stanley Park bike lane has been mostly removed as directed by the Board to restore pre-pandemic traffic conditions.
- Arts, Culture & Engagement: Building Community through the Arts – The Decolonization, Arts, & Culture team celebrated artists and cultural groups across



Vancouver, supported by Park Board funding and staff to build relationships with Indigenous communities.

- Arts, Culture & Engagement 2023 New Initiatives – In 2023, Arts, Culture & Engagement expanded the Park Activation Program, worked on the Local Food Systems Action Plan, and provided Reconciliation education.
 - Reconciliation Planning 2023 – Park Board staff lead efforts to enhance relationships with the City, local First Nations, and Urban Indigenous communities through initiatives like the Weekly Decolonization Circle, MST Flag Raising, and nearing completion of the Colonial Audit.
 - Arts & Culture Planning 2023 – Park Board staff supported Indigenous-led naming initiatives following the completion of the second phase of the City-wide Commemoration Framework engagement.
 - Land & Food Systems Planning 2023 – The Land and Food Systems branch nurtures local connections with land and food systems in parks to foster diverse, resilient communities and lands.
 - Participation in the Vancouver Pride Parade – Park Board staff participated in the Vancouver Pride Parade in Summer 2023, demonstrating ongoing support and engagement with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
 - Think Big Strategy – In July 2023, the Board received the Think Big revenue strategy report, suggesting increased user fees, better food options, sponsorships, and a public foundation to boost revenue.
 - Support for Community Events – The Park Board continued supporting community events like the African Descent Festival, Carnaval del Sol, and the Circles Festival.
 - Symphony At Sunset – The Park Board partnered with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra for Symphony at Sunset, an open-air concert held at Sunset Beach Park.
 - Golf: Largest generator of Park Board revenue – Vancouver's golf operations hosted various events, including the Vancouver Open, accessibility tournaments, and low-barrier camps for kids.
 - Return of the Stanley Park Train – The Stanley Park Railway returned in 2023 for Bright Nights.
 - VanDusen Festival of Lights – VanDusen's Festival of Lights holiday event drew a record 190,000+ visitors over the holidays.
 - Record visitation at Bloedel – In 2023, Bloedel Conservatory broke attendance records with nearly 225,000 regular admissions, a 24% increase from 2022.
- Council Agenda Items
- Council to receive a presentation on February 7, 2024, titled “Vancouver Parks & Recreation Services: Proposed Governance Transition - Planning Update”.



BOARD MOTIONS

Independent Legal Advice for Judicial Review of Mayor's Motion

The Board [approved a motion with amendments](#) authorizing the board to retain independent legal counsel related to [Vancouver City Council's motion of December 13, 2023](#), seeking to abolish the elected Park Board. The motion includes the allocation of the sum of \$20,000 for preliminary review and any relevant actions recommended to the Board by such legal counsel. Legal counsel is directed to provide a legal opinion on the mid-term abolition of the elected Park Board and whether that violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, along with addressing any other matters advised by counsel. The motion also stipulates that all privileged legal advice, information, or correspondence remain confidential to anyone beyond the elected Park Board, unless otherwise decided by a majority vote of the elected Park Board.

NEXT MEETINGS

The next Committee and Board meetings are scheduled for February 26, 2024.

