



REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 7, 2025

A Regular meeting of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation was held on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at 7:38 pm, in the Boardroom at the Park Board Office, and via videoconference.

PRESENT:

Commissioner Laura Christensen, Chair
Commissioner Brennan Bastyovanszky, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Tom Digby
Commissioner Angela Haer
Commissioner Marie-Claire Howard
Commissioner Scott Jensen
Commissioner Jas Virdi

**GENERAL MANAGER'S
OFFICE:**

Steve Jackson, General Manager
Jessica Kulchyski, Manager, Executive Office and Board Relations
Carol Lee, Meeting Clerk
Victoria Tyers, Board Support and Meeting Assistant

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. The meeting is being held on the land respectfully and with the knowledge that there must be continued acknowledgement of the history of injustice toward Indigenous peoples. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation is committed to supporting truth and reconciliation, and to use this opportunity to amplify local First Nations voices and culture through our work in community.

IN CAMERA MEETING

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen

SECONDED by Commissioner Digby

THAT the Board will go into meetings prior to the next Regular Board Meeting, which are closed to the public, pursuant to Section 165.2(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*, to discuss matters related to paragraphs:

- (c) labour relations or other employee relations;
- (g) litigation or potential litigation affecting the city;
- (k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of an activity, work or facility that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the city if they were held in public;

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Regular Board Meeting – September 15, 2025

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen

SECONDED by Commissioner Digby

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Board meeting of September 15, 2025, be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair highlighted the participation of Commissioners at Park Board events since the previous Board meeting on September 15, 2025:

- Commissioners recognized National Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 30
- Commissioner Bastyovanszky attended the Roundhouse CCA meeting in his role as liaison
- Commissioner Digby was a judge in the Dog Trick Contest at Dog Day in Dude Chilling Park
- Commissioner Digby attended the International Spin Wook Outdoors Day event in Trillium Park
- Commissioner Digby attended the Hogan's Alley Society event in the unnamed park at Gore and Union Streets
- Chair Christensen and Commissioner Digby attended the Grandview-Woodlands Advisory Committee meeting on enhancing public greenspace in the Grandview-Woodlands neighbourhood
- Commissioner Digby attended the VanDusen Botanical Garden Association lecture covering the history and current collections at VanDusen Botanical Garden
- Commissioner Digby attended the Day of Long Boat canoe races at Jericho Sailing Centre
- Commissioner Bastyovanszky attended the Canadian Women's rugby team viewing party at the Meraloma Clubhouse, the roof of which was recently repaired by Park Board staff.

COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were received via email or the [Contact Park Board Commissioners](#) web form between September 29, 2025, and 3:00 pm on October 7, 2025 regarding the Member's Motion titled "Enjoy the Sunset in Vancouver":

- Two in support
- One opposed.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

1. Report of the Board Committee – October 7, 2025

The Board considered the report containing recommendations and actions taken by the Board Committee. Its items of business included:

1. Imagine West End Waterfront Vision: Alternative Phase 1 – Report Back
2. Procurement Policy Update – Report Back
3. T100 Vancouver Multisport Festival Triathlon.

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen
SECONDED by Commissioner Virdi

THAT the Board approve the recommendations and actions taken by the Board Committee at its meeting of October 6 and 7, 2025, as contained in items 1 through 3.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Haer, Jensen, Virdi
Absent: Commissioner Howard

STAFF REPORTS

1. General Manager's Report

The General Manager presented the General Manager's Report, highlighting:

- Completion of the 2025 outdoor sport court renewal program
- The award of King Charles III Coronation Medal to Albert Sing Wai Lee , Past President of Renfrew Park Community Centre, in recognition of his service to the Vancouver-Kingsway neighbourhood
- Award of the consultant contract for the design of the Moberly Park synthetic turf field and fieldhouse
- Award of consultant contract for design of Ross Park spray park and fieldhouse
- Council agenda items related to, or impacting, parks and recreation:
 - Council to receive a report on October 7, 2025, titled "[Kitsilano Secondary Synthetic Turf Replacement and Sport Field Lighting – Licence Agreements, Custody, Care, Management of Land and Expenditure of Development Cost Levies](#)", which would approve negotiating a contract to acquire the rights to use a portion of the grounds at Kitsilano Secondary School for the purposes of replacing a synthetic turf field
 - Council to receive a report on October 7, 2025, titled "[Auditor General Committee Recommendations Transmittal Report](#)", which would endorse the 13 recommendations in the recent audit of Recreation Facility Asset Management report.

- Council to consider a motion on October 8, 2025, titled “[Zero Means Zero: Advancing a Zero Percent Property Tax Increase for 2026](#)”, which would direct staff to prepare the draft 2026 Operating Budget based on a zero percent property tax increase,
- Council to consider a motion on October 8 2025, titled “[VanStat: A Pilot Program for Smart, Transparent, and Accountable City Services](#)”, which would direct staff to establish a 3-month pilot program modelled on the CompStat accountability framework
- Council to consider a motion on October 8, 2025, titled “[Protecting the Champlain Heights Forest Trail Network for Future Generations and Residents](#)”, which would direct staff to report back with considerations for the protection of the Champlain Heights trail system network under provisions for park designation
- Board briefing memos and emails issued from September 15 to October 6, 2025.

MEMBERS’ MOTIONS

1. Affirming the Park Board’s Commitment to Transgender Lives and Rights

Commissioner Digby introduced the motion and responded to questions from the Board.

Suspension of Rules

MOVED by Commissioner Digby

SECONDED by Commissioner Bastyovanszky

THAT the Vancouver Park Board suspends the rules to hear from two speakers in the audience.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Board heard from two speakers who commented on the damage done to the 2SLGBTQIA+ by the Park Board by featuring the work of JK Rowling and that some of the proceeds of the event may be used to fund her legal actions against transgender rights. The speakers responded to questions from the Board.

Suspension of Rules

MOVED by Commissioner Digby

SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

THAT the Vancouver Park Board suspends the rules to hear from one additional speaker from the audience.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Board heard from one speaker who expressed concern that the decision to proceed with the Harry Potter event was taken in-camera, which was a departure from the normal process for approving new events.

Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Digby

SECONDED by Commissioner Bastiovanszky

WHEREAS:

1. The Vancouver Park Board has a long history of celebrating Vancouver's 2SLGBTQIA+ community including transgender, gender diverse and Two-Spirit (TGD2S) people, and addressing specific needs and opportunities within these communities;
2. The City of Vancouver created its first TGD2S Action Plan in 2016 and has completed many of the "early actions" contained in that plan. The City is currently renewing the TGD2S action plan with a stronger focus on making sure TGD2S communities feel safe and included. Public consultation has concluded on the renewed plan, and a draft report is anticipated in November 2025;
3. By in-camera decision dated May 12, 2025, the Park Board approved hosting a Harry Potter™ event in Stanley Park, with that event being currently scheduled to open in November 2025, which approval may not have had a robust reputational assessment at that time about its impact on the TGD2S community;
4. The original author of the Harry Potter book series, JK Rowling, has since at least 2018, taken notorious public positions, and committed funding to political and legal causes which are openly hostile to full acceptance and rights of TGD2S people in our communities, some of which actions directly impacted Vancouver itself. To avoid platforming the views of JK Rowling, specific actions taken by her have been circulated by Commissioner Digby to all Commissioners for their individual assessment;
5. It is understood that JK Rowling will financially profit from the Harry Potter™ event being hosted by the Park Board;
6. The views of JK Rowling are part of a hostile public discourse that targets TGD2S people, seeking limits on their access to economic opportunities, healthcare, censorship in education on perspectives relevant to them, and limitations on access to public spaces and services (including bathrooms and changerooms):
 - i. The impact and scale of damage from this hostile public discourse is known to cause anxiety, depression and lead to acts of suicide by TGD2S individuals; and
 - ii. This hostile public discourse is deeply disturbing to TGD2S individuals, families, friends and communities;
7. This hostile public discourse of which JK Rowling is engaged is deeply inconsistent with the values of the Vancouver Park Board including our long standing policy to create safe and welcoming spaces for everyone;
8. The pain caused to an important part of our community by the decision to host the Harry Potter™ event in Stanley Park opening in November 2025 has called into question the reputation of the Park Board regarding, specifically, its commitment to the

TGD2S, and more generally, whether it intends to profit from events which are associated with the targeting of any of our diverse equity seeking groups in Vancouver.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board reiterates that it unequivocally supports the lives and rights of transgender, gender diverse and Two-Spirit (TGD2S) people, it will continue to celebrate and honour them and their communities, and it will continue to support their specific needs and opportunities in the Vancouver parks and recreation system;
- B. THAT the Vancouver Park Board recognizes that transphobia sets a precedent to the reduction in human rights that affects all of us;
- C. The Vancouver Park Board directs staff to report back on contract options to ensure that the Harry Potter™ event runs for one season only;
- D. THAT the Vancouver Park Board directs staff to separately report back on actions the Park Board can take to address the pain caused to TGD2S people and their communities by hosting the Harry Potter™ event, including:
 - i. Actions to increase TGD2S inclusion and safety according to the renewed TGD2S Action Plan anticipated for November 2025;
 - ii. Recognition of the Trans Day of Remembrance on November 20, 2025
 - iii. Spaces, place-making and events to celebrate and honour TGD2S people and communities;
- E. THAT the Vancouver Park Board acknowledges that it failed in its policy commitment to consult with the 2SLGBTQ+ Committee in advance of hosting the Harry Potter™ event, a failure which would likely have identified the reputational concerns of hosting the event; and
- F. THAT the Vancouver Park Board directs staff in the business services group to, in the future, conduct deeper investigations into the reputational aspects of potential hosted events, and to present a fulsome account of such risks to Commissioners at the time approval is requested:
 - i. Requests for confidential approval by potential suppliers shall be viewed with extreme skepticism going forward.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Enjoy the Sunset in Vancouver

Commissioner Digby introduced the motion and responded to questions from the Board.

Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Digby

SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

WHEREAS

1. Sunset in Vancouver on June 2 (solstice) each year is about 9:21 pm, with light remaining in the sky to at least 11 pm (all times PDT);
2. Sunset on the Victoria Day long weekend in late May is about 9:01 pm;
3. Sunset on BC Day is within a few minutes of 8:49 pm;
4. Police have in recent years increased beach patrols providing safety and management of civil order on Vancouver's very safe beaches; and
5. Police have demonstrated increasing enforcement of the current 10 pm park closing by-law which interrupts visitors during hours which are commonly used by many residents to enjoy the immediate post-sunset conditions on our beaches, most of whom cause little or no disruption to surrounding neighbourhoods.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Park Board hereby directs staff to prepare a by-law amendment for approval by Commissioners extending the public hours on ocean beaches facing English Bay to 11 pm from Victoria Day long weekend to BC Day, each year, inclusive.

Amendment to the Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Haer

SECONDED by Commissioner Viridi

THAT Item B be added to the Main Motion:

- B. Conduct meaningful public consultation on the proposed extension of beach hours, including outreach to residents, beach users, and neighbourhood associations, and report findings back to the Board prior to final approval of any by-law changes.

DEFEATED

In favour: Commissioners Haer, Howard, Viridi

Opposed: Commissioners Bastovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Jensen

Amendment to the Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen

SECONDED by Commissioner Bastiovanszky

THAT the Main Motion be amended as follows:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Park Board hereby directs staff to prepare a report summarizing costs and risks/benefits, as well as a by-law amendment for approval by Commissioners extending the public hours on ocean beaches facing English Bay to 11 pm from Victoria Day long weekend to BC Day, each year, inclusive.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastiovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Jensen

Opposed: Commissioners Haer, Virdi

Abstained: Commissioner Howard

Amendment to the Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Digby

SECONDED by Commissioner Haer

THAT Item B be added to the Main Motion:

B. FURTHER THAT the Park Board direct staff to decline to pay any costs charged to the Park Board in 2026 for policing the alcohol on beaches program which totaled \$430,500 in 2025.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioner Digby

Opposed: Commissioners Bastiovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Haer, Howard, Jensen

Question on the Main Motion, as Amended

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Vancouver Park Board hereby directs staff to prepare a report summarizing costs and risks/benefits, as well as a by-law amendment for approval by Commissioners extending the public hours on ocean beaches facing English Bay to 11 pm from Victoria Day long weekend to BC Day, each year, inclusive.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastiovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Howard, Jensen

Opposed: Commissioners Haer, Virdi

Recess

The meeting recessed at 9:13 pm and reconvened at 9:31 pm.

3. Think Free Play: Expanding Sports Access in Vancouver Through Self-Service Equipment Stations

Commissioner Virdi introduced the motion and responded to questions from the Board.

Motion to Extend

MOVED by Commissioner Digby

SECONDED by Commissioner Haer

THAT the meeting be extended to the conclusion of the Board meeting.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Haer, Jensen, Virdi

Abstained: Commissioner Howard

Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Virdi

SECONDED by Commissioner Haer

WHEREAS:

1. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation manages and operates over 240 parks, 24 community centres, a network of sports fields, courts, and recreation facilities, serving as the largest provider of free and low-cost recreational opportunities in the city;
2. The Board has long prioritized accessibility, equity, and inclusion, delivering programs that reduce financial barriers to recreation, including the Leisure Access Program for low-income residents;
3. Despite these efforts, many Vancouver residents still face barriers to participation in sport and physical activity, including the cost and storage of equipment;
4. The City of Surrey has recently become the first municipality in North America to introduce free sports equipment lending stations, in partnership with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities and Equip Sport. The initiative has launched 30 self-service stations across 20+ parks, offering year-round access to equipment such as table tennis sets, soccer balls, basketballs, and fitness gear, at no cost to residents or the municipality;
5. Surrey's initiative is powered by Equip Sport, a Swiss-based company operating more than 400 lending stations across Europe, and fully funded by Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, a national organization dedicated to removing barriers to children's participation in sport and recreation;
6. By leveraging partnerships, Surrey has demonstrated an innovative, inclusive, and cost-neutral approach to expanding access to recreation and strengthening

community connection – an approach that could be adapted for Vancouver’s extensive park and recreation system; and

7. Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities and Equip Sport have expressed a strong interest in expanding the free public sports equipment lending program and self-service stations to Vancouver parks and recreation facilities (Letter of Interest appended).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to work with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities and Equip Sport to pilot a free sports equipment lending program in Vancouver parks and facilities, modeled after the Surrey initiative, with a report back to the Board following the first year of implementation; and

FURTHER THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation affirm and direct that accessibility, equity, and inclusion be prioritized in this initiative, ensuring that residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can participate in sport without financial or logistical barriers.

Amendment to the Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Bastyovanszky

SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

THAT the Main Motion be amended as follows:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to work with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities and Equip Sport to pilot a free sports equipment lending program in Vancouver parks and facilities, modeled after the Surrey initiative, through the existing unsolicited proposals process.

DEFEATED

In favour: Commissioner Bastyovanszky

Opposed: Commissioners Christensen, Digby, Haer, Jensen, Viridi

Absent: Howard

Question on the Main Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to work with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities and Equip Sport to pilot a free sports equipment lending program in Vancouver parks and facilities, modeled after the Surrey initiative, with a report back to the Board following the first year of implementation; and

FURTHER THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation affirm and direct that accessibility, equity, and inclusion be prioritized in this initiative, ensuring that residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can participate in sport without financial or logistical barriers.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ENQUIRIES

Commissioner Bastiovanszky requested information on the timing for the update on the Park Board's land assets that are held in trust.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The Board adjourned at 10:08 pm.

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Steve Jackson
General Manager

Commissioner Laura Christensen
Chair