



SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 4, 2025

A Regular meeting of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation was held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, at 6:41 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
Debbie Reimer, 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.

Suspension of Rules

MOVED by Commissioner Digby
SECONDED by Commissioner Haer

THAT the Vancouver Park Board suspends the rules to reduce the length of time permitted for speakers from five minutes to three minutes.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Christensen, Digby, Haer, Howard, Virdi

Opposed: Commissioner Bastyovanszky

Abstained: Commissioner Jensen

COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were received via email or the [Contact Park Board Commissioners](#) web form between October 27, 2025, and 12:00 pm on November 4, 2025 regarding: the Park Board response to 2026 budget reductions:

- 131 in support
- Council has received over 500 emails in opposition to the Park Board budget cuts.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Member Motion: Park Board Response to 2026 Budget Reductions

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

Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Bastovanszky

SECONDED by Commissioner Digby

WHEREAS:

1. The Mayor's proposed Zero Means Zero 2026 Operating Budget imposes a \$120 million city-wide spending reduction, of which \$15 million is assigned to the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation;
2. In 2025, the Park Board's operating budget represented 7.9% of the city's budget; yet the Park Board is being asked to absorb 12.5% of the target reduction (\$15 million out of \$120 million);
3. The \$15 million reduction target assigned to the Park Board is a significant portion (8%) of the Park Board's operating budget; and even more significant portion (15%) of the tax-funded component of the Park Board budget,
4. The Mayor's Zero means Zero plan will directly impact frontline community services, reduce service hours, defer additional maintenance, and undermine cleanliness across the city's parks and recreation system; and will have a disproportionate impact on residents' day to day lives;
5. The Mayor recently stated in the Vancouver Sun "... what I can tell you is we are going to do whatever it takes to deliver better parks in the city of Vancouver as soon as possible" and this statement appears to be incompatible with the \$15 million reduction target;
6. The Park Board is being directed to increase revenue from parking, fees, and services by \$8.9 million in addition to absorbing the \$15 million cut to its tax-funded portion;
7. Despite exceeding its 2025 revenue targets and achieving a \$4.5 million surplus, the Park Board is not permitted to retain these revenues, as they are absorbed into the City's general accounts, further constraining the Park Board's ability to manage its own fiscal pressures; and
8. Recreation Services and Park Operations — responsible for community centres, pools, arenas, urban forestry, park maintenance, public washrooms, and frontline community services—constitute the majority of the Park Board's tax-funded operations and will likely be deeply impacted by these reductions (<https://cityhallwatch.wordpress.com/2025/10/20/parks-recreation-on-the-line-zero-zero-budget-christensen/>)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT The Park Board requests that City Council reduce the 2026 budget reduction target assigned to the Park Board to reflect the Park Board's share of the municipal tax base and thereby be limited to 8% of the total target, or about \$9.6 million of the \$120 million target, not \$15 million (12.5% of the total target); and
- B. THAT The Park Board requests that the Chair, or delegate, engage in a dialogue with the Mayor and City Manager to seek a constructive path forward and to reaffirm the shared obligation to maintain equitable, transparent budget targets for the Park Board.

The Board heard from 25 speakers, all of whom spoke in support of the staff recommendation. The Speakers responded to questions from Commissioners.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 9:00 p.m. and reconvened at 9:10 p.m.

Motion to Extend

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen

SECONDED by Commissioner Digby

THAT the meeting be extended to the conclusion of the November 4, 2025 Board meeting.

CARRIED

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

Opposed: Commissioners Howard, Viridi

Amendment to the Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Digby

SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT The Park Board requests that City Council reduce the 2026 budget reduction target assigned to the Park Board to zero, and further requests that the tax funded portion of the Park Board budget be maintained at the same level as 2025; and
- B. THAT The Park Board requests that the Chair, or delegate, engage in a dialogue with the Mayor and City Manager to seek a constructive path forward and to reaffirm the shared obligation to maintain equitable, transparent budget targets for the Park Board.

Amendment to the Amendment

MOVED by Commissioner Howard
SECONDED by Commissioner Haer

THAT the Main Motion be replaced with the following:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Park Board staff identify and implement administrative efficiencies and eliminate duplication of services to ensure responsible fiscal management;
- B. THAT Park Board staff prioritize the allocation of resources toward maintaining and renewing existing parks, community centres, and recreation facilities before pursuing new capital projects that do not have secured external funding from the City of Vancouver, the Province, or the federal government; and
- C. THAT Park Board staff work collaboratively with City staff to prepare a 2026 operational budget that aligns with Council's direction for a zero tax increase while protecting the essential services Vancouver residents rely on.

DEFEATED

In favour: Commissioners Haer, Howard, Viridi

Against: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Jensen

Question on the Amendment

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- B. THAT The Park Board requests that the Chair, or delegate, engage in a dialogue with the Mayor and City Manager to seek a constructive path forward and to reaffirm the shared obligation to maintain equitable, transparent budget targets for the Park Board.

DEFEATED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky Digby Jensen

Opposed: Commissioners Christensen, Haer, Howard, Viridi

Question on the Main Motion

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- B. THAT The Park Board requests that the Chair, or delegate, engage in a dialogue with the Mayor and City Manager to seek a constructive path forward and to reaffirm the shared obligation to maintain equitable, transparent budget targets for the Park Board.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Jensen

Opposed: Commissioners Haer, Howard, Virdi

Abstained: Commissioner Digby

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The Board adjourned at 10:18 pm.

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Steve Jackson
General Manager

Commissioner Laura Christensen
Chair