



District and Community Services Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 12, 2017 at 1:00pm
549 Congress St.

Board members present: Josh Benthien (Northland Enterprises), Ken Cianchette (Portland Properties), Phil Haughey (MHR Management)

Guests: Kay Mann (Maine Green Power)

Others: Megan Doane (Portland Stage), Jon Dow (Waterfront Concerts), Joan Dow (resident), Jenn Tomlinson (Cat Ferry), Bill Daly (Westin Portland Harborview Hotel)

Staff present: Amy Geren, Taffy Eaton

Minute 1. Josh Benthien welcomed everyone and asked for introductions.

Minute 2. On a motion by Ken Cianchette and seconded by Phil Haughey, the committee unanimously accepted the November 17, 2016 meeting minutes.

Minute 3. Panhandling Ad hoc meeting update: Ken said the reason for the ad hoc committee is to address downtown safety.

- The committee will use a 6-month time frame to develop a Plan for Recommendation
- There are 10 – 12 interested and committed committee members
- There will be weekly meetings to start with
- The committee will hear from all interested organizations and individuals

Minute 4. Kay Mann, Commercial Outreach Coordinator with Maine Green Power:

- The program has been around for 4 years and is funded through 2021. It is offered by Maine PUC and allows Maine Green Power to be available to all consumers.
- Great Lakes Millinocket and Black Liquor from a paper mill in Rumford are this years' suppliers
- Pandora's lights are supported by Maine Green Power this year
- \$8.95 per month represents 1 block of 500 KW hours which covers an average home in Maine. A half block for residential use is also available.
- This does not replace a supplier, it's a voluntary program meant to source some or all of the power used with Maine generated, renewable power
- Kay will address the Merchant meeting in February to get the word out further
- Kay can be reached at kmann@3degreesinc.com

Minute 6. DEL update: Amy covers Graffiti removal, Winter operations, Ordinance enforcement, Panhandling discussion, Supplemental Services data collection, Downtown Beautification in the attached report.

- The Cadets summary indicates that smoking issues and social services needs are elevated

- See Click Fix has annual awards which Amy will look into
- Casey and Amy are working with LearningWorks and the City of Portland to develop a graffiti removal strategy, and are looking into programs that have worked in other cities (Charlotte, NC). Cameras and rapid removal seem to be the best deterrents.
- This will be revisited at the January 19, 2017 Board meeting. Liability is an issue. Amy will ask the Neighborhood Prosecutor attend the next DCS Committee meeting.
- Amy recommends using the See Click Fix app when reporting graffiti, but do not take a photo while doing it as it is believed to encourage the behavior. The City reports it to the Neighborhood Prosecutor who contacts the building owner. The Neighborhood Prosecutor can pursue the property owner and let them know they will get a citation. Portland Police Department is aware of the groups that are responsible.
- Tree tour with Jeff Tarling - Jeff talked about using a rubber porous material in place of the tree grates, and discusses opportunities for tree planting.
- Planters will be worked on for the winter 2017-2018
- Data collection by the Downtown Public Works crew is under way so Amy will be able to report at the end of the year. Data points are based on supplemental services agreement requirements.
- New trash/recycling bins are here and will be installed in the Spring

Minute 5. Supplemental Services Agreement benchmarking update: Josh distributed the updated agreement for review. The Board would like to get these suggestions to the City by the end of January for their review.

- See Josh's report (attached)
- These changes were suggested for the current 2016-2017 agreement but didn't get added/changed
- Some events were eliminated so benchmarking at this time will help in the future

A motion to recommend these changes to Board was made by Ken Cianchette and seconded by Phil Haughey. The vote was unanimous.

Other business:

- February 9th agenda:
 - 3 committee goals needed: Graffiti is one. Josh encouraged committee members to think about others for the February meeting.
 - Vote on having City staff remove graffiti when seen on private property. Issues:
 - It is a liability issue
 - What's the trade off? What will the City staff not do in lieu of increasing removal efforts?
 - Maybe sign onto graffiti insurance in order to protect property owner? This committee is interested in pursuing the possibility of increased City involvement with graffiti removal.
- Portland Stage's Gaslight Project is an outdoor event on 1/19/17. Megan should contact Ted Musgrave regarding the possibility of using part of Forest Avenue.

Josh adjourned the meeting at 2:00

Respectfully submitted,
Taffy Eaton, recorder

Update from your Downtown Experience Liaison

January 2017

Cadet Program

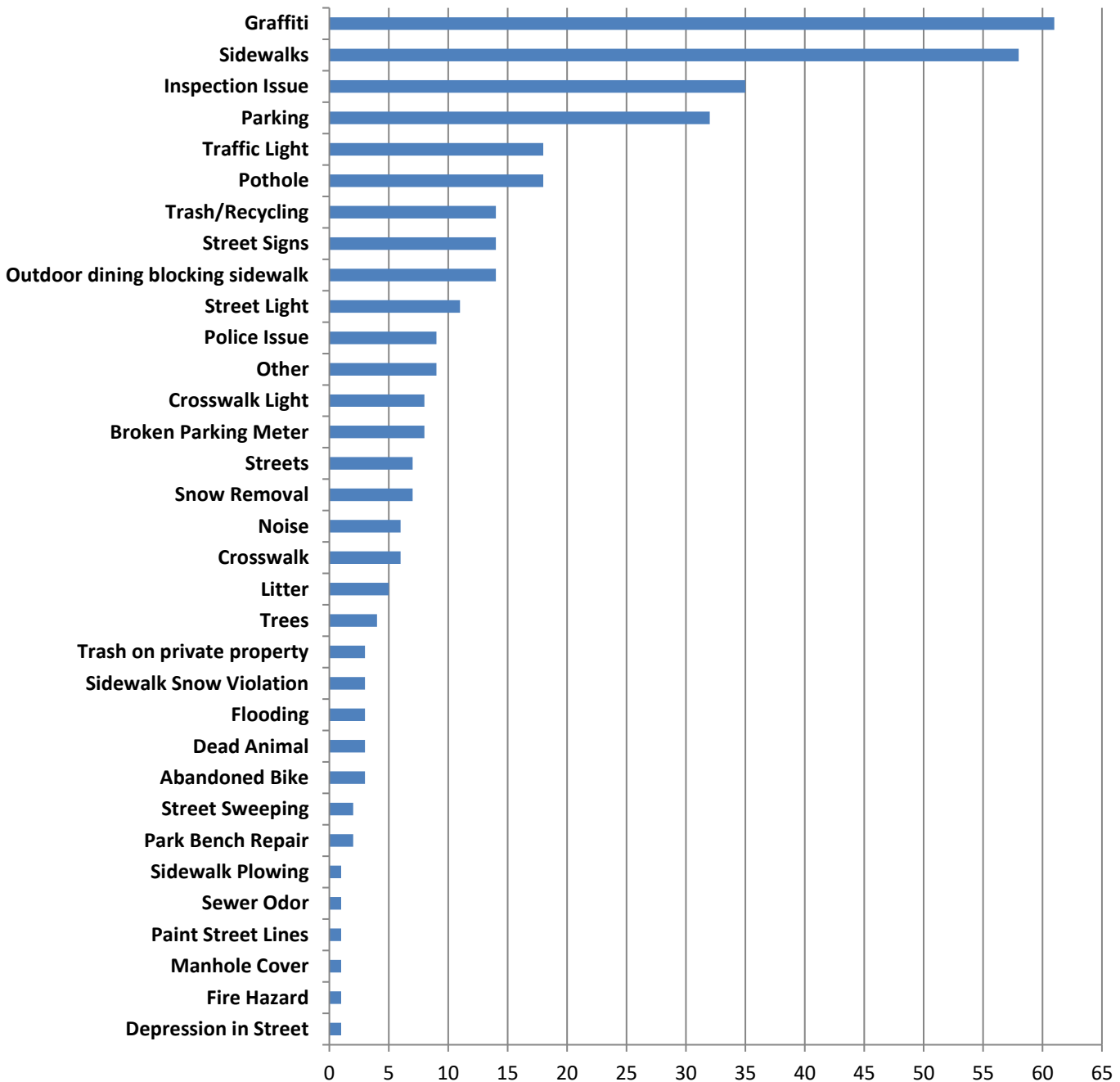
- I have completed the cadet evaluation. Key findings and recommendations are outlined below, but please contact me if you would be interested in reading the full report.
 - FINDING: Business contacts decreased by 65% in 2016 from the previous season, indicating the cadets were either more heavily focused on community involvement (which was high this season), there was less demand within the business community to meet with the cadets, or perhaps there were other variables. RECOMMENDATION: To assure property owners' and businesses' interests in talking with the cadets are met, I could provide cadets with points of contact by business location for cadets to strategically check in with early in the season to make their role in the community known. As well, Portland Downtown could make use of its constituent contact list to solicit interest in meeting the cadets, continue to provide liaison for community interest and requests, and continue to collect data and other communication from the cadets.
 - FINDING: Smoking in public places where the activity is prohibited was consistently the highest ordinance violation warning by incident throughout the 2016 season. RECOMMENDATION: Exploring public smoking attitudes with public health officials for solutions could be a key partnership in slowing these violations, which will include marijuana smoking next season since its legalization statewide, an ordinance violation that has been treated separately in past years. I had a preliminary meeting with the City's Tobacco Prevention Program Coordinator last week to start this conversation. We discussed signage and outreach with cessation materials.
 - FINDING: Cadet activity stats, the focus group discussion, and feedback throughout the season indicate there is a social service demand from transient, mentally ill, and substance abuse disordered individuals that would be better served by social service organizations than through criminalizing by-products of homelessness and mental health behaviors, which has been found to be costly and ineffective. RECOMMENDATION: Downtown community health outreach programming, commonly used by BIDs nationally, in conjunction with the cadet program could better address these issues. I have been focused on developing ideas and relationships for a community outreach worker program to be co-managed by Portland Downtown in collaboration with a social service organization. There are several organizations interested in participating once details are worked out, including funding.

See, Click, Fix Reports

- Incidences of graffiti vandalism were the most commonly reported issues in 2016. We should note that the neighborhood prosecutor with the police department uses See, Click, Fix as a tracking tool and is the creator of some of these reports.
- Other notes per issue category:
 - Crosswalks need to be added or repaired, or there are complaints about new material being slick before it dries.
 - Fire Hazard refers to a gas smell.
 - Flooding does not refer to actual flooding in any of these reports, just large puddles due to rain and/or new road construction.
 - Inspection issues refer quite often to sidewalk signs blocking passage. There several of cases reporting trash or spills on sidewalks.
 - Litter reports refer to liquid from night life establishments getting poured out on the sidewalk and cigarette butts.
 - Noise reports include construction, an unattended alarm, and an individual who has walked around downtown playing an amplified guitar.
 - Sidewalk reports often refer to small repairs needed with brick work, with a lot of creative comments from the address of MECA's student dorms on Shepley Street.
 - Traffic light reports most often refer to long waits at intersections.

- There are some mentions of restaurants leaving their trash outside for pickup.
- Tree reports refer to a tree that is leaning to one side that should be staked, a dead tree that is decaying, a tree with a dead limb, and an area of sidewalk affected by tree roots coming up through the bricks and concrete.

Downtown Portland See, Click, Fix Reports: 2016 by Incidents Reported



- Interestingly, I have found that See, Click, Fix has annual awards for innovative uses of the application. 😊

Graffiti

- Casey and I met with LearningWorks to discuss the 17/18 Graffiti Busters program potential. Casey met with the new executive director separately and has suggested she meet with Mike Murray with the City of Portland to renegotiate a contract.

Winter Operations

- Winter operations take up a significant amount of time for Portland Downtown's public works crew.
- I have been working with individual businesses and property owners to assure sidewalk signs and furniture are removed for winter operations.
- The co-chairs and I toured the main arteries of the downtown district to formulate plans for future trees in areas with best success rates for survival.

Supplemental Services Data Collection

- Casey, Adam and I participated in a data clinic with USM's Data Innovation Project in October, and I recently completed a data webinar series that will help focus our data collection needs and efforts.
- From these educational experiences, I created a new data collection system for tracking work hours per categories Portland Downtown is responsible for in the Supplemental Services Agreement with the City of Portland. I can begin to share data as we fill in the database.