



Commissioner Nick Fish
City of Portland

March 19, 2019

Commissioner Fish Opening Remarks – PP&R Budget Work Session

National Search

When I became Parks Commissioner in September, my first priority was a national search for a new Director.

We hit the jackpot.

Director Adena Long is an outstanding addition to the Parks team.

New Budget Process

My next priority was the budget, working with new Finance Director Claudio Campuzano and his team.

This year, the Mayor's new process required us to think about the bureau in a new way, and to build the budget from the ground up.

The Gap

In doing that, the Parks team discovered that the bureau's unsustainable business model had reached a breaking point.

The bureau has been running at a deficit for years, as costs have risen faster than revenues.

Next year, Parks faces a \$6.3 million gap.

The independent City Budget Office has confirmed this, and advised that the previous practice of patching the hole with one-time strategies is not sustainable.

Solving the Problem

Today, the bureau will present a balancing option that strives to close the gap while protecting the community's core values.

I want to acknowledge that there's no easy fix here – every implication of this proposal is painful – especially with layoffs, program cuts, and closures.

Next Steps

1. Close the gap and stabilize the bureau.
2. Implement the transition with one-time resources.
3. Work together to build a vision for the long-term future of our parks system – and a plan to sustainability fund it.