Grant's comments on white papers

Ann note: Grant got his comments back in record time. So he saw the version of the volunteer paper that we retracted after Steve took a look at it.

Volunteerism:

Overall, I think the volunteer white paper is missing action items. These white papers are to educate briefly about the history of the subject and need to give forward, thinking directions to policymakers and commissioners. Many examples of volunteerism are going on in Parks now. I think that needs to be more qualified with specific numbers in the valley that volunteers add and why policymakers should support that financial leverage. I would like to see a few concrete examples of things that could be improved. I think it would also be helpful to list things that would not be done or could not be done without volunteer support and the impact that has on the community. As always, when it comes to bonding, it looks like volunteerism should be supported through private funding, maybe with a stronger relationship with the Madison Parks Foundation. I agree this is important. It would be a strong partner. This paper needs to be more specific on encouraging policymakers to see the value in spending taxpayer dollars on, maintaining, and improving our community parks because the ROI is enormous.

Resilience and sustainability:

I don't see too much of an issue with this particular paper, and it's a very good story of what we're doing and where we need to go. I'd like to see a few action items. The policymakers could do that would help foster that direction.

Golf:

The golf paper seems to have a good blend of history and direction into the future. There seem to be some excellent action statements that allow the golf enterprise to grow and change to meet goals in the park, and this seems pretty clear in this paper. I think the explanation of enterprise and how the finances in golf work as a standalone organization could be strengthened. I feel a lot of people believe that golf is supported substantially by taxpayer dollars which may have been the case for a few years In the past. I think the one-time $5 million transaction could be explained a little more in terms of where these funds are coming from and how they keep the golf enterprise off city taxpayer dollars.

I would like to see a little more positive promotion of the long-term benefits of golf. I think it's very easy to pigeonhole it into an elitist, expensive sport at a private country club. Madison works very hard to allow people of all means the opportunity to play sport and make all golfers feel welcome.

Comments from Catie

Hey team –

Sorry for the late response. I put a few comments within the attached papers.

A few additional things:

- Based on the "things to think about" from Ann, the Golf paper didn't address disc golf or Nordic skiing. And I don't think the climate paper addressed citizen involvement
- Are we using any citations or linking to other articles? For example, the updated Land Management Report or the Golf Task Force findings?
- I think this will happen when Ann Shea cleans up the documents, but they all read really different:
    - May benefit / read easier using bullet point lists where needed
    - One paper uses "KPIs" the other "we will measure this by…"

I don't think I received the Volunteers paper. Ann note: it was sent out but then it got retracted by the time you received the papers when you asked to have them sent again.

Steve's Comments

Volunteers in Parks

This paper would best be improved by strengthening the concepts, e.g.., type of volunteer, type of activity, type of venue / sample – wildwarner bird habitat restorer, Olbrich Garden ticket taker, ice rink shoveler, policy analysis committee member.
Reorder the paper to tell the story using examples from reorganizing of the concepts. Then storyboard the narrative to figure out the message. Currently the paper just lumps everything together in a non-linier fashion which confuses the reader and results in the perception of redundancy.

- I don't think it's useful to think about": managing" volunteers but rather "supporting" volunteers.
- There might be some additional work on what volunteers will not be expected to do.
- I also suggest taking a "volunteer career" frame from recruitment to retirement.
- I like starting with a historical mandate, discussing exemplars.
- A section on barriers to volunteering would also be interesting.
- Also how volunteering is changing and how we will stay ahead of the trend.
- Finally, the biggest venues, e.g., Olbrich, foundation could be handled separately
- The role of volunteers vis a vis private vendors e.g.,, mallards bears mentioning

Resilience and sustainability

This is well written and hangs together. Stylistically, although I agree with the 1st ½ of the 1st paragraph, it reads a bit like a UN document plus poverty and vulnerability are never revisited. Bits of the last three paragraphs could serve as intros. Some of the assumptions may not stand both in regard to the future and behavioral response. It's fair to say we need to be organic and adaptive and not mechanistic. Finally, maybe we need a new paper but, in as much as this just deals with botanic actions, we need to be talking on usage patterns in parks and expected changes.

Golf

Overall, I thought this was well written and told a story. Two minor questions. Do we want to name the donors for Glen Golf Park. I don't think specific donors have been mentioned in other papers.

Second, and this may just be a nonsense comment, but I don't know whether there was actually $5 million of new money but rather just money changing hands because it was the city selling to the county. My major concerns are the lack of discussion on how our program interacts with other golf providers and, since it is operated as an enterprise provider of golf services , how's it doing financially?