

2013 - 2014 Seattle City Council Green Sheet

Ready for Notebook

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110	1	A	1

Budget Action Title: Restore one gardener position at the Volunteer Park Conservatory for 2013 and 2014, but leave the position unfunded until admissions fee revenue can support it

Councilmembers: Godden; Licata; O'Brien; Rasmussen

Staff Analyst: Norm Schwab; Frank Video

Council Bill or Resolution:

Date		Total	SB	BH	TR	RC	TB	NL	JG	SC	MO
	Yes										
	No										
	Abstain										
	Absent										

Summary of Dollar Effect

See the following pages for detailed technical information

	2013 Increase (Decrease)	2014 Increase (Decrease)
General Subfund		
<i>General Subfund Revenues</i>	\$0	\$0
<i>General Subfund Expenditures</i>	\$0	\$0
<i>Net Balance Effect</i>	\$0	\$0
Other Funds		
<i>Park and Recreation Fund (10200)</i>		
<i>Revenues</i>	\$0	\$0
<i>Expenditures</i>	\$0	\$0
<i>Net Balance Effect</i>	\$0	\$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	\$0	\$0

Budget Action description:

This green sheet would restore one gardener position at the Volunteer Park Conservatory (Conservatory) in the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) that had been proposed to be abrogated in the Mayor's 2013-2014 Proposed Budget (1.0 FTE Gardener). This green sheet would also leave the position unfunded until it could be demonstrated that a new mandatory admission fee to the Conservatory would exceed the Executive's revenue projections by the estimated \$70,000 per year cost of the gardener.

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The Executive has conservatively estimated the new fee revenue to be \$104,000 annually based on an estimated annual attendance of 27,500 to 37,500. The Executive's proposed budget assumes that the \$104,000 would offset General Subfund support for the Conservatory. Council believes that recent trends in increased visitors to the Conservatory suggest that revenue realized with a new fee likely may be higher than anticipated.

The Council requests that the Executive monitor admissions revenues in 2013 and that the Executive report the status of revenues from the new fee to the Council by June 30, 2013. If a mid-year review of 2013 fee revenues concludes the 1 FTE gardener position can be supported with higher than anticipated fee revenue, the position would be funded in a supplemental ordinance.

For the past several budgets the City Council has increased funding and stated its support for the continued operation and maintenance of the Conservatory. The Council is doing so again in the 2013-2014 budget and wishes to underscore its intent that the Conservatory will be well maintained and supported by DPR through use of DPR resources and through the support of the Friends of the Volunteer Park Conservatory.

While there may be a number of strategies that may be implemented by DPR to support and maintain the Conservatory including fees and increased reliance on community organizations to help continue the operation of the Conservatory, the Council is hereby restating its support for the continued operation and maintenance of the Conservatory as one of the leading Conservatories in the United States and that the ultimate responsibility for the success of the Conservatory rests with DPR.

Background:

In 2012, DPR commissioned a consultant study of the Conservatory to recommend options for transitioning the Conservatory into a more financially self-sustaining facility and to reduce its reliance on General Subfund support. In 2011, the cost of the Conservatory operation was approximately \$420,000 with the primary cost being personnel (4.5 FTE gardener staff) and was supported entirely by the General Subfund. The consultant recommendations incorporated into the Mayor's 2013 Budget include:

- 1) converting a \$3 suggested admission to a \$4 mandatory entrance fee,
- 2) modifying the seasonal house display to increase revenue by about \$4,000 from fees for larger gatherings at rental events, and
- 3) reducing the gardener staff from 4.5 to 3.5 FTE to lower operating costs by about \$70,000 and reduce the number of temporary displays and purchase seasonal plantings rather than propagating them.

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Budget Action Transactions

Budget Action Title: Restore one gardener position at the Volunteer Park Conservatory for 2013 and 2014, but leave the position unfunded until admissions fee revenue can support it

#	Transaction Description	Position Title	Number of Positions	FTE	Dept	BCL or Revenue Source	Summit Code	Fund	Year	Revenue Amount	Expenditure Amount
1	Add unfunded position for Volunteer Park Conservatory Gardener	Gardener - FT	1	1	DPR	Natural Resources Management	K430B	10200	2013		\$0
2	Add unfunded position for Volunteer Park Conservatory Gardener	Gardener - FT	1	1	DPR	Natural Resources Management	K430B	10200	2014		\$0