

Report

World Urban Parks Program Monday 25 May 2015



Introduction

The World Urban Parks Program provided members and other participants with an opportunity to workshop on two key World Urban Parks services, the World Parks Academy and Yardstick benchmarking, and for a number of key World Urban Parks board and committee meetings to take place.

The venue was in one of Ponte de Lima's notable manor houses, the Palacete Villa Morais, provided by the Ponte de Lima Municipality.

08:30 am to 12:00 pm Joint Yardstick and World Parks Academy Workshop

The opportunity was taken to combine best practices and benchmarks with Yardstick in combination with continuing professional development and credentialing with in the World Parks Academy. Participants included the Yardstick Europe User Group, CIPP candidates and holders, members interested in benchmarking and/or certification, local professionals and tertiary students. The workshop was attended by 30 persons.

The joint workshop was led by Chris Rutherford, a director of Xyst Ltd that administers Yardstick, and Steve Wolter, Executive Director of Indiana University's Eppley Institute that is the World Parks Academy's administrator.



The two related educational sessions covered:

1. a review of continuing education best practices, the value of certification and continuing education, and review of the World Parks Academy program.

Continuing Professional Development in the World Parks Academy

- Introduction and review of components of a profession
 - Review of professional development benefits and role of World Urban Parks, World Parks Academy as cooperative ventures
 - Discussion; How does professional development occur and how to track it
 - Individual Development Planning (IDP); informal and formal use
 - Toward certification as one way to assure continuing professional development
 - The role of elder statesman; the CIPP role in mentoring younger professionals
 - Continuing Professional Development (Education) as a requirement; and how to maintain credentials.
2. A review of the 2014 benchmark outcomes, discussion around areas to be benchmarked in 2016 and the opportunity to see what some members have discovered from user surveys about their users desires for parks. How do we know if we are doing a good job unless we measure and report on our progress?

Using Best Practices and Benchmarks with Yardstick

- Review of some of the 2014 Europe Benchmark results
 - Discuss the data and questions specifically from the Yardstick Europe section and how these might be adjusted for 2016
 - Review how the new Survey tool operates using iPads and the data collection techniques
 - Review some of the results from parks surveys and discuss the implications of these results
 - Consider how we grow the participation in the project in future years
 - Review the joint session and discuss how we might progress for user gatherings in 2016
- Outline the new World Urban Parks Annual Indicators – an on-line benchmarking service with 15-20 of the base-level benchmarks useful to all organisations. This would be completed on-line without auditing for \$380 USD and with the report accessing a wider database from Yardstick benchmarking. The service would be available in countries where Yardstick is not present.

Lunch at the venue



1:30 pm to 2:00 pm World Urban Parks Europe Region Meeting

The meeting was an opportunity for Europe and other members to consider a draft terms of reference for the functioning of World Urban Parks regions as opportunities for greater face to face activity. Region committees will be created similarly to standing committees under a terms of reference, rather than comprising commissioners as was in Ifpra. However, those commissioners continuing to act in a national ambassadorial capacity will retain a close relationship with their region.

Following input an improved Terms of Reference was recommended to the Board.

2:00 pm to 2:30 pm Ifpra Commissioners and World Urban Parks Board Meeting

This was an opportunity for Ifpra Commissioners to receive the final draft financial report for the year ending 31 March 2015 and formalize hand transition to World Urban Parks by transferring Ifpra's financial assets.

The income for the year was \$94,946 with expenses of \$154,568 (fixed-term funding of the secretariat) for a Net Deficit \$59,622 NZD).

The World Commission agreed to transfer Ifpra's net assets of \$19,278 NZD (cash reserves) to World Urban Parks Incorporated.

World Commission and World Urban Parks directors present also acknowledged the significant transfer of services from founding organisations Ifpra and Parks for Life

2:30 pm to 5:30 pm World Urban Parks Board Meeting

The first meeting of the World Urban Parks board took place at the Palacete Villa Morais, and by Skype for those not present for the first one and a half hours.

The board added a second Vice Chair to the board and agreed the Executive would comprise the Chair, the two Vice Chairs and the Regional Chairs. These arrangements would be reviewed following the first elections later in 2016.

Gil Penalosa of Canada was appointed Chair, Emanuel Trueb of Switzerland Vice Chair, and Neil McCarthy of Australia the second Vice Chair.

Jon Pape of Denmark was appointed Chair of the Knowledge and Standards Committee, Kevin O'Hara of the USA appointed Chair of the Membership and Partnerships Committee and David Cochrane of Australia nominated to Chair the Funding and Audit Committee.

The World Urban Parks Regions Terms of Reference recommended by Europe Region members, was adopted

The Transfer of Ifpra agreements and MOUs was acknowledged

Three levels of World Urban Parks congress/conferences (World, Regional, and partnered) were approved with requirements. These will go out shortly for expressions of interest covering the next three years.

A congress bid was presented by Maria Boey Yuet Mei and David Chong of the Institute of Parks and Recreation Singapore for 2017

The board agreed to initiate the Ponte de Lima Charter, proposed by Manuel Sousa of Portugal, to guide the planning, design, maintenance, conservation and use of urban parks. This was initiated with the following statement of intent. A working party will be formed from interested World Urban Parks members to create the Charter.

Statement of Intent

1. World Urban Parks on 29th of May, 2015, on the occasion of the first Congress on Smart Parks and Gardens in association with the 9th Ibero-American Congress of Parks and Public Gardens Conference, at Ponte de Lima, Portugal agreed to develop a charter to guide the effective planning, design, maintenance, conservation and the use of urban parks, gardens and green spaces.
2. This Charter will take in account a number of principles and guidelines including the Florence Charter - Charter of Historic Gardens - drafted by the International Committee of ICOMOS-IFLA Historic Gardens and adopted in 1982 to complement the Venice Charter on the Conservation of Monuments and Sites, in 1964. It will further be developed in collaboration with member organisations, specialists, and interested parties to reflect contemporary good practice and standards.
3. The Charter will be named in honor of the first congress and hosting municipality and will be presented to the Mayor and Council of Ponte de Lima Municipality. The intent is for relevant organisations and other municipalities to agree to reference the guidelines of the charter in their urban park, garden and green space activity.

8:30 pm World Urban Parks Board of Directors Dinner

World Urban Parks board members and Commissioners had an opportunity to catch up with each other at Restaurant Encanada overlooking the Lima River.

