



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Mel Pincus, 1st District
Marico C. Enriquez, 2nd District
Neil Merrilees, 3rd District
Marian Vanden Bosch, 4th District
Michael J. Cooney, 5th District
Robert Sukhovitsky, Youth Commissioner

County Office Building
455 County Center, 4th Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063
(650) 599-1393
Brenda Bennett, Clerk
www.eparks.net
www.sanmateocountyparks.org

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
Thursday, October 6, 2011
4:00 p.m.
Board of Supervisors' Chambers
400 County Center, Redwood City

MINUTES

Chair Enriquez called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Commission: Cooney (Absent), Enriquez (Chair), Sukhovitsky (Youth Commissioner), Merrilees, Pincus, Vanden Bosch (Vice Chair)

Staff: Porter, Lockman, Lombardi, Hallett, Medina, Harris, Herzberg, Schoof, Bennett

Oral Communications

Ms. Seren Pendleton-Knowles, Program Coordinator for the San Mateo County Youth Commission, invited the Commission to a program for adult allies on how to engage with youth on November 1, 2011.

Commissioner Merrilees said he was not sure what part of the agenda was appropriate for him to raise a topic. Chair Enriquez suggested he continue. Commissioner Merrilees said in a recent site meeting he had discussed with a Coastal Commissioner the recent Fitzgerald Marine Reserve project that Commission had considered. Commissioner Merrilees said the Coastal Commissioner suggested for the future that there be earlier communications with the Coastal Commission on ideas for projects to avoid miscommunication and surprises. Commissioner Merrilees suggested having informal gatherings and inviting members of the Coastal Commission to those. He said the Coastal Commissioner had suggested that someone either from the County or the Commission attend a local Coastal Commission meeting and raise some of the topics/projects that were being considered by County Parks as this would allow the Coastal Commission to begin thinking about those projects and keep lines of communication open to minimize surprises.

Commissioner Merrilees noted that some very wealthy friends of his were quite interested in getting a park memorial bench. He suggested raising the cost of the benches in the future as there were a finite number of the most desirable spaces for those benches to be located. He noted that another agency charges higher fees for similar memorial benches.

Chair Enriquez asked if staff wanted to address or have the matter agendized for a future agenda.

Director Porter said the Commission could decide to agendize these matters. He said that County staff speaks with the Coastal Commission staff on a regular basis about project specific matters. He said there were not a lot of surprises at the staff level. He said it might be helpful to have a study or work session with the Coastal Commission on potentially problematic projects.

Agenda Amendments

There were none.

Consideration of the Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission

A. Regular Meeting of June 2, 2011

Commission Action: M/S Vanden Bosch/Merrilees to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2011 meeting.

Motion carried 5-0 with Commissioner Cooney not in attendance.

Correspondence and Presentations

B. Introduction of Youth Commissioner Robert Sukhovitsky

Commissioner Merrilees introduced the newly appointed Youth Commissioner, Robert Sukhovitsky, noting that Robert is a Junior at Sequoia High School in Redwood City. He presented Robert with a Parks Annual Pass, which allows free vehicular access to any of the County's Parks.

C. Youth Commissioner Report

Youth Commissioner Sukhovitsky said his goal was to learn as much as he could about the Parks and Recreation Commission's work.

D. Budget Update - Administrative Services Manager Medina

Administrative Services Manager Medina presented a PowerPoint report to update the Commission on the Parks budget reviewing revenue and costs using graphs.

Commissioner Pincus noted the drop in revenue between this year and the previous and asked why that was as it had been expected the online reservation system would boost revenue.

Ms. Medina said revenue also included entry fees, annual pass fees and miscellaneous parks sales. She said there was a reduction of 7 percent in revenues. Commissioner Pincus asked if reservation revenue decreased. Ms. Medina said there was a later slide which would show a trend analysis for the past three years for reservation revenue.

Ms. Medina said Parks since 2005 has had a 9 percent Net County Cost increase which Parks has met. She said Parks was asked to devise three tier reduction plans. She said staff developed a third tier reduction which included the elimination of the Parks Director position, and some other positions associated with Flood Park closure. She said also reservation revenue was being used to pay the Reservation Clerk's salary. She said the Board of Supervisors fortunately decided to fund Flood Park for another six months, which gave the County time to look at other alternatives for Flood Park.

Ms. Medina showed the Commission the actuals starting with fiscal year 2008-2009. She said despite revenue decrease and increased costs for fiscal year 2010-2011 that the use of fund balance and reserves fully funded the Division's fiscal year 2011-2012 budget and met targets. She said that the Board recently approved some increased Park fees including increasing the vehicular entry fee from \$5.00 to \$6.00 and through study of the revenue trend it appeared there was increased revenue. She said there were other new revenue producing measures including online donations.

Ms. Medina presented the Commission with an overview of the Marina budget and noted that it was an enterprise fund and has no net County costs. She reviewed the Acquisition and Development budget and associated projects.

E. Presentation on Scientific Collection Permit Wildlife Survey Project at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve* – Park Planner Herzberg

Planner Herzberg presented a PowerPoint on a wildlife survey project done at Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve under a scientific collection permit issued by Parks. He said these permits have doubled in the last year and a fee has been adopted for the permit processing. He said digital infrared cameras were situated at various points at Edgewood Park for the wildlife survey project. He showed the Commission photographs of wild life taken by those cameras. .

F. Presentation on Crystal Springs Trails Survey Results – Financial Services Manager Harris

Financial Services Manager Harris said she used a SurveyMonkey to get information from users of the Crystal Springs Regional Trail for use on grant applications. She said a copy of the survey questions was in the packet.

Responding to an inquiry from Chair Enriquez, Ms. Harris noted that staff was applying for grants for the section of the Trail South of Hwy. 92 and would use this information for those applications.

G. Presentation and Discussion on 400-feet of Danger - Beach Access at Surfers and Miramar Beaches

Planner Herzberg said the formal title of this item should read: The Coastal Access and Coastal Trail Improvement Project at Surfer's Beach in El Granada. He presented a PowerPoint report. He noted that staff the previous year had reviewed a coastal trail conceptual plan with the Commission for the area north of Mirada Surf to Princeton. He

said that report had been developed by the Midcoast Park and Recreation Action Plan Committee and was adopted by the Board of Supervisors. He said the 400-feet of trail along Hwy. 1 north of Coronado was unsafe for users. He said the California Coastal Commission had approached County Parks about providing some mitigation funds for improvements particularly for access to the beach.

Park Superintendent Lockman said County Parks did not own Surfer's Beach or the trail area which was under the jurisdiction of Half Moon Bay and Caltrans (roadway right-of-way). He said Parks was working with the Midcoast Parks and Recreation Committee to try to assist with the alignment of the Coastal Trail through this area. He said this was also identified as one of the issues for the Midcoast both through the Midcoast Mobility Studies and the Parks Action Plan for the Midcoast. He said there was no question that work was needed but the questions were how everyone could be brought together to solve the problem, which agency would take the lead, and from where the funds would come.

Commissioner Merrilees said it was helpful to meet with Coastal Commissioners and ask them to consider how this project might be accomplished. Responding to Chair Enriquez, Commissioner Merrilees said that the portion of this owned by Half Moon Bay and the Caltrans right-of-way both might be underwater. He suggested that it might be the Coastal Commission's mission to provide public access and even funding for public access. He said he thought Half Moon Bay was very interested but had no money. Most of the people that use this section were San Mateo County residents.

Commissioner Pincus asked if this area washed out whose responsibility that would be. Mr. Herzberg said that question had come up and eventually the erosion could affect the roadway. He said it was asked whether Caltrans was going to move its roadway but they had indicated not right now.

2. Director's Report

Director Porter said on October 1, 2012, Parks had a playground opening at Quarry Park. He said on National Public Lands Day there was a great Take A Hike event at San Pedro Valley Park. He said Assistant County Manager Holland and he were in exploratory discussions with the City of Menlo Park about the ownership of Flood Park. He said the County was in the process of doing a Facility Master Plan and it was expected that in the spring of 2012 Public Works, Planning and Real Property would move to Circle Star.

Superintendent Lockman said that on the same day as National Public Lands Day, Volunteer Program Coordinator Schoof had coordinated a volunteer cleanup day at Flood Park with local neighbors. He said the expected number of volunteers was 50 and 100 people came to the Park with tools, wheelbarrows and power washers and had a successful day sprucing the Park up. He said there was potential for a great partnership with the local neighborhood "Save Flood Park" group.

Discussion Item

A. Joint Environmental Quality Committee and Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting for Discussion of Parks Strategic Plans and Needs

Superintendent Lockman said as part of the budget process the Board of Supervisors had requested a specific joint meeting of their Environmental Quality Committee and the Parks Commission. He said the main issue that led to this request was how the County could close a park when it was taking on areas of public lands such as Pillar Point Bluff and Devil's Slide. He said the expected date of the meeting would be November 8. He said they would be looking at a strategic approach for parks and issues such as land acquisition strategy, fire and vegetation management requirements, partnership opportunities for funding, and service levels.

Director Porter said that upon the conclusion of the tunnel project, the County would inherit Devil's Slide. He said the estimate to develop that land as California Coastal Trail was \$1.5-2 million with an expected annual operations and maintenance cost of \$500,000. He said that would also be part of the discussion with the Board's subcommittee.

Chair Enriquez asked for information and outline of the issues prior to the workshop. Director Porter said that would be provided.

Marina

B. Harbormaster's Report

Harbormaster Hallett said the Marina's annual revenue has been around \$950,000 for the last two years. He said the Marina has \$16,000 more revenue this year than at the same point the previous year. He said that they were going to be able to have 60-foot slips as part of the Dock 29 improvements. He said pilings supporting the fuel dock would need to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$50,000. He noted a problem with raccoons getting aboard boats.

Chair Enriquez asked when Dock 29 would be constructed. Harbormaster Hallett said that would occur in spring 2012.

Superintendent Lockman noted that the Marina's website had been revamped for marketing purposes and acknowledged the time and effort the Harbormaster had committed to that endeavor with Nate Grover, Parks' part-time IT employee.

Operations and Maintenance Activities

A. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Lombardi thanked Commissioners for attending the playground opening at Quarry Park. He said he had no additions to his written report.

Superintendent Lockman said on the previous Saturday there had been a missing five-year old child at Huddart Park, and asked Mr. Lombardi to report on the search and rescue operation.

Superintendent Lombardi said there had been a multi-agency incident response for a missing five year old child from the Toyon Campground at Huddart Park. He said the call was made at 7:30 p.m. and Sheriff, Search and Rescue, CHP, VHP, and AMR personnel mobilized within an hour and half. He said he received a call about 9:30 p.m. and reported to the command center. He and search and rescue personnel searched the campground and every available tent and a mile and half circumference around the campground. He said he went into the gorge area in between Phleger's Estate and Richards Road and connected with a search and rescue person who had a search dog. He said around 11:30 p.m. it was reported that an emitting light had been seen by personnel on a helicopter searching the area. He said they found the girl at about 12:15 p.m. and the light was from a six-inch glow stick the child had around her neck.

Commissioner Merrilees thanked Superintendent Lombardi for the letter he wrote regarding the use of asphalt at Quarry Park noting that was in response to a last minute controversy before the playground opening.

Superintendent Lockman said typically a new Parks Director receives a Director's badge. He said that badge however had been given to former Director Holland on a plaque. He said staff ordered a badge for Mr. Porter but it took a long time for the order to be filled but it had now arrived. He presented the badge to Director Porter. .

B. Report on Volunteer Events and FY 2010/11 Foundation Funded Volunteer Grant Projects – Community Program Specialist Schoof

Community Program Specialist Schoof asked if the Commission had any questions about her written report. Commissioner Pincus said regarding the volunteer statistics it seemed school participation was limited to youth from Sequoia High School. Ms. Schoof said this report only covered the final quarter of the past year. She said College of San Mateo students volunteer twice a year in the spring and fall. She said also Kennedy Middle School students volunteer. She said her goal was to introduce youth to parks from both public and private schools.

Superintendent Lockman said he completely agreed with Commissioner Pincus' goal. He said that part of the discussion with the Environmental Quality Committee would concern organizational capacity and volunteer program expansion noting there was one person coordinating up to 25,000 hours of volunteer work annually and working with the numerous associate Friends' groups.

Commissioner Merrilees asked if volunteers could be trained to lead volunteers. Ms. Schoof said one of her long term goals was to train volunteers as service coordinators. She said those persons would need to like working with the public and be able to bring a project to completion. She said there was also an operations and safety understanding component as well.

Ms. Schoof said the National Public Lands Day was September 24 and this was the fifth year County Parks has participated in the event. She said this year's theme was "Discovery and Volunteerism" and the goal was to encourage people to visit one of their local parks and hopefully be inspired to volunteer. She said the Board of Supervisors waived the park entry fee for that day and presented a proclamation to kick off the event. She said representatives from the Friends' groups were invited for the Board's proclamation presentation. She said Parks partnered with their existing volunteer groups to entice people to the Parks to show them what volunteers do in County Parks. Activities were Take a Hike at San Pedro Valley Park led by Friends and staff and docent led tours at Folger Stable in Wunderlich Park. She said at Edgewood Park, Mr. Paul Heipel from the weeding group took people to see restoration work that had been done and what the outcome of the work was. She said also the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center was open that day. She said at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, docents were available for the public that visited. She said Mountain Watch at San Bruno Mountain typically host about four volunteer restoration activities during the month and had partnered with the County for Public Lands Day. She said neighbors of Flood Park have become a very engaged group committed to partnering with whomever to keep that park open. She said they weeded, pruned trees, cleaned picnic tables, and painted garbage bins.

Replying to Commissioner Merrilees, Ms. Schoof said there had been an increase in volunteers some of which was attributable to the opening of the Education Center at Edgewood. She noted also there was usually a spike in volunteer hours for this particular quarter because of Earth Day.

Support Services

A. Planning Project Quarterly Update – Planner Herzberg

Planner Herzberg said he serves on a contract basis with the Department of Fish and Game in Marin County as the Program Director of the Fishery Network for Central California Coastal Counties and within their discussions they communicate with the Coastal Commission on various elements of natural resource management. He said two of the County's Supervisors just north and south of San Mateo County who support his working group are also members of the Coastal Commission, and they understand issues faced by County Parks. He said there were forums in which multi-agency staff are able to discuss issues they face as land management agencies.

Commissioner Pincus asked if the Commission should be making a recommendation about the lower Alpine Trail, noting it was being brought to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. Director Porter said the item was scheduled before the Board for its October 18th meeting. He said there had been three meetings with the community and the outcome of the last meeting was that County staff would present a request to the Board of Supervisors asking them to accept Stanford University's grant dollars to do an environmental review and design for the lower Alpine Trail, and vet with the community to confirm that was what they would want. He said it was rather a divisive project right now. He said certainly the Commission's support was always welcome. He said however that Assistant County Manager Holland was set to take the request to the

Board of Supervisors. He thanked Ms. Bennett for her note taking for the last community meeting.

B. Quarterly Grants and Programs Report – Financial Services Manager Harris

Financial Services Manager Harris said in addition to her written report that one of the four approved grants for Crystal Springs Regional Trail South of Dam was contracted. She was optimistic that the others would move into contracts. She said for Crystal Springs Regional Trail South of Hwy. 92 that there was one grant that was about to be contracted. She said one application was submitted in September and she would submit another in a few weeks. She said she just found out today that an application they had submitted last summer, which she was told would not fly because there was no federal budget for it, was being reconsidered. She said the Coastal Conservancy would consider funding South of Hwy. 92 after the completion of the South of Dam segment.

Ms. Harris said she was also looking at other alternative methods of acquiring funding such as online donations and purchasing annual passes online as well as mobile phone fund raising.

Friends and Subcommittees

A. Parks Foundation

Executive Director Bott said the Tour de Peninsula had been very successful. She said staging at Coyote Point Recreation Area and not at Sequoia High School was instrumental in raising participating bicyclists' awareness that the event was supporting Bicycle Sunday and County Parks. She said they were submitting a number of grant applications to support the core programs such as the volunteer program and the Student Conservation Association and gearing up for the year-end fundraising letter.

Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Merrilees said he loved going to Quarry Park and thanked staff for completing the playground there. He suggested that they all think about how to develop a relationship with the Coastal Commission. He said he had realized moving forward that every agency at this time was going to have less money and it would be preferable to spend less money on permitting and arguing and more money on facilities. He said he wanted to see if there was a way to work together to make that happen through meeting with people, getting to know each other and talking over ideas ahead of time.

Commissioner Pincus said he agreed and perhaps that could be agendized for the next meeting. He said he wanted to comment on when and where on the agenda Commissioners might speak and bring up a subject. He said that the agenda similar to most organizations' agendas could have sections called old business and new business on the agenda.

Chair Enriquez said he participated in a Bay Vista marathon at Coyote Point. He said there were almost 1,000 people who participated in 3-K and 5-K runs.

Commissioner Vanden Bosch said on a recent visit to Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve that she had seen a baby rattlesnake lying across the trail she walked.

Youth Commissioner Sukhovitsky said the meeting had been very interesting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.