

MINUTES



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
March 23, 2003
Palo Alto City Hall
Council Conference Room
250 Hamilton Avenue**

Commissioners Present: Ann Warner-Cribbs, Ellie Gioumouis, Jennifer Hagan, Edie Keating, Paul Losch, Jeanette Marquess and Judith Steiner

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: Jim Burch, Council Liaison and Austin Freeman, Palo Alto Youth Council

Staff Present: Dan Williams, Richard James, Greg Betts, Paul Dias, Bobbi-Ross-Neier, Virginia Gibbons

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order by Chairperson Edie Keating at 7:05 pm

ROLL CALL: Conducted by Virginia Gibbons.

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS: Change to Item #5: Greg Betts presented instead of Paul Dias.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

BUSINESS:

1. **Approval of Minutes of February 24, 2004 Meeting.** Minutes were approved with one change to Item #7.
2. **Youth Council Update.** Bobbi Ross-Neier introduced the Positive Alternatives for Youth (PAY) Intern, Rebecca Hitchcock and Austin Freeman of the Palo Alto Youth Council (PAYC).

A goal of the Youth Master Plan is to have a PAYC representative work as a liaison between the Youth Council and a City of Palo Alto Commission, with the idea of creating



better understanding between the PAYC and Commission. Austin Freeman is the PAYC liaison for the Parks and Recreation Commission.

A short question and answer session established that the representatives serve on the council until graduation, but must reapply to the Youth Council every year. There are 15 voting members on the council, with the balance of the members being “at large,” or non-voting members. Accomplishments of the PAYC include a recent forum with workshops for students on stress, nutrition, sports and other topics. The PAYC is presently working on a brochure for students with information relative to academics, sports, stress, and parent relationships.

3. **Mayfield Issues.** Richard James explained to the Commission that Stanford and Palo Alto are continuing negotiation talks, which includes the athletic fields. A new plan is being reviewed that includes turning the north field into a full sized soccer field. This plan cut out 17 parking spaces, but there are still 90 spaces available, which makes the parking lot still within the guidelines of a 1 to 4 ratio. The new plan calls for heavily landscaped edges for aesthetics and to keep the balls on the field. There will be restrooms, snack shack, lighting, a traffic turn-around and good bike and pedestrian access. Research is being done into the lighting issue due to the new senior complex being built. The City will provide the artificial turf. The timeline is to begin construction in spring of 2005, with construction being completed by summer of 2005. Commissioner Losch asked why the long delay to begin construction. Richard explained that the fields are just one small piece of a huge negotiation and everything else must be completed before the fields are constructed. Commissioner Gioumouis questioned why the plan calls for red oaks, which are not native to California instead of using the native valley oaks. She went on to state that the grass berm planned would be hard to maintain and not good for the trees. Richard responded that native fescue grasses were planned for the berm and that he would bring up the oak issue with the designer.

Richard went on to explain that the EIR process will start in about six weeks and it is possible to make further recommendations during the EIR process (i.e., parking and temporary baseball striping during the off seasons).

4. **Review of Infrastructure Management Plan (IMP).** Richard James provided the Commission with the background information that in 1999 City Council approved a 10-year plan to improve city infrastructure. Improvements were identified and three full time employees were hired. To streamline the work and cut down on park downtime, staff packaged the projects together by park and one-by-one, the parks have been upgraded. The plan is now a permanent on-going plan, with most projects to be completed in 5-6 years. The IMP is only to repair or replace what already exists.

The question of project funding was brought up and Richard explained that other funding sources include state funding, grants from the state or federal government, and grants from foundations. Commissioner Gioumouis asked why the plan did not consider weed control,

explaining that invasive plants are a major problem that will only get worse over time. Richard responded that policy direction was to put money into other areas. After a short discussion, it was suggested that invasive plant control be made into a future agenda item and Richard suggested that the Commission form a sub-committee to investigate this issue. A sub-committee consisting of Commissioners Gioumouisis, Keating, Cribbs, and staff Greg Betts was established, with the goal being to identify invasive plants and look into allocation of existing resources for their eradication.

SOFA park will be simply landscaped. There is a possibility that the Utilities Department might create an underground reservoir at this site and it could become a full amendment park at some future date. There is no funding for Greer Park renovations. The park will remain as it is for now and with a plan for community outreach to ask the neighbors what they want now.

5. **Adopt-a-Park Liaison Selection.** Greg Betts explained the program, requested the Commissioners review the park list and choose the parks that they would watch over for the year. The Commissioners will make their selections by April 15th and notify staff of their preferences. Commissioner Steiner noted that as she has little knowledge of Open Space, she would like to work with Open Space and Greg Betts for the next year.

There was a discussion of park funding, use of park impact fees, and how to get the neighborhood associations more involved in local parks. A brief brainstorming session established several ideas. Commissioner Losch volunteered to sit on a sub-committee for community outreach and was joined by Jeanette Marquess. A staff person will be chosen to work with the sub-committee to discuss additional ideas and to create action items. It was requested that use of park impact fees and community outreach be agendaized for an upcoming meeting.

6. **PAUSD Field Agreement.** Paul Dias provided background information on the agreement to the Commission, noting that the high schools are not included in the agreement, and that the agreement is due to expire June 30, 2004. The City and PAUSD divide the financial cost of maintenance, which is approximately \$880,000 per year. A question and answer session followed regarding the type of maintenance the City provides, what sites are included, and where the funding comes from. There was a brief discussion regarding school encroachment on City land and it was noted that there still has been no resolution regarding the Walter Hays issue.

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR APRIL 27, 2004 MEETING

1. Approval of Draft Minutes of March 23, 2004 Meeting – Action Item (2 min.)
2. Golf Course Fees for 2005 – Action Item – Paul Dias (10 min.)
3. Camp Registration – Information Item – Rob de Geus (10 min.)
4. May Fete and Black and White Ball Update – Information Item – Shia Geminder (10 min)
5. Get Acquainted Program – Action Item – Dan Williams (10 min.)

APPROVED

6. ESS Update – Information Item – Richard James
7. Community Outreach -

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. At the beginning of the meeting, Commissioner Cribbs announced that the 2006 FINA Masters World Championships are to be held at Stanford.
2. Commissioner Hagan made an announcement regarding a lawsuit filed with the Santa Clara Grand Jury requesting that the legality of the Land Use Charter pertaining to the Terman and Walter Hays School encroachment issues be investigated.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.