



**DRAFT**

**MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
July 22, 2008  
City Hall  
250 Hamilton Ave**

**Commissioners Present:** Deirdre Crommie, Joel Davidson, Pat Markevitch, Alex Panelli, Daria Walsh, Paul Losch

**Commissioners Absent:** Carl King

**Others Present:** Council Liaison Jack Morton

**Staff Present:** Greg Betts, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Donald Piana, Lester Hodgins

**I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY:** Catherine Bourquin

**II. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – Emily Renzel** – Emily spoke on the issue of the composting facility to ensure that each Commissioner had time to visit the landfill site at Byxbee Park. Ms. Renzel wanted to make sure that the Commissioners had enough information to help them with their decision at next month's meeting on the Recommendation to Council on the Composting Site at Byxbee Park.

**III. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:** Staff Betts requested time to be given in the event that Olenka Villarreal from the Friends of the Palo Alto Park comes to give a brief update on the Universal Playground project at Mitchell Park.

**IV. BUSINESS:**

**1. Approval of Draft Minutes of June 24, 2008 Meeting –**

The draft minutes of the June 24, 2008 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

**Approved 6:0**

**2. Banning Smoking in Public Parks -**

Chair Markevitch requested from the Commission their input on bringing back this item for discussion at the next meeting. There was discussion on moving the item to the September meeting. All the Commissioners agreed that it was a topic that they wanted to pursue. The issue would be brought back to the Commission as an Agenda item at the



September meeting. Staff Betts suggested in preparation for the meeting that each Commissioner research smoking in public parks and make available any documentation they find on the topic to each of the Commissioners and Staff.

### **Oral Communications Continued**

**Olenka Villarreal** – Olenka informed the Commission that the Friends of the Palo Alto Parks are moving along with the project working closely with neighborhood associations, Abilities United, children groups, as well as other interested groups. The Friends of the Parks is in the process of signing an agreement with Shane's Inspiration, Inc. who has assisted with approximately 80 other universal access playgrounds throughout the country. They will complete a full survey and assist with a design of the park. Olenka invited any interested Commissioner to play an active role in the development of the park by joining the Advisory Board for this project. Once this portion of the project is complete, the Friends of the Palo Alto Parks will come back with a formal presentation to the Commission.

### **3. Subcommittee Reports -**

- a. **Playing Fields** – Commissioner Panelli informed the Commission that the subcommittee met on Thursday, July 17<sup>th</sup> and the current timeline to release the draft Field Allocation Policy is set for on or about August 1<sup>st</sup>. Once the draft is released, Recreation will schedule meetings with any interested parties. Any comments will be incorporated into the policy and be revised for the Commission's August 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. After all public input the draft policy will once again be revised and will come to the Commission at the September meeting for approval. Staff de Geus affirmed that the announcement of the available Field Allocation Policy will be advertised as thoroughly as possible so that the public has time to comment.
  
- b. **Open Space** - Commissioner Walsh informed the Commission that the Committee met a few times this month. Commissioners Walsh, Davidson, and Crommie took a tour on their bikes to the Baylands and the Adobe Creek underpass. They also met with Council Member Drekmeier and Mr. Walter Hays to discuss composting on dedicated parkland. Commissioner Davidson inquired as to the process of communicating with the other Commissioners when they want to share information. Staff Betts responded by instructing the Commissioners to forward any correspondence to their Staff Liaison and Catherine Bourquin who will forward on to all the Commissioners and Staff members.

There was a discussion on the upcoming Draft Baylands Master Plan Update. The Commissioners requested an explanation as to what they were going to be responsible for editing and making changes to. Staff instructed the Commission to be looking for errors and omissions.

- c. Culture of Fitness - Nothing to report.
  - d. Partnerships – Commissioner Davidson reported on partnerships and mentioned the list he received from Staff de Geus. The various partnerships the City has established was discussed. It was agreed that Commissioner Davidson and Staff de Geus would meet so as to have a better understanding of the list Commissioner Davidson had received.
  - e. Palo Alto as a Magnet – Nothing to report.
4. **Update on Park Renovation Projects** - Staff Betts gave a brief report on the recent project that was completed at Mitchell Park with the help of the Palo Alto Kiwanis club. He also reported on the recent neighborhood meeting that was held at Cubberley regarding the installation of synthetic turf on the football field. He informed the Commission that a matrix will be created outlining the items that were of interest and of concern regarding using synthetic turf. Staff Betts said that he was very pleased with the attendance of the neighborhood and interested attendees for this project.

Staff Piana reported on the progress of Greer Park Renovation which included Phase 4. He informed the Commission that a consultant had been selected to work on the design of the upgrades which will take about six months. These will include the irrigation and new pump station, playground upgrades, and the new passive park (Phase 4). He informed the Commission that the renovations of Weisshaar and Cameron Parks were complete. The park will be open on August 4th with a celebration happening at Cameron Park on August 5<sup>th</sup>. He let the Commission know that it has been a great summer finishing up various renovations at Hoover, Ramos, and Peers Park. At Peers Park there was a design flaw that postponed the opening of the park on schedule. It is now scheduled to be open in September. The updates were followed by questions from the Commissioners. Council Liaison Morton wanted to acknowledge the significant progress that has been made and wanted to thank the Open Space and Parks Division for all the upgrades and improvements to the City's Parks.

5. **Report Back to Commission on Open/Close Dates for Adobe Creek Underpass** - Staff Betts submitted an informational report memo on Public Access to the Baylands Nature Preserve in response to an inquiry from the Commission last month. Staff Betts went over the contents of the memo and opened up the topic for discussion. It was agreed by the Commissioners that they would like to pursue the use of the underpass year-round and would like to see Staff work with City Transportation staff to change the amendments between The City, VTA, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

## **V.. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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1. Emergency Water Supply and Storage Project at Eleanor Pardee Park and Main Community Gardens - Staff Betts asked Staff Bourquin to give an update on this project. Staff Bourquin informed the Commission that the project is in the design stage and exploratory drilling at each of these sites has started. The first one was done on July 18<sup>th</sup> and the next one is scheduled for July 28, 2008. A design meeting is scheduled for August 5<sup>th</sup> where there will be discussion on the next phase relating to the construction of the project.
2. Jordan Middle School Playing Field Activity Collation – The Commission was provided with an updated activity report for the noise issues at Jordan Athletic Fields.
3. Lester Hodgins, Open Space Supervisor gave a brief report on the Foothill Parks Fire Management Plan, which is under development.
4. Commissioner Davidson shared his experiences with his involvement on many issues related to Parks and Recreation such as a pathway at Bol Park, the Cubberley synthetic turf project, the concerts in the parks.
5. Commissioner Walsh would like to see some type of notification listing dates of upcoming events, projects, etc. Staff Betts mentioned the City’s web site features a Community Calendar where most activities, events and public meetings are listed.
6. Commissioner Losch requested getting a copy of Mountain View’s Recreation Master Plan. Staff de Geus informed the Commission that he would get a copy to each of them.
7. Staff Betts announced that Community Services will be participating in the Management Talent Exchange Program (MTEP) that the City participates in.
8. Staff Betts announced that according to Gloria Humble of the Planning Department, the Draft Baylands Master Plan will be available this Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>. The Master Plan will be mailed that same week to each of the Commissioners.

**VI. AGENDA FOR AUGUST REGULAR MEETING: August 26, 2008**

It was discussed by the Commissioners that due to the length of the next scheduled meeting, would it be appropriate to have an additional special meeting to cover the Baylands Master Plan and to discuss the composting issues. There was a vote to have an additional meeting the results were 4:2 in favor of having two meetings. Staff would check to see if August 19<sup>th</sup> was available and a special meeting would be scheduled.

**August 19<sup>th</sup> Agenda**

1. Review of the Baylands Master Plan Update for Errors or Omissions – Action



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2. Recommendation to Council on Use of Byxbee Park Hills as a site for Composting –  
Follow up to Public Works Staff Recommendations (CMR 219:08) – Action

**August 26<sup>th</sup> Agenda**

1. Approval of Minutes from the July 22, 2008 meeting
2. Playing Fields Policy review
3. Amendment of Section 22.04 of Title 22 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code to restrict the consumption of alcohol at Heritage and Eleanor Pardee Parks.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 9:55 pm

