

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
City of Oakland, California

SPECIAL MEETING - RETREAT
Saturday, April 5, 2008
Joaquin Miller Community Center, 3594 Sanborn Drive, Oakland

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER:

A special meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was held on Saturday, April 5, 2008 at Joaquin Miller Community Center, 3594 Sanborn Drive, Oakland, California. Chairperson Webb convened the meeting at 9:34 a.m., Audree V. Jones-Taylor, Secretary to the Commission, conducted roll call. A quorum was present.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Victor Arceneaux, Osagie Enabulele, Michael Hammock, Howard Matis, Susan Montauk, Junaid Mohiuddin, Brad Ricards, Jeffrey Taylor, Matthew Webb, Calvin Wong

Absent: Valerie Abad (excused), Benjamin Scott

Staff Present: Audree V. Jones-Taylor, Gail McMillon, Kip Walsh

Guests: none

3. BUDGET UPDATE:

Audree Jones-Taylor, Director for the Office of Parks and Recreation provided a brief overview of the department's budget *vis á vis* the City's overall budget. Following are some key highlights:

- The City Administrator anticipates a \$26 million deficit going into next year.
- There is currently a hiring freeze Citywide which affects OPR's hiring for six full time recreation vacancies and two support staff vacancies.
- Although new funding was allocated for Recreation Leader II PPT positions, OPR will not be able to hire into those positions until after July 1. OPR has proceeded with screening and interviews in order to be ready when funding is made available.
- The Budget Office requested that OPR find \$467,000 to cut from this current year's spending, OPR proposed \$225,000 in O & M cuts.
- For the next fiscal year OPR may be required to give up \$600,000 or more. OPR identified \$400,000 to cut from the budget for O & M, travel, and conferences and is currently looking for ways to reduce the budget to meet the Budget Office goal.

Commissioner Wong asked if OPR's budget cuts would affect park maintenance, which launched a discussion regarding the upcoming ballot measure regarding the Landscape Lighting Assessment District (LLAD) that will be going before property owners now through May.

- Ballots are out regarding LLAD – the item needs Port and OUSD support, but we also need property owner's support.
- LLAD doesn't pay for CIP (tennis courts, buildings).
- Commissioners were encouraged to be responsive to questions from homeowners. Commissioner Montauk agreed to send the LLAD website link and provide Commissioners with some bullet points for discussions.
- The new LLAD sunsets after 15 years and has a cost of living increase built in.
- The new LLAD would raise an additional \$12 million to support parks maintenance.
- Commissioner Montauk recommended contacting Sue Piper in Councilmember Jean Quan's office for more information.

Commissioner Ricards asked whether the new LLAD would support recreation center maintenance, and Ms. Jones-Taylor clarified that building maintenance is budgeted out of the Public Works Agency budget and is separate from the LLAD.

Commissioner Mohiuddin asked whether Councilmembers' PayGo money could close facilities maintenance funding gaps, Ms. Jones-Taylor explained that PayGo funds are restricted to Capital Improvement Projects.

Golf course maintenance is funded separately than other parks maintenance and should not be affected by the current budget reductions. OPR has a report regarding the Metropolitan Golf Links scheduled for 4/22/08 at the Life Enrichment Committee (6 p.m. Hearing Rm 1, City Hall).

Despite budget cuts and funding challenges, Ms. Jones-Taylor asserted that OPR is committed to serving the community and will support service levels by partnering with other groups. OPR was the recipient of a \$235,000 grant for Radical Roving Recreation from Rep. Barbara Lee's appropriations this year, for instance.

Commissioner Wong asked about fee increases and whether those would be recommended as a way of closing some of the other funding gaps. A discussion ensued about a number of fee changes OPR is recommending:

- Charging a field user fee - youth users to pay \$5 and adults \$10 per participant per season. Commissioner Matis suggested adding a flat fee to field rentals per use since implementation and management of a per user fee would be difficult.
- OPR will be recommending some increases to facility reservation fees

Commissioner Wong requested that staff provide an outline of all OPR services and the policies governing them.

Commissioner Matis: requested that staff provide a revenue spreadsheet showing how much is received for each fee charged.

4. SCHEDULING COMMUNITY MEETINGS:

Commissioner Webb led a discussion regarding the scheduling of PRAC meetings at community locations during the coming year. Specific Districts to be targeted would be District 1 (Brunner), District 2 (Kernighan), District 4 (Quan), and District 7 (Reid).

Commissioner Matis agreed to contact Councilmember Brunner, Commissioner Webb agreed to contact Councilmember Kernighan, Commissioner Mohiuddin agreed to contact Councilmember Quan, and Commissioner Hammock agreed to contact Councilmember Reid. PRAC members will work with the identified Councilmembers to identify locations for the meetings. The locations may be OPR recreation sites, but might be another site such as a school or nonprofit facility.

The goal of holding Commission meetings at community locations is to 1) engage the Councilmember and have them present at a meeting; 2) bring PRAC business out to the communities; and 3) to increase public awareness of the Commission and its business.

Target dates for the community-based PRAC meetings will be June 11, July 9, September 10, and October 8 with November 12 and December 10 as alternates.

5. NATURE OF PRAC's MISSION:

Each Commissioner spoke briefly about his or her interest in serving on the Commission and issues or items that might be a priority in the coming year:

- Commissioner Ricards described himself as an enthusiast for Parks and Recreation. He sees his role on the Commission as supporting the work of OPR and is interested in seeing the centers thrive. He sees his role as very involved.
- Commissioner Arcinaeaux is particularly interested in making parks safe and making sure families use parks. He is also interested in seeing how to bridge faith-based community partnerships.
- Commissioner Matis acknowledged that he has been an Oakland field user for 30 years. He is particularly interested in bringing more programs to North Oakland
- Commissioner Mohiuddin is interested in improving Oakland recreation facilities and in building community involvement in Parks and Recreation in District 4. He expressed some disappointment about the realities of his role on the Commission versus what he'd hoped to contribute.
- Commissioner Wong expressed appreciation for the diversity of Commission and Oakland because it represents the whole City. A particular challenge is how best to serve diverse needs with limited resources. He sees his role as assisting in the facilitation of getting the best Parks and Recreation possible.
- Commissioner Enabulele is interested in improving on existing conditions of parks in Oakland – he wants the public to be proud of OPR facilities. He would like to “walk with others” to create better Parks and Recreation facilities – perhaps to even bring in people from outside of Oakland.
- Commissioner Montauk wants to see the Commission emphasize PRAC's role as a group and a force in advocating on behalf of OPR thru City Council, Advisory Councils and the community.

- Commissioner Taylor introduced himself as a lifetime participant who worked in OPR as a young adult. He is committed to making OPR as strong as it once was.
- Commissioner Hammock sees his role as assisting in providing direction to staff and the OPR Director and to support their efforts especially for youth programs.
- Commissioner Webb commented on Oakland being one of greenest areas around, but acknowledged that trees are not tax revenue-generating. He sees PRAC as advocating for parks and OPR especially with regard to budgets and funding.

Once the Commissioners described their interest in serving on the Commission, there was a discussion about the responsibilities of the Commission.

Commissioner Montauk suggested that it would be useful to have a PWA liaison from the Parks Maintenance division to regularly attend meetings. She also expressed her interest in seeing PRAC have a stronger role with Council

Commissioner Mohiuddin would like to see PRAC meetings be more effective and dynamic and suggested that outside speakers be invited to come and speak to inform regarding trends.

Commissioner Webb reminded those present that the ordinances governing PRAC require certain responsibilities. He recommended that Commissioner attend conferences and join CPRS and NPRA to stay informed on trends. As part of rebuilding PRAC's credibility, Commissioners need to stay informed about Parks and Recreation issues. PRAC's role is to consider legal issues and make sound recommendations for programs or projects that are doable.

Commissioner Montauk requested that a committee review special events permits and make recommendations to the Commission rather than having the items fully heard at Commission meetings. Gail McMillon noted that Special Events Committee was originally meant to review special events requests. Commissioner Wong cautioned against adding too many layers to the bureaucracy because it slows the process.

Commissioner Wong asked that staff make sure reports contain specific elements for specific concerns, thereby reducing the number of questions needing to be asked.

Commissioner Taylor asked that Commissioners be sure to read reports prior to the meetings to prevent issues from being rehashed at meetings when the issues have already been discussed in the report.

Commissioner Webb commented that the role of the Chair is to keep discussion structured and relative to the item before them. He cautioned members to be mindful of full agenda and need for time for later items.

Commissioner Wong requested that members always explain when they are casting a no vote.

Commissioner Ricards wanted to make sure that it is understood that each member reserves the right to ask questions and to disagree if need be. There's an interest to be efficient but questions need to be asked.

Ms. Jones-Taylor commented that items regarding facility or park projects are especially important. Questions and discussion need to stay focused on the specific

recommendation that is before the Commission and avoid trying to address issues that are tangential to the question. For effective discussions and actions, Commissioners need to be on time and stay in the room so a quorum is present. It is the responsibility of the chair to keep discussion on topic.

Commissioner Webb reminded members that the Commission can't revisit previously approved times – it wastes time and confounds the question.

Commissioner Wong commented that an uninformed no vote results in the addition of at least 100 hours of staff time and significantly delays project timelines.

There was a brief discussion of PRAC having its annual picnic at Woodminster for one of the musicals being presented there. A number of Commissioners requested that a different venue be considered because they are not all interested in the musical productions.

6 OPEN FORUM

1. Commissioner Hammock – Midnight Basketball on Fridays from 6pm – 2am until 6/23/08 at Ira Jinkins moves to Willie Keyes (send PRAC schedules)
 - partnership with Oakland PAL and OPD
 - looking to start twilight and midnight soccer in Fruitvale
2. Jones-Taylor – Reminder to submit Conflict of Interest forms
3. Jones-Taylor – Discovery Channel to air spot on Josie de la Cruz Park in April.
4. Commissioner Montauk – OPC volunteer reception event 4/2/08 – 100 people, many leaders – oldest 90 and youngest 4 – will probably happen same time next year.