

**PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
**WEDNESDAY, June 12, 2002**  
**Lakeside Park Garden Center, Oakland, CA**

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was held at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland, California. Chairperson Webb convened the meeting at 4:55 p.m. Mary Perisic, Recording Secretary to the Commission, conducted roll call. A quorum was present.

**2. ROLL CALL:** (four vacancies)

Present: Valerie Abad, Dinah Fischbach-Bensen, Theresa Nelson, William Patterson,  
Matthew Webb, Jeffery Wong

Absent: Yvonne Myers

Staff Present: Francine LarKriith-Thompson, Angela Thorne, Art Yamashita, Jim Ryugo,  
Mary Perisic

Visitors: None

**3. DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:**

A. Minutes of May 8, 2002 regular meeting:

**MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved approval. Commissioner Abad seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

**4. SPECIAL ORDERS:** None

**5. DETERMINATION OF SCHEDULE—OUTSTANDING AGENDA ITEMS:**

- Gibson and Associates' first report on evaluation of Recreation Centers – December 2002
- Green Waste Report

**6. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

Items 11A ,11B, 11C and 12A moved up.

**7. COMMUNICATIONS:** None

**8. PRAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:** No reports

**9. ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS:** No reports

**10. CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS:** None

**11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

A. Pesticide Use Policy: Art Yamashita, Special Projects Supervisor, gave an overview of the City's pesticide policy, how it is affecting the ability of staff to do their work, and whether the policy needs to be revisited. The prevention and removal of weeds and other pests from

landscaping without the use of pesticides is labor intensive. The number of parks keeps increasing while the staffing decreases. Currently, there are 53 new sites coming on board that will require maintenance, but no new employees. Mr. Yamashita advised that the City needs to strike a balance between staffing, use of pesticides and alternatives, and quality of parks, and that the pesticide ban needs to be evaluated. Commissioner Webb advised that the public, including pro-ban groups, should be invited to give input before PRAC takes a position.

**MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved to accept the informational report and request that staff respond to the Commission with specific recommendations and to invite the input from the general public so that the Commission can review proposed policy changes in detail before making a recommendation to the City Council. Commissioner Fischbach-Benson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

This item is tentatively rescheduled for the September 11, 2002 Commission meeting.

- B. William “Willie” Wilkins Memorial Park – update: Ms. Angela Joyner, Operations Manager, provided an update on the renaming of Elmhurst Park in honor of William “Willie” Wilkins. A letter was sent to the Elmhurst community soliciting comment. There were no negative responses on the renaming of the park. The item will be going to the full City Council on June 18, 2002.

**MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved approval of the proposal to rename Elmhurst Park to William “Willie” Wilkins Memorial Park and that it is consistent with the renaming policy. Commissioner Wong seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

- C. Torii Gate final approval: Mr. Yamashita provided a brief summary on this item which was originally heard by the Commission on 2/14/01. Drawings and a photograph of the proposed new site for the gate were examined.

**MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved approval of the site for the installation of the new Torii Gate. Commissioner Patterson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

12. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Recreation Summer Ramp Up Angela Thorne, Operations Manager distributed the Summer Program Guide and provided an update on the OPR summer ramp up. The City Manager has approved all requests for summer hires. Staff trainings are scheduled to be completed by June 29. Some highlights include: Inclusive Recreation programs, Oakland Fine Arts Summer School, Rotary Nature Center programs, the Sea Odyssey collaborative program with State Parks which will also include youth with disabilities, and Franklin Recreation Center’s horseback riding camp. All pools are open, including McClymonds and Castlemont pools. Through the joint use agreement the OPR is working with the school district so they can have swim classing during the school year. Some corrections to the program guide were noted and will be forwarded to OPR Marketing staff. Registration for programs is available on the web, by phone, by mail or in person.

13. **COUNCIL REFERRALS:**

- A. Office of Parks and Recreation Garden Center Financial and Operations Report: Ms. Thorne advised that this item was heard at the Finance and Life Enrichment Committees. Staff is scheduling an exit conference with the City Auditor to go over the findings and the results will go back to the committees. The time period of the audit was from before the current OPR administration, and all of the issues have been addressed by the new OPR Director. The collection of the debt (over \$35,000) owed to the City by Alhambra School is being handled by the City Attorney's Office. The missing chairs have not been replaced. The mold in the corner of the Garden Room still needs to be abated. Staff will follow up.

14. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** No report

15. **OPEN FORUM:**

- Commissioner Fischbach-Benson attended the budget hearing on June 11. It is important for PRAC as an advocacy group to pay attention and to be a voice at the City Council meetings, especially in terms of the consequences of removed positions. Talking with Union representatives can also help to understand the consequences.
- Commissioner Abad expressed concern about the late dates for the summer hires and training, and that the schools are closing for summer prior to those dates.
- Commissioner Wong shared that the Bonsai Garden was shown on the PBS program, "California Gold". A historic bonsai from Abraham Lincoln's collection has been donated to the garden.

16. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

17. **ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Francine LarKrith-Thompson  
Acting Secretary

Mary Perisic  
Recording Secretary