

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2001
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 4:30 pm. Jim Ryugo, Secretary to the Commission, conducted roll call. A quorum was present.

2. ROLL CALL: (two vacancies)

Present: Valerie Abad, Dinah Fischbach-Bensen, Yvonne Myers, Theresa Nelson, William Patterson, Elba Sanchez, Matthew Webb,
Excused: Jeffery Wong
Absent: Raymond Bobbitt
Staff Present: Jim Ryugo, Mary Perisic
Visitors: Gillian Garro, Friends of Bella Vista, Garlen Capita, Trust for Public Land

3. DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:

A. Minutes of September 26, 2001 regular meeting

MOTION: Commissioner Myers moved approval. Commissioner Patterson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

4. SPECIAL ORDERS: None

5. DETERMINATION OF SCHEDULE—OUTSTANDING AGENDA ITEMS: No changes

6. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA: Moved item 12A up.

7. COMMUNICATIONS:

- Mr. Ryugo advised that there will be a meeting at the Lake Chabot Golf Course on October 17, 2001. The purpose of the meeting is to give a quick review of the proposed golf course club house plan. Commissioner Fischbach-Bensen will attend and report back to PRAC at the next meeting.

8. PRAC COMMITTEE REPORTS: No reports

9. ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS:

- Commissioner Nelson asked about the letters of introduction of the PRAC liaisons to the Advisory Councils. Mr. Ryugo will draft a letter. Dr. Edwards wants this to be handled through the Recreation Supervisors.

10. CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS:

A. Cancer Survivor Park: Mr. Ryugo gave a brief update. He made contact with the American Cancer Society in Oakland. We are trying to do outreach to cancer survivors in Oakland. The American Cancer Society generally supports the idea. Commissioner Nelson advised that she called the two phone numbers listed on the proposed plaques. One number was a legitimate National Cancer Institute. The other number was unclear and gave no information. This item will be kept on the agenda on an on-going basis.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A. PRAC Long Term Project: The first step is for PRAC to identify a project that will have tangible results. Commissioners discussed the park maintenance issue as a project, which is very much needed and has community support. It was requested that staff invite Gibson and Associates, who will be conducting an evaluation of recreation programs, to the next meeting. This item was tabled until the next meeting.

12. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Facility/Park Maintenance Issues – Friends of Bella Vista: Gillian Garro of Friends spoke regarding Bella Vista Park. It is a small park near Highland Hospital. They have been successful in raising money for the park and are working with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for further funding of much needed improvements. The TPL has raised money and provided oversight on park improvements throughout Oakland. However, they are unhappy that these parks have been poorly maintained. The TPL is hesitant to fund another Oakland park, including Bella Vista, until they are assured that there will not be a problem with maintenance. Members of Friends of Bella Vista have started talking to people and other park agencies regarding maintenance issues. This is a huge problem in many communities, as is vandalism and low expectations for parks. A community meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 18 at the Garden Center. Mr. Ryugo advised that the number of maintenance staff have been cut but the number of parks and median strips have increased. We need to begin working with people who live near the parks and have them be our eyes and ears so we know what is happening in our parks.

Parks that are not maintained and not enjoyed by park users are then used in inappropriate ways, and a vicious cycle of disuse persists. Recreation programs in the parks will help to prevent inappropriate use. Staff needs to do more outreach to get people to participate in programs. It was suggested that a survey of neighborhoods be conducted to determine what kinds of recreation programs are desired, and that the City Auditor's Office may be able to help fund a survey. One of the first steps would be to make our parks more attractive and inviting so that people reclaim them. Ms. Garro stated that the key is in communities and their children, the main users of the parks. When children can speak on behalf of their parks, and be given a voice through their schools, East Bay Conservation Corps, and other agencies that work with young people, it could make a huge difference.

Garlan Capita of the Trust for Public Land provided a brief summary of how the TPL helps agencies acquire park land, design and build parks. The problem TPL faces is that these parks are not being kept up by the City and the programming is not sufficient. She advised that in the City of San Francisco there is a park employee for each park. A maintenance plan and park standards would help. When the TPL works with foundations who fund park improvements, they need to show where the money is going and how the parks are maintained. They cannot get funding if it is known that our parks are not maintained. TPL has a contract with Bella Vista in its review stages. They cannot sign off until the city has a maintenance plan and a clear line of responsibility.

Commissioner Nelson arrived at 5:30 p.m.

13. **COUNCIL REFERRALS:**

- A. Resolution authorizing City Manager to negotiate and execute a professional services agreement with Gibson & Associates for an amount not to exceed \$97,000 to develop and conduct a needs assessment and evaluation of recreation programs: Discussed in 11A.
- B. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute a sole source agreement with Subsurface Consultants, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$80,000 for geotechnical and hydrological services related to the Montclair Golf Course and Sausal Creek: Staff is reviewing the scope of work with Friends of Sausal Creek and we are finalizing agreement.

14. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- Mr. Ryugo briefly reported on the issue of the Jack London Aquatic Center.

15. **OPEN FORUM:**

- None

16. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Commissioner Nelson gave an update on the Rockridge Park work, which is being done completely by volunteers.

17. **ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Ryugo
Secretary

Mary Perisic
Recording Secretary