



**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 3, 2020
City Council Chambers, One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, CA**

CALL TO ORDER: 7:05 PM.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Cotten, Foehr, Fox, Kapur, Lee, Lyford, Michaels, Mittelstadt

Commissioner Absent: Sanders

Staff Present: Parks and Recreation Director Shearer, Administrative Assistant Clark, Recreation Supervisor Moran

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Chair Fox

COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments)

Resident Kristin Mercer's email was read into the record. Mercer highlighted a new "illegal" trail in Water Dog Park and called for all unauthorized trails to be closed.

Resident Barbara Posch's email was read into the record. Posch had recently walked Water Dog Park with Mayor Lieberman, Director Shearer, and Commissioners Fox and Lyford and she wanted to reiterate safety concerns about bikers running into hikers when coming down newly created trails.

Resident Navid Kamali's email was read into the record. Kamali expressed concerns about the trail density at Water Dog Lake and called for the immediate closure of unauthorized trails.

COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / AGENDA AMENDMENTS

Commissioner Fox thanked the public for their comments and said most issues would be addressed in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan, but safety concerns should be addressed sooner.

CONSENT CALENDAR

May 6, 2020 Draft Minutes

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Mittelstadt seconded by Commissioner Cotten, the minutes were unanimously approved with one revision: Commissioner Foehr—not Fox—nominated Commissioner Fox as the new Commission Chair.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

City's Strategic Plan

Director Shearer reviewed the City's Strategic Focus Areas and corresponding action items for Parks & Recreation, which aligned with the Commission's 2020 priorities. The full strategic plan is available online. In response to Commissioner Kapur, Shearer said anticipated Prop 68 funds would fund tennis court resurfacing at Hallmark Park, but larger-scale improvements would fall under the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. In addition, the Parks & Recreation Department will

be removing select trees that are causing damage to the courts and asphalt pathway and native trees will be planted at alternate locations in the park. In response to Commissioner Fox, Shearer said planning for the Belmont Creek stabilization component of Phase 1 of the Twin Pines Master Plan would begin due to secured grants

Open Space Trail Signage Committee Update

Due to residing near the project site, Commissioner Mittelstadt recused himself from the discussion.

Director Shearer conferred with the City's Wayfinding consultant, which resulted in significant changes to the draft signs. She shared the latest iteration and said the final design would be shared at the July Commission meeting.

Commissioner Lee suggested testing the signs in their intended environments to ensure they are visible and attractive. Commissioner Michaels recommended adequate space around QR codes and consistent text/image alignment. Commissioner Fox asked about larger signs at trailheads, suggested engaging the Wayfinding consultant to finalize signage, and thanked City GIS Coordinator Jason Eggers for creating the sign drafts.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan Update

Director Shearer said the department was still awaiting the FY21 budget approval before advertising the request for proposals.

Verbal Update on COVID-19

Director Shearer reviewed the status of parks, open spaces, and recreation programs. Updates included: new virtual camps, in-person camps beginning June 15, the Community Learning Center was up to 20 full-time children, two Commissioners were calling to check in on seniors regularly, and facility rentals were still on hold with a possible limited reopening for worship services. Shearer called for all members of the public to maintain social distance in parks and the open space and announced limited park/parking access at McDougal Park June 8-10. Finally, she commended department staff for planning/implementing changes to services.

Commissioner Michaels complimented staff and asked about posting signage along Ralston Ave. with best practices for enjoying the outdoors. Commissioner Fox asked about allowing dog park reservations, but Shearer said the County health order currently prohibited dog park use. Fox also said she had enjoyed speaking with two "senior pals" weekly. In response to Commissioner Foehr, Shearer said park restrooms would open eventually.

Commission Calendar

Director Shearer said she hoped to add the Twin Pines Park Tree Succession Plan to the July agenda.

OTHER BUSINESS / UPDATES

Department Reports

Director Shearer shared monthly highlight including: more open space fuel reduction, updates on the Sports Complex Synthetic Turf Project, YAC held an event "A Hand for Our Heroes," and the department launched a "See It, Clear It, Share It" volunteer campaign which Commission Cotten contributed to.

Shearer said she had been on open space trail walks with Mayor Lieberman, Commissioners, and Belmont residents. During these walks, they discussed trail maintenance, etiquette, mapping, and history as well as vegetation management. She said other local agencies were also having issues with night bicyclists in open space and the Belmont Police Department was making contact when possible as well as issuing citations to repeat offenders. In response to Commissioner Lee, Shearer said the Trail Signage Committee identified some unauthorized trails, but many would need to be investigated through the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. Lee suggested temporary signage to reduce conflicts between trail uses. Commissioner Mittelstadt suggested engaging the trail builders group when closing trails and Commissioner Foehr thanked Shearer for organizing the trail walks.

Other Business/Updates

Commissioner Michaels announced the Park Boosters had cancelled the summer 2020 concert series.

Commissioner Mittelstadt requested that the meeting be adjourned in the name of the late Henry Ruspil, prior Parks Supervisor and City employee of 35 years.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:01 PM.

Brigitte Shearer
Parks and Recreation Director