



**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting of November 6, 2019
City Council Chambers, One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, CA**

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Block, Cotten, Dai, Foehr, Fox, Lyford, Michaels, Mittelstadt, Sanders
Staff Present: Parks and Recreation Director Shearer, Office Assistant II Gonzalez

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Chair Michaels

COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / AGENDA AMENDMENTS

Commissioner Block said the Pump Track Committee contacted two firms regarding a feasibility study, resulting in a proposal by Hilride. Next, they need to identify funding.

Commissioner Lyford said the Water Dog Run was excellent and highlighted the contributions of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers.

Commissioner Michaels thanked City staff for Save the Music setup.

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 2, 2019 Draft Minutes

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Mittelstadt seconded by Commissioner Lyford, the minutes were unanimously approved (7-0).

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Senior Services/Holiday Craft Faire Update

Recreation Coordinator Andrea De Lara reviewed Senior and Community Center attendees, how they hear about the programs, the role of volunteers, and the breadth of center activities. Recreation Supervisor Cheryl Handley discussed volunteer recognition and community partnerships, which help provide an array of free programs, services, and events. She also highlighted the expansion of intergenerational programming, which has connected center attendees with the preschool, Camp SOAR, and Notre Dame de Namur University. De Lara highlighted the annual Holiday Craft Faire, and Handley added that this year two local churches would provide children's activities and a choir.

Commissioners shared questions and comments.

- Commissioner Mittelstadt thanked De Lara and Handley for their work and asked how many visitors they have; De Lara estimated 100 daily.
- Commissioner Lyford said his mother has found the center to be a huge resource and asked about increasing awareness of its programs and services. De Lara said The Daily Journal runs an annual ad and perhaps van drivers could distribute flyers at local businesses.

- In response to Commissioner Fox, Handley said retirement homes generally have activity directors, but people from Leslie Terrace and some assisted living facilities attend the center.
- Commissioner Foehr suggested a “Bring a Friend Day” as well as a stack of flyers by the front desk for attendees to distribute.
- In response to Commissioner Dai, De Lara said volunteers under 18 had to be supervised by staff. In addition, most center volunteer opportunities were an ongoing commitment, though high school volunteers are great for larger, one-time events.
- In response to Commissioner Sanders, De Lara said the department is updating its volunteer page and the center has had the most success soliciting volunteers on volunteermatch.org, through flyers at the lunch program, or through person-to-person interactions.
- In response to Commissioner Block, Handley said they are currently able to accommodate all shuttle requests through creative scheduling. Commissioner Michaels suggested a ride sharing board and Handley said many participants find carpools naturally.
- In response to Block, Handley said they have offered newcomer events, though they have not been well attended.
- Commissioner Cotten suggested a program to share family recipes.
- Commissioner Michaels suggested a wii bowling league and Handley said they are trying to revitalize the wii bowling program with an upcoming wii bowling party.
- Michaels suggested partnering with Resource Area for Teaching (RAFT) and StarVista.
- Michaels asked about capturing participant contact information to connect people in the event of emergencies. Handley said contact information is collected through registrations for some programs, though they are looking at a membership program long-term.
- In response to Michaels, Handley said programs are already offered remotely through the organization Senior Center Without Walls, which is advertised in the center newsletter.
- Director Shearer thanked Handley and De Lara for the breadth of programs and partnerships and invited Commissioners to stop by the center. De Lara suggested a “have lunch with the commission” event and Michaels said they would select a date offline.

Belmont Sports Complex Synthetic Turf Project Update

Director Shearer said they are still awaiting draft financing documents. Construction would need to begin by March to, weather permitting, complete by the end of August and avoid impacting soccer.

Pickleball Activity and Court Layout Options

Director Shearer said the department hosted a pickleball “try-it” in response to a community request. Based on its success, they now want to incorporate pickleball into their ongoing program offerings. Starting in January, indoor drop-in pickleball will be offered at the Senior and Community Center one Friday per month. They also want to offer outdoor pickleball at Alexander Park, so Shearer asked the Commission to choose from three potential court layouts. Staff preferred the layout of one pickleball court per tennis court. After Commission approval, the department will place corner markers on the courts (so users can easily add painter’s tape) and include permanent striping in the RFP for the tennis court resurfacing. Shearer suggested starting with Alexander Park since it has a restroom and later considering Hallmark, Belmont Community Center, and a possible partnership with NDNU.

- In response to Cotten, Shearer said the “try-it” day had about 20 signups resulting in 13 adult participants. Only 3 youth attended, but perhaps more would attend if it were offered at Barrett.

- In response to Commissioner Fox, Shearer said she would look into converting the handball area to a pickleball court.
- In response to Block, Shearer confirmed multiple pickleball courts per tennis court could be confusing for tennis players.
- In response to Commissioner Michaels, Shearer said current tennis court use was unknown outside of programming hours, though staff could observe use and users could self-report use.
- Commissioner Fox said she recently tried indoor pickleball and it was really fun. Based on her experience, she suggested fewer pickleball courts per tennis court.
- Commissioner Lyford mentioned they would need to post instructions on adjusting net height.
- In response to Michaels, Shearer said equipment would only be provided during programs.

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Mittelstadt seconded by Commissioner Fox, the Commission unanimously recommended the layout of one pickleball court per tennis court (7-0).

Open Space Trail Signage Committee

In response to Commissioner Lyford, Commissioner Mittelstadt estimated there were originally 30-40 trail markers throughout the open space. Director Shearer mentioned some were missing and needed replacement for safety purposes. Commissioner Block asked if this could be a simple, inexpensive project that didn't require an RFP and Mittelstadt mentioned the staff report went beyond replacement signage. Shearer said the committee could choose to keep a narrow scope and delegate some actions to the master plan. She also offered to work with them on redefining the project scope and considering what the City sign shop could do. She did suggest the committee consider indicating trails' difficulty and family-friendliness, as well as possible utilization of the Easy2Hike app.

Kevin Sullivan, a resident and previous Parks and Recreation Commissioner, offered to participate in the committee and discussed some considerations for the signs' utility and aesthetics for various user groups.

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyford seconded by Commissioner Fox, the Commission unanimously established an Open Space Trail Signage Committee with one Community Member at Large to be appointed by City staff (6-0, Mittelstadt abstained).

Commissioners Block, Foehr, Fox, and Dai were appointed to the committee.

Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan Committee

Director Shearer recommended a new Master Plan to guide Department and Commission actions for the next 15-20 years. She suggested a committee be formed to assist with this process over the course of 10-11 meetings from January-December 2020. The last Parks and Open Space Master Plan was completed in 1992 and included a community assessment, demographics, projections, an assessment of existing conditions, opportunities for improvement, cost of improvements, and recommended priorities. Shearer confirmed the new Master Plan would integrate existing plans and confirmed Commissioners could participate in community meetings (but not decision-making) even if they were not on the committee.

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Mittelstadt seconded by Commissioner Fox, the Commission unanimously established a committee for the Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan RFP finalization and project guidance (7-0).

Commissioners Lyford, Mittelstadt, Michaels, and Sanders were appointed to the committee.

January Meeting Date

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Cotten seconded by Commissioner Lyford, the Commission unanimously voted to move the January meeting from January 1 to January 8 (7-0).

Commission Calendar

Director Shearer reviewed December calendar items.

OTHER BUSINESS / UPDATES

Department Report

Director Shearer shared photos of the new Twin Pines bike path and said it would open once the traffic light pole was replaced at South Road and Ralston Avenue. Commissioner Fox suggested scaling down the bicycle signage and Commissioner Mittelstadt asked about removing the short pathway connecting Ralston Avenue to the parking lot. Shearer shared the rest of the Monthly Highlights: the Belburn sidewalk by Barrett was repaired in partnership with Public Works, a new sign was added to park bulletin boards to let the public know how to report park issues, the community garden held a fall cleanup day, NDNU students volunteered as part of their annual “Call to Action Day,” NDNU students participated in an intergenerational lunch at the Senior and Community Center, the 2019-20 youth advisory committee was established, and the department held the first annual “Trunk or Treat” event at the Hideout. Shearer ended by reviewing upcoming events. Commissioner Cotten commended Recreation Specialist II Chris Fonesca-Bates for doing an excellent job at the Hideout.

Shearer thanked the Commission for attending the Community Center Conceptual Design meeting the prior night. She also announced that the City is applying for a new California’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) grant to help prepare for power outages, she is applying for grant funding for creek bed restoration in Twin Pines Park, and a new Santa is needed for Santa at the Firehouse.

Commissioner Questions and Comments

Commissioner Fox suggested incorporating Hanukkah décor into this year’s holiday decorations.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:27 PM.

Brigitte Shearer
Parks and Recreation Director