

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
January 27, 2014

ATTENDING: Kirby, Yee, Kern, Coffey, Vann, Mercurio, Bank, Palacios, DeMarcus, Simmons, Beyaert, Volin, Coomber, Pellegrini, Shalaby, Best, Gregory
NOTATTENDING: Madsen, Madison, Godfrey
STAFF ATTENDING: Barial, Pfuehler, Nisbet, Scheer, Doyle
GUESTS: Director Ayn Wieskamp
PUBLIC: None.

The meeting began at 7:01 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes: PAC member Pellegrini moved and PAC member Beyaert seconded approval of the November 25, 2013 minutes with one correction. The motion passed unanimously. There were five abstentions due to absence from the meeting.

2. Introductions: PAC Chair Kirby asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves. Two new members of the PAC, Linda Best and Michael Gregory introduced themselves.

3. Board Member Comments: Director Wieskamp brought an article from the *Independent* newspaper that discussed a possible ballot initiative to protect the Doolan Canyon open space. This year is the Districts 80th Anniversary. Wieskamp believes in Healthy Parks Healthy People (HPPH) as an opportunity to get people in the parks. She touched on cooperation between agencies as it relates to the pavement situation at Sycamore Grove and the opening of Vargas Plateau to help alleviate crowding at Mission Peak. Wieskamp was enthusiastic about finally coming to an agreement with Dumbarton Quarry, the push for more short trails and the District's emphasis on green technology. Wieskamp expressed appreciation to the Board, the PAC and former employees.

4. Public Comments: None.

5. Presentations:

a. EBRPD Year in Review 2013 – Robert E. Doyle, General Manager
General Manager, Robert E. Doyle, presented his annual review. Doyle gave the PAC a historical synopsis of the origins of parks beginning with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., who believed it was part of our democracy to provide outdoor space for people to unwind. In 1866, Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. was commissioned to generate a comprehensive study of the U.C. Berkeley campus and thought the Berkeley hills would be a great place for a park. In 1927 Olmsted Jr. developed a plan to essentially create the California State Park system. From 1920-23 Ansel Hall was the first Park Naturalist of Yosemite National Park and he was a 1917 graduate from U.C. Berkeley. In 1930, Olmsted Jr. and Hall, who were brought together by their connections to U.C. Berkeley, co-wrote a report which '...advocated a revolutionary new concept: a regional approach to park development, the creation of truly large, interconnected parklands that would define an urban landscape,' which led directly to the establishment of the District.

Doyle noted the District has a balanced budget with a AAA rating. It has a four year contract with its labor union. The District did not have to lay off or furlough staff during the recession and is now looking to add some positions. Measure WW funds can help to leverage more grants for land acquisition and capital improvement.

Highlights of 2013:

- Obtained \$11.3 million in grants for 28 projects.
- Board approved 2013 Master Plan update.
- Dumbarton Quarry will be the first major campground built on San Francisco Bay, and the first one built in decades. Completely funded by Dumbarton Quarry Associates.
- Conservation Partnerships – added more than 2320 acres of land – much of funding came from East Contra Costa Habitat Conservation Plan.
- Roddy Ranch acquired.
- Eastshore State Park has been renamed to McLaughlin Eastshore State Park.
- 30 year agreement with state parks at Eastshore and \$5 million in funding for Brickyard.
- The Healthy Parks Healthy People (HPHP) Festival at Quarry Lakes won an award.
- 20th Anniversary of Trails Challenge with over 6700 participants.
- Monthly HPHP hikes launched with all parks in the area.
- The District is one of the largest employers of youth.
- Raptor research to reduce bird mortality in the Altamont.
- Public safety's helicopter helps to find people, fight crime and fight fires by dropping water.
- No drowning's in 2013.
- Environmental and Outdoor Education - a total of 220,000 guests visited District visitor centers.
- First fitness zone circuit at Lake Chabot in partnership with the Regional Parks Foundation.
- Crown Beach Sand Replacement – \$5.6 million project is completed.
- Tilden nature area \$1 million infrastructure project for sewer and improvements.
- Regional Parks Foundation raised \$1.5 million, funded 3400 youth camperships.
- Staff transitions – new hires and promotions.
- Received numerous awards – individual and agency.

Beyaert asked if there would be a nationwide search to replace former Planning and Stewardship AGM Mike Anderson. Doyle said a number of senior staff have retired and are retiring. The District will be doing a number of things, including nationwide searches, for senior staff. PAC member Kern added the management transitions will be a tough challenge, yet it is also an opportunity to step back and see how the organization can move forward in the future. Doyle responded he is looking at a reorganizational study at the senior level. The District needs to be relevant to the communities it serves. Kern complimented the District on its forward thinking. Doyle added the day-to-day running of the parks can be attributed to great staff. The Regional Parks Foundation raises additional money which helps the District reach out to a number of non-traditional park users. Members of the Foundation are loyal and 84% renew annually. PAC member Vann thanked Doyle for the comprehensive report and asked if the presentation would be available online. Doyle said he will make it available. PAC member Yee asked about the timeline for completing the entrance to Vargas, which should help relieve

the congestion at Mission Peak. Doyle said likely this summer.

b. 2014 PAC Workplan - Glenn Kirby, PAC Chair and Erich Pfuehler, Government Relations and Legislative Affairs Manager

Kirby stated the subcommittee took a look at the 2014 workplan. Government Relations and Legislative Affairs Manager Pfuehler mentioned some items are set in the PAC's agenda to meet deadlines for the Board and some items can be moved around. Kirby suggested the committee think about what they would like to hear from new Chief of Stewardship, Matt Graul in September. There is a suggestion to change the December Holiday Dinner to the second Monday for 2014 which falls on December 8th. Most PAC members agreed the change made sense. Vann asked if the May 19th meeting is a shift from the fourth Monday. Kirby said yes in order to avoid trying to meet on Memorial Day. Vann asked for a summary of the contract with Oakland Strokes. PAC member Palacios asked if there could be a more formal discussion about the collaborations between agencies. PAC member DeMarcus asked for more information about bird strikes and wind turbines during the presentation by Stewardship staff in September. Pfuehler added climate change and drought conditions may also be a focus of the Stewardship presentation. Kern asked if anyone would like to work with him as chair of the finance subcommittee.

Kirby presented Yee with a framed certificate for 2013 PAC perfect meeting attendance.

c. Plan Bay Area Subcommittee Discussion - Glenn Kirby, PAC Chair and Erich Pfuehler, Government Relations and Legislative Affairs Manager

Kirby said there are members of the PAC who have a strong interest in how the Plan Bay Area effort should proceed and want to support the District's involvement. Pfuehler gave a brief background on the District's efforts to date. All the land managers throughout the nine Bay Area counties were brought together and agreed on a goal of a 5% set aside in the \$278 billion plan for natural resource protection and management, including mitigation for transportation projects in advance. A letter was sent to Steve Heminger Executive Director of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) which prompted a second meeting of the groups. That discussion went well until the very end when MTC staff stated it was too late for this iteration, but more discussion about the role of open space agencies should be included in future plans. The process for producing the next plan is starting now. Feedback about where the District should plug in and try to activate sister land management agencies is welcomed. Staff views the PAC ad hoc subcommittee as something that is organic and not staff driven.

Kern thanked the Board for assembling a unique set of community advocates each with their own networks. He suggested a working ad hoc subcommittee on Plan Bay Area should be established. The first step is to make sure PAC members understand the District's efforts to date and what an appropriate future 'ask' of the Plan would be. Over the next four years, PAC members can provide some constructive thinking of the issue, understand the strategy and help the District move forward. Most importantly, is to better understand how PAC members could be empowered as advocates for the District's interests. Director Wieskamp asked if the ad hoc subcommittee would pull in people who are not PAC members. PAC member Simmons added he had the impression the District was working with agencies in the other counties to advocate for conservation and parks generically. He added Walnut Creek has two

“Priority Development Areas” (PDAs) in the Plan. Like most of the PDAs, they are in areas that are already developed so there is no net loss of green space. There is a need, however, for people who live in the PDAs to have access to green space. Providing input and a mechanism for funding to access green space would be a critical component for the next round. He likes the concept of having a PAC ad hoc subcommittee. He suggested two or three members should work on the subcommittee and then come back to the PAC with a set of recommendations that have been vetted by staff.

Vann added his understanding was Plan Bay Area addressed the relationship between transportation and housing. The quality of life impacts and relationship the District represents should be considered. Quality of life includes the availability of outdoor space and parks, the relationship of parks to transportation and the design of housing developments. Perhaps a ‘quality of life’ metric could be developed, applied and measured. Kirby concurred with Vann and added the infill design and intensity of developed areas may not allow for a lot of open space. Policy makers should be reminded of the need to include quality of life issues in their planning efforts. Kirby suggested three or four PAC members should form an ad hoc subcommittee and work with District staff Pfuehler and Interagency Planning Manager Larry Tong. PAC member Gregory said he participated in some of the Plan Bay Area efforts. The focus was on the PDA’s, however the ‘Priority Conservation Areas’ (PCAs) did not receive much attention. Gregory thought it would be appropriate for the District to have a role in the PCA discussion. Kirby said it is difficult because each agency who signed onto the 5% set aside letter is constituted differently and has different roles within their counties of jurisdiction. Pfuehler stated his belief the PCAs were too limited. For the five counties south of the Golden Gate and Carquinez Strait, it was a total grant program of \$5 million with a three to one match the wrong way (for every PCA dollar granted three needs to be provided by the applicant). District staff believe there needs to be a focus on growing the pot and making it more workable for implementing actual projects. Beyaert reminded the group the PCA’s include the San Francisco Bay Trail and the Bay Area Ridge Trail. Kirby asked Kern to spearhead the group and work with Pfuehler and Tong. Prospective subcommittee members are PAC members Madsen, Gregory, Palacios, Mercurio, Simmons and Best. Kern added the mission would be to develop a working document which clearly articulates the committee’s focus and how the committee can best be engaged.

6. **PAC Member Comments** – Beyaert visited ground zero of the Mt. Diablo fire with Greenbelt Alliance and discovered a staging area on Morgan Territory Road with new signs installed after the fire. Vann helped with tabling as an ambassador at the MLK event at the Longshore Hall in Oakland. He also took a group hiking in Kennedy Grove and asked about a closed trail. Anne Scheer, Chief of Operations, said she would find out and get back to him. Palacios visited Pt. Isabel Park. It was packed and lovely. Kirby rode up Mt. Diablo. Simmons added some trivia about the Mt. Diablo fire. Kern, Kirby and Volin attended Chief of Planning and GIS Brian Wiese’s retirement dinner and were able to see the waterfall at Lake Temescal. Vann mentioned he did not notice major changes as it pertains to the Native American concerns in the Master Plan. Kirby responded there was a quote that was removed.
7. **Report from the Chair** – Kirby said he would be out of town in February and Vice Chair Mercurio will chair the meeting. Bank and Volin will be attending the Board Operations meeting on February 20. Kirby asked that the gun range subcommittee get the materials beforehand.

8. **Board Committee Reports** – PAC member Bank did not have a report.
9. **Status of Recommendations** – Final for 2013.
10. **Old Business** – None.
11. **New Business** – None.
12. **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The November 25, 2013 meeting minutes were approved.
2. The next PAC meeting is February 24, 2014.
3. Holiday Dinner was moved to December 8, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,
Yolande Barial, PAC Secretary