

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
November 27, 2017

ATTENDING: Best, Brubaker, Bueren, Kern, Gregory, Godfrey, Ho, Madsen, Mercurio, Palacios, Rickard, Robinson, Sanwong, Skaredoff, Thompson, Trotter, Tsutsui, Volin, Wilkins, Yee

NOT ATTENDING: N/A

STAFF ATTENDING: O'Connor, Clay, Victor, Bondurant, Barrington, Johnson, Spaulding, Auken, Love, Ciaburro, Nisbet

GUESTS: Board Member Beverly Lane

PUBLIC: Robin Freeman, Kathy Roth, Terry Goodman, Beth Tepper, Marla Schmalle, Greg Thomas, Ruby Thomas, Beth Williams, Ana Wong, Maureen Forney, Amelia Wilson, Phil Hudson

The meeting began at 7:02 p.m.

1. **Approval of the October 23, 2017 Minutes:** The October 23, 2017 minutes were approved. The motion to approve the minutes was moved by PAC member Skaredoff and seconded by PAC member Best. PAC member Gregory abstained due to being absent from the October meeting.
2. **Introductions:** PAC Chair Kern asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:**
Director Lane thanked the PAC members for their work in 2017 on some very important issues to the Park District. She congratulated Chair Kern for his skills as Chair of the PAC.

Director Lane spoke briefly about wildfires in the District parklands. Director Lane showed a video interview by KRON news of Interim Fire Chief John Swanson. The discussion was about fuels management in East Bay Regional Parks. Since the Oakland hills fire in 1991, the District has led efforts to keep small fires from becoming big fires. Swanson explained fuels management consists of thinning the forest by removing small diameter trees, leaving the larger diameter trees well-spaced and reducing the amount of fuels on the forest floor. The goal is to keep a wildfire from climbing up the tree and reaching the canopy. If the canopy ignites, embers are cast high up above the trees for hundreds of feet. Winds can loft the embers downwind and start fires far away from where the original fire began. Swanson pointed out wildfires cannot be prevented, but preventing catastrophic disasters is the goal. The Bay Area is a Mediterranean climate in which frequent fires are one of the natural elements. The District is trying to prevent intense, threatening fire behavior as was the case in 1991. Director Lane said the District is working systematically along the hills to thin, clear and allow mature trees to

flourish while reducing flammable small diameter trees. One reason the District has been successful in obtaining FEMA money is because it has a fuels management plan in place with environmental clearances.

4. **Foundation Update:** Carol Johnson, AGM Public Affairs provided an update about the Regional Park Foundation. She reported the Foundation is on track to raise two million dollars which provides underserved communities access to the parks. This will be the seventh consecutive year the numbers have increased. Johnson reported there has been a double digit increase in membership.

5. **Public Comments:**

Robin Freeman, Guadalupe Gonzales and Beth Tepper spoke about the San Leandro Creek Greenway project. They expressed interest in the Park District partnering with the San Leandro Creek Alliance to help build and maintain the new trail. Marla Schmalte discussed park signage. Liz Williams spoke about professional dog walkers and their role in maintaining park access for dogs.

6. **Presentations:**

- (R) a. **2018 Proposed Budget – Debra Auker, AGM/CFO Finance and Management Services**
Debra Auker, AGM/CFO Finance and Management Services provided an overview on the proposed budget. Auker explained total District resources for 2018 is \$219.8 million (including inter-fund transfers of \$41.5 million), which is \$9.6 million (4.6%) above the 2017 budget (\$210.2 million). Appropriations for all funds (including transfers) total \$255.3 million, which is \$24 million (10.5%) more than the 2017 adopted budget of \$231.0 million. The District’s 2018 proposed operating budget is balanced when taking into account the planned use of fund balance for capital projects and debt service payments.

The 2018 Proposed Budget includes over \$6.3 million in *base budget* increases. A *base budget* increase is a commitment of ongoing costs that will repeat each year. The 2018 base increases recognize costs in several key operating areas, including ongoing costs for managing newly opened parklands. The 2018 Proposed Budget includes the addition of 22.62 full-time equivalent positions (FTE’s), both permanent and seasonal, all funded by the General Fund. This increases the total District authorized staffing to 823.8 FTE’s.

The 2018 Proposed General Fund Budget is balanced with estimated total resources of \$147.1 million available to fund expenditures and transfers out of \$146.9 million, resulting in a projected fund balance increase of \$165,000 in the General Fund. The 2018 Proposed Budget provides a detailed plan for the District’s operations during the 2018 calendar year. It is the result of months of planning and review by District staff. The Board Finance Committee received a report about the 2018 Proposed Budget on November 20, 2017, and unanimously recommended adoption to the full Board of Directors.

Recommendation: By motion of PAC member Best, and seconded by PAC Member Mercurio, the Park Advisory Committee voted to recommend the 2018 Proposed Budget to be adopted by the Board of Directors.

(I) **b. Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan – Kelly Barrington, Chief of Maintenance and Skilled Trades**

Kelly Barrington, Chief of Maintenance and Skilled Trades provided a brief history about the Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan. Staff identified 9,960 features to be corrected in the parks. To date, the total number of features that have been corrected are 1,614, and total project expenditures are \$ 3,613,537.

Barrington highlighted a few of the projects. The Tilden Environmental Education Center and historic map were restored and installed where the old ADA wheelchair elevator lift was located. A new lift was built that connects to the stair rail and takes a wheelchair down the two stairs to the lower floor. Picnic areas have been reconfigured to allow for ADA access at the tables. Parking lots have been repaved to provide handicap parking. An ADA ramp and pier was rebuilt to accommodate ADA needs at Temescal, as well as a new picnic site with ADA railing and tables.

Director Lane commented one of the decisions made during the initial evaluation period was to make sure people with mobility issues experience the best of the Park District. The very top priorities were to provide access to spectacular views and/or out to a quality fishing pier. PAC member Ho commented it was great staff had the knowledge to design and build. She asked if there is anything in the ADA Transition Plan regarding the visually impaired. Barrington replied yes with the signage for restrooms and truncated domes.

Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.

(R) **c. Review of the Park District’s Interim Policy on Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices – Carol Victor, District Counsel**

Carol Victor, District Counsel reported the interim policy on Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices was approved in 2010. The policy has generated very little activity out in the field. It is well understood by staff and there have been no issues arising from the policy. Victor explained it has been seven years since the Interim Policy was adopted. It was brought before the Operations Committee for final approval. The Operations Committee recommended it to be discussed by the PAC for a recommendation to the full Board.

Victor outlined the origins of the policy and explained it was the result of a change in law. In 2010, the Department of Justice (DOJ) revised the rules under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Victor stated Segways are popular among the mobility disabled population. They are being used as a mobility aids, but a number of businesses would not allow Segways. The DOJ decided to embark on rulemaking to adopt standards which conform to the ADA. One aspect of the rule is if pedestrians are allowed in an area, then a wheelchair must be allowed. This standard applies to most District properties. Victor explained it is very important for public agencies adopt a policy to comply with the DOJ rules. Victor stated the District has included a variance procedure in its policy. This means if the District’s policy does not work for a particular user, then they have an opportunity to meet with the ADA coordinator at the District to discuss whether another accommodation can be made. Victor explained under the ADA rules, an agency is allowed to develop standards and areas of authorized use. The types of standards adopted by the District were regarding size, speed limits and areas of use.

PAC member Trotter inquired about speed limits. Victor replied current speed limits are 15 mph for bikes and 10 mph for other types of mobility devices. PAC member Tsutsui noted mobility devices of only a certain width are allowed on trails. He asked if the requirements are listed on the District website for park users to determine if their device will be allowed. Victor replied not at this time.

Recommendation: By motion of PAC Member Volin, and seconded by PAC Member Rickard, the Park Advisory Committee voted to recommend to the Board of Directors approval of the proposed review of the Park District's Interim Policy on Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices.

(I) d. Sibley LUPA – Julie Bondurant, Senior Planner

Julie Bondurant, Senior Planner, reported Planning staff are currently working on the Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA). This LUPA will update the 1985 LUP. It will incorporate the Western Hills and McCosker sub-areas into Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve. Bondurant explained there are three sub-areas totaling 1,318 acres of planned improvements. Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve (Preserve); 2) Western Hills Open Space (Western Hills); and 3) the McCosker Parcel (McCosker).

Bondurant specified a total of six staging areas will help to distribute use throughout the park. Improvements will include expanding the existing parking capacity from 34 spaces to approximately 55 spaces in the Sibley Main Staging Area parking lot. Incorporating the Western Hills Open Space will provide two access points, increasing access opportunities to the Preserve from the Lamorinda area. Internal project roadway improvements will include repairing existing service roads, including installation of two new bridges within the McCosker sub-area, and installing a new, pedestrian bridge that will provide ADA trail access from the staging area to the McCosker sub-area.

Bondurant explained the recreation facility development in the McCosker sub-area will include an ADA compliant recreation area designed to accommodate interpretive programs and camping. It will accommodate up to 50 people with parking for approximately 26 vehicles. ADA compliant trails will provide connections between the developed recreation area and the day use staging area. An informal site for passive day use activities will incorporate existing concrete walls remaining from the former construction and quarrying business. Landscaping in the recreation areas will augment existing habitat located at the perimeter of these sites, as well as provide screening, shade and aesthetic value for park visitors. Utility infrastructure improvements in the Preserve sub-area will include extension of an existing potable water line to the backpack camp. In the McCosker sub-area, infrastructure improvements will include installation of prefabricated toilets and development of potable water supply. Connections will be made to existing electrical and communications services to meet recreation and maintenance needs at the group campsite and interpretive program area. Bondurant explained the trail system will incorporate trails in the three sub-areas, as well as connections into Huckleberry Preserve. The trail system will include new narrow, natural surface trails. Changes in trail uses on existing trails are proposed to improve circulation and provide greater connectivity with other District lands and neighboring residential communities.

Approximately 2,135 linear feet of the deteriorating, culverted Alder Creek that connects directly into Upper San Leandro Creek, and 754 linear feet of a side tributary, will be day-lighted and restored. The reconstructed creeks will incorporate a mix of cascades, step pools, resting pools and pocket pools in steeper areas. Potential spawning sites for rainbow trout will be incorporated into Alder Creek. New riparian habitat will be established throughout the length of the restored channel and tributary. The projected start of the project is anticipated in the summer of 2019 pending adoption of the LUPA, certification of the EIR, and securing the necessary environmental and local agency permits.

Rickard asked where the nature trail will be located. Bondurant replied it will run generally along the creek. Trotter inquired about staging from the south at Pinehurst. Bondurant replied at Pinehurst there is an existing staging area for ten cars. PAC member Godfrey inquired about the budget estimates for this project. Bondurant replied within the McCosker sub-area costs will be approximately \$6 million. PAC member Gregory asked if limiting park use was considered. Bondurant replied they are trying to distribute use around the park to not have overly concentrated areas.

Maureen Forney, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, inquired about signage enforcement to protect endangered species and biological diversity at Huckleberry. Bondurant answered wayfinding signage, informational signage and regulatory signage will be installed to let the park user know they are entering a protected area. PAC member Madsen commented most park users would not be aware of trail use changes while they are on the trails. Madsen would like to see deeper study on this as the process moves forward. Karen Picket commented she supports the creek restoration and species will benefit from the changes. She stated this is a fire ecology area. She believes it is a safety issue to allow camping in the park.

Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.

(R) e. 2018 PAC Goals – Bruce Kern, Chair

PAC member Yee mentioned he would like the volunteer bike patrol and general volunteer program items discussed separately.

Kern explained the broader mountain bike discussion will be postponed until 2019. Kern announced he will meet with Pfuehler and the General Manager to discuss the 2018 Work Plan. He will then meet with the Board Executive Committee and finally the full Board to finalize the Work Plan for 2018.

Kern brought up Regional Advanced Mitigation Planning and suggested it be part of the Work Plan. Kern mentioned the Capital Project Review and Update was not on the 2017 Work Plan, but should be incorporated into the plan for 2018. In particular, Stewardship's role in obtaining permits, as well as their oversight of projects as part of the Capital Project Review and Update. Madsen suggested the role of the Park District within the context of broader regional planning and transportation funding would be worthwhile in 2018. Madsen also suggested the discussion of climate change and resiliency be kept on the 2018 Work Plan. Trotter stated he felt regional planning and funding, grants update, and a parks and trails update should be included. Ho asked the Community Update item include Youth Employment. PAC member Palacios asked for clarification on item Multicultural Advisory Community review. Lane explained the District has

a Multicultural Advisory Committee which meets twice a year and represents a variety of groups throughout the East Bay. Skaredoff asked for an update about urban creeks be continued in 2018. Kern asked to add a Sibley Update. PAC member Bueren asked the item on dogs be continued in 2018. PAC member Robinson asked the Black Diamond LUPA be added.

Recommendation: The PAC accepted the work plan with some minor adjustments and recommended it be presented by the Chair to the General Manager, Board Executive Committee and full Board.

(R) f. Election of PAC Officers – Bruce Kern, Chair

Mercurio announced Bueren is willing to fill the role as Chair, and Rickard would be willing to serve as Vice-Chair. Palacios made a motion to nominate Bueren and Rickard as Chair and Vice-Chair. Yee seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Mercurio announced Best's willingness to continue as Finance Chair. PAC member Wilkins made the motion to nominate Best as Finance Chair. Yee seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

7. PAC Member Comments

None.

8. Report from Chair – Kern reported December 11 is the annual holiday dinner. Kern discussed the draft dog policy and the work the executive team did to draft the report. They will meet for the first workshop in December 13. Kern invited all PAC members to attend.

9. Board Committee Reports – None.

10. Status of Recommendations – All recommendations have been approved and adopted by the Board of Directors.

11. Old Business – None.

12. New Business

13. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the October 23, 2017 minutes.
2. The PAC voted to approve the acceptance of the 2018 Proposed Budget to the Board of Directors.
3. The PAC voted to recommend to the Board of Directors approval of the proposed review of the Park District's Interim Policy on Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices.
4. The PAC accepted its 2018 Work Plan, with some minor adjustments.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay
Confidential Secretary