

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
October 23, 2017

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

NOT ATTENDING: Bueren, Best, Sanwong, Robinson

STAFF ATTENDING: O'Connor, Kassebaum, Luna, Saito, Dougan, Moran, Barrington, Clay

GUESTS: Board Member Ayn Wieskamp

PUBLIC: Bruce Ohlson, Hobart Zimmerle

The meeting began at 7:02 p.m.

1. **Approval of the September 25 2017 Minutes:** The September 25, 2017 minutes were approved. The motion to approve was moved by PAC member Volin. PAC member Yee seconded approval of the minutes.

2. **Introductions:** N/A, the meeting began with Board Member comments.

3. **Board Member Comments:**

Director Wieskamp began by discussing her visit to Ardenwood on Labor Day. Director Wieskamp recounted how she talked with park users that came from all over the Bay Area to enjoy the park and escape the heat. Director Wieskamp encouraged them to return to Ardenwood for Harvest Festival and the Cowboy Hootenanny both in October. Director Wieskamp suggested the PAC members would enjoy attending the Gathering of the Ohlone on October 1 at Coyote Hills. She also encouraged PAC members to view Bob Coomber's film, *4-Wheel Bob*, on October 3 at the Parkway Theater in Oakland.

Foundation Update: No update.

4. **Public Comments:** Hobart Zimmerle expressed concern that dog walking in Dunsmuir has been discouraged in the last few years. He asked if the Park District could help facilitate a designated public area to walk dogs on or off-leash.

5. **Presentations:**

(I) a. **Convenience Camping Update – Jim O'Connor, AGM Operations, and Nate Luna, Administrative Analyst II, Maintenance and Skilled Trades (MAST)**

Jim O'Connor, AGM Operations introduced Nate Luna, Administrative Analyst II, who presented a PowerPoint on the item. Luna discussed the history of convenience camping and explained ten potential locations were originally considered. Del Valle was chosen as the best fit for the pilot project. The site is relatively flat, close to restrooms, showers, water and power – all key elements

for the project. The site accommodates five cabins. The draft design was taken from the cabins at Samuel P. Taylor State Park.

Luna stated each cabin cost \$35,330.00. The total project cost including ADA ramps, delivery, installation, license and transfer fee, and site materials totals \$269,163.00.

The exterior of the cabins include a metal roof with a high solar reflective index rating (SRI), the cabins are fully insulated, and have Wilderness Urban Interface (WUI) rated windows which protect the building from wildfire. Hardie board siding is also being used which is resistant to fire, mold and pests. Interior features include cedar wall siding, solid surface counter space, USB charger outlet, electrical outlet, recessed lighting, ceiling fan, bunk beds, carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, air conditioning, and an electric “wood” stove. Trenching for the electrical work was done in April while the park was closed for cleanup from the winter flooding. The District survey team, MAST, Roads and Trails, Park Craft Specialists and Rangers worked together to complete the trenching, electrical engineering, grading, asphalt and cabin pad construction.

O’Connor announced a new link was created on the webpage for cabin reservations. Reserve America is the company that provides this service. October 7 reservations will be open. It is anticipated a 65% occupancy rate in year one will net \$88,969.00 in revenue. Initially reservations will be available by phone only, but it is anticipated to go online soon.

PAC member Palacios asked when the District will break even. O’Connor replied it might take five to seven years. PAC chair Kern explained this came out of a marketability study from 2014 by the District to look at convenience camping.

PAC member Ho asked if additional staffing or janitorial staff will be needed to take care of the cabins. O’Connor replied the cabins are very basic. The District will determine how to move forward once camping has been established, but some staffing will be added. PAC member Trotter inquired if the cleaning costs were included in the projected revenue. O’Connor replied no. PAC Member Rickard announced there will be a Board Field Trip on October 6 to Del Valle and the cabins will be part of the tour.

Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.

(I) b. Community Services/Volunteers Program Update – Anne Kassebaum, Chief of Interpretive and Recreation Service

Anne Kassebaum, Chief of Recreation and Interpretive Services introduced Jeremy Saito, Recreation Supervisor. Saito provided an overview about the District-wide volunteer program. He noted some of the ongoing volunteer programs: Docent Groups, Park Ambassadors and Volunteer Safety Patrol. There are also one-time volunteers who come out for special events such as: Earth Day, Coastal Cleanup and Ivan Dixon Trail Days. In 2016, there were over 21,000 volunteers providing over 150 thousand hours of service. Corporate volunteer groups have continued to increase. In 2016, there were 55 corporate volunteers, and in 2017 to date there have been 58 corporate volunteers. Because of the success of corporate volunteer days, the Board of Directors have asked the District to continue to increase corporate volunteers in 2017.

In 2016, a total of 21,166 volunteers contributed 150,782 hours of service. Saito stated there is a noticeable trend of increased requests by corporate volunteers. Some of the projects included planting at Anthony Chabot Park; removal of French Broom at Diablo Foothills; weeding at Quarry Lakes rare fruit trees; liter removal at Baypoint; the construction of a split rail fence at Las Trampas; spreading mulch; and the building and staining of park benches at Radke Memorial Martinez Shoreline. Saito reported some corporate volunteers include: Whole Foods, The North Face, Workday, PG&E, Meridian Property Co., AAA of Northern CA, Stantec, the Rotary Club, Toyota, Clif Bar, Shaklee and Massage Envy Spa.

Saito reported that each year the District hosts *Corporate Caring Volunteer Week* with Chevron. The District also hosts work parties put on by Weed Warriors and Friends of Five Creeks Volunteers. Saito said the Regional Parks Foundation is committed to corporate engagement and donates to the program. They provide planning support, lunch, snacks and commemorative t-shirts and/or water bottles. The Foundation has a website which links to the volunteer webpage.

Saito showcased several volunteer public events that are offered each year: the MLK Jr. Day of Service, Earth Day events, Special Kids Fishing Derbies, California Coastal Cleanup Day and National Public Lands Day. Saito explained Parks Express hosts a Day in the Park for Alameda nursing homes at Crown Beach.

Volin asked how the list of projects are determined. Saito replied he works with Park staff to conduct an assessment about what the needs are, and what projects can be offered to volunteers. PAC member Tsutsui asked if the District has a mechanism to recruit volunteers from colleges. He added there could be projects tailored specifically for educational programming. Saito replied he would be very interested in working with universities to identify potential conservation projects and long-term sustainability projects.

PAC member Godfrey stated the volunteer numbers are impressive. He noted high school students are often required to provide mandatory community hours. He wondered what percentage of our volunteers are high school students. Saito said there is a big program at Irvington High School called the *Change Project*. The District tries to plan projects in advance, so when schools call they are ready for them. Palacios commended Saito for his work. She inquired if the Girl Scouts have been part of this program. Saito replied there is a website for Eagle and Silver Star projects for the Boy and Girl Scouts. PAC member Mercurio inquired if the corporate projects are done during the work week. Saito replied yes, they are done as team building projects for the businesses.

Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.

(I) c. Trails Update- Sean Dougan, Trails Development Program Manager

Sean Dougan, Trails Development Program Manager provided a PowerPoint presentation on this item. Dougan said the department's operating budget is \$2,080,537. The Trails Development department develops trails inside and outside parks, and also runs the Ivan Dickson Volunteer Trail Maintenance program. They are a department of three. Together they complete about ten projects per year. Dougan said they are working on roughly 37 projects simultaneously throughout the year.

Dougan explained the stages of a project include conducting a feasibility study, design, CEQA requirements, and final construction. Dougan gave an overview on a few of their current projects. A goal of the Tassajara Creek Trail terminus project is to connect the Tassajara Creek Trail to Wallis Ranch. Once completed, it will connect Dublin to San Ramon and eventually connect to Mt. Diablo. Another project, is the construction of a fiberglass bridge across Havey Creek by District staff in Wildcat Canyon.

Dougan commented construction of a 1,100-foot bridge began in June 2017 to connect Pinole Shores to Bayfront Park as part of the San Francisco Bay Trail. It is a technically difficult project which has taken a decade to get to this point. Dougan reported another bridge will be constructed in 2019 at Point Molate. It is currently being designed and CEQA should be completed this Fall. Federal funding is anticipated for this project, so NEPA studies are underway. Dougan anticipates the project will be completed by Spring of 2018. Another project is the Bay Area Ridge Trail from Garin to Highway 84. The design is about 95% complete. The expected completion date is next Spring. Dougan stated Board approval for initiating CEQA review is scheduled in October for a trail from Dunsmuir to Chabot Regional Trail in the City of San Leandro.

Dougan explained not all projects are on the Master Plan. For example, there is a proposal for the Contra Costa Canal Trail at the Highway 680 - Highway 4 interchange where new fly-overs, and the elimination of certain on and off ramps, are being contemplated. The project doesn't include any non-motorized trail component, and doesn't accommodate bicyclists or pedestrians. Usually the District supports these types of projects, and will push for the inclusion of a bicycle and pedestrian component to the trail.

Bruce Ohlson, member of Delta Peddlers Bicycle Club, commented about the Contra Costa Canal Trail project by Contra Costa Transportation Authority. Ohlson asked the PAC members to support the connection of trails in the vicinity. Mercurio stated he would like the PAC to consider recommending the Board of Directors encourage the connection be made. Rickard agreed the PAC should support the connection.

Trotter responded funding has been difficult for CCTA to obtain. He commented there is a new companion bill to SB 1 to fund the project. Trotter said CCTA would likely support a bicycle and pedestrian component to the trail.

PAC member Brubaker asked if the District owns land on the Contra Costa Canal Trail. Dougan replied no.

Kern inquired about repair of the trails which were damaged by the winter storms. O'Connor replied there were 53 trail closures and only two remain closed.

Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.

6. PAC Member Comments

Palacios mentioned she has seen storm damage repairs at Redwood Park.

PAC member Thompson thanked the Park District for hosting the San Francisco Bay Trail Summit. She felt it initiated a conversation for the next phase of the SF Bay Trail as it moves forward with the most difficult segments.

Ho pointed out Saturday was the grand opening of the Hemme Station Park in Alamo at the Iron Horse Trail.

PAC member Skaredoff stated he enjoyed the Garin Apple Festival. Skaredoff mentioned the Resilient by Design Tour is a competition to create designs and projects to make the Bay Area resilient to sea-level rise, severe storms, flooding and earthquakes. Skaredoff took part in a 10k run at Contra Loma Reservoir.

PAC member Gregory stated that Doug Siden, Director Emeritus, was voted Chair Emeritus of the San Leandro Creek Alliance. He asked the PAC to consider an update on the blue/green algae issue.

7. **Report from Chair** – Kern reported the Executive Committee met on September 12 to begin developing the PAC's report on dogs in the parks. They are working on a draft recommendation to be brought before the PAC membership in October. The Executive Committee is in the process of setting up a meeting with the environmental community regarding dogs in the parks. They are also initiating outreach to the District Volunteer Trail groups. Director Wieskamp stated the Board appreciates the PAC's work on this issue.

A Measure CC Extension working group was established by the General Manager. Kern, Rickard and Wilkins sit on the Working Group.

8. **Board Committee Reports** – None.

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

10. **Old Business** – Dog report.

11. **New Business** – None.

12. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the July 24, 2017 minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay
Confidential Secretary