

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
February 26, 2018

ATTENDING: Brubaker, Bueren, Kern, Gregory, Ho, Mercurio, Robinson,
Skaredoff, Tsutsui, Wilkins, Yee

NOT ATTENDING: Thompson, Trotter, Godfrey, Madsen, Sanwong, Best, Rickard

STAFF ATTENDING: O'Connor, Pfuehler, Nisbet, Johnson, Koh, Sigismondo, Brede, Love

GUESTS: Board Member Dee Rosario

PUBLIC: Mary Barnsdale, Marla Miyashiro, Maribel Izquierdo, Diane Livoti,
Frances Gandy, Gerry Goodman, Jeanne Moreau, Jan Taylor, Wendy Clark,
Claudia Kawcznska, Susan Robinson, Cameron Wu, Rochelle Mason

The meeting began at 7:04 p.m.

1. **Approval of the January 22, 2018 Minutes:** The January 22, 2018 minutes were approved. The motion to approve was moved by PAC member Kern. PAC member Robinson seconded approval of the minutes. PAC member Tsutsui abstained.
2. **Introductions:** PAC chair Bueren asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:**
Director Rosario gave an update about Ward 2, and the Board members' trip to Washington, DC. Rosario explained while in Washington, they received confirmation from FEMA that the District will receive a \$5.4 million grant to work on the District fuel break, mainly in the Oakland area. The Park District is the only agency in the Oakland area receiving this funding.

Rosario reported the McCosker Ranch EIR is in progress. Once complete, the District will have contiguous parkland between Lafayette and Moraga all the way to Tilden, Sibley and Huckleberry which will create a large continuous wildlife corridor. Rosario stated the Board recently passed funding for a feasibility study to look at dredging Lake Temescal. The lake used to be 60 feet deep, but currently is only 12 feet, which exacerbates the blue green algae.

Rosario explained MTC has agreed to build a pier using the remaining abutments of the original Bay Bridge at the new Gateway Park. This will be a great draw for the public once the park opens. In Ward 2, conveyance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the District of the Tidal Canal along the Oakland shoreline between Oakland and Alameda is almost complete. The District plans to meet with the stakeholders to discuss how to close the Bay Trail gaps in this area. Districtwide, the Park District is working toward obtaining conveyances for the Concord Naval Weapons Station, the Oakland Army Base and Alameda Point.

4. **Foundation Update:** Carol Johnson, AGM Public Affairs reported a pilot program has begun in four parks, Shadow Cliffs, Ardenwood, Quarry Lakes and Lake Chabot to offer Foundation memberships. Johnson said she has received feedback that the public enjoys purchasing their memberships directly at the kiosks. The pilot program ends in March. The Foundation then anticipates rolling out the ability to purchase memberships at all District's parks.

5. **Public Comments:** None.

6. **Presentations:**

(I) a. **Community Relations Plan – Mona Koh, Community Relations Manager**

Mona Koh, Community Relations Manager provided a presentation about the Community Relations Plan and Communications Plan for 2018. Koh explained there are three focus areas in the Community Relations Collective Impact Model:

- investment in the community and stakeholders,
- focus on public information, and
- upcoming events sponsored by the Park District and Regional Parks Foundation, such as community events and fairs.

An important component of the community and stakeholder investment is relationship building and engagement. One key focus is increasing local, diverse multicultural access to parks through regional, national and international stakeholders. It was a driving consideration in establishing the Multicultural Advisory Committee and international partnerships with Japan and Korea. Other engagement efforts include: civic and business stakeholders, parks prescription, parks and recreation stakeholders, and the Regional Parks Foundation.

Koh discussed the Stay Healthy in Nature Every Day and Parks Prescription programs. Over the last two years, the Latina Center in Richmond has served over 700 women, and at least 500 members have come to District parks. Other centers involved with the District include: the Contra Costa Health Care Center serving Martinez, Concord, Pittsburg, Antioch and Walnut Creek; the Latina Center in Richmond; UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in Oakland; Samuel Merritt University; Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center serving San Leandro, Hayward and Union City; a Migrant Program in Union City; National Alliance on Mental Illness serving Fremont and San Ramon; Kaiser Permanente; Washington Hospital in Fremont; Axis Community Health in Livermore.

Koh urged Park Advisory Committee members to engage in speaker bureaus and city councils to share what the goals, outcomes and projects the District has undertaken. She emphasized the District's work on SB 5, the park and water bond, and Measure CC extension. Other strategic messaging includes East County visibility, fire prevention, fuels management and climate adaptation strategies.

Koh touched on advertising, print, broadcast and the website. Koh stressed Regional in Nature (RIN), COMPASS, e-newsletters, website and social media, and the Leaf are all important tools. Koh explained events are also very important. In 2017, the District hosted about 84 events. Events showcase projects through dedications, classes on trail user etiquette for dogs and horses, Regional Parks Foundation Appreciation events, National Trails Day, the Children and Nature International Summit in Oakland, Drake's What's Brewing in the Parks events and job fairs.

Tsutsui commented UC Berkeley, has a new institute for parks, people and biodiversity that was launched a couple of months ago. The program director is the former director of the National Park Service, Jonathan B. Jarvis. They will partner with Outdoor Education programs at UC Berkeley. They are working toward getting students from K-12 and at the university level outside and viewing parks as educational classrooms in the wild.

Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.

(I) b. **Community Engagement Update – Carol Johnson, AGM Public Affairs, Bob Nisbet, AGM Acquisition, Stewardship and Development**

Carol Johnson, AGM Public Affairs, and Bob Nisbet, AGM Acquisition, Stewardship and Development presented on this item. Johnson explained community engagement is the what and how the Park District engages with other organizations. The goal is to structure the District's engagement, so the planners and other staff holding community meetings, are reaching out and engaging with the constituents who will be most impacted by the District's planning process. An interdivisional approach and process is being implemented because there has been no consistency within the various divisions. To provide consistency, and tighten the process, community engagement goals were developed; protocols and standards were identified so the agency will be unified; staff training has been implemented; a checklist toolkit has been developed.

Johnson explained community engagement goals include: transparency, inclusivity, early engagement and consistency. Protocols and standards should include location selections, date and time to best address the project's community engagement goals, brief Board representative(s) in advance, templates used for flyer invites with translations in Spanish and other languages as appropriate. Additional steps include working with Public Affairs for assistance with multicultural participation; preparation of branded handouts, presentations, comment cards and signage; check in with key District liaison committee contacts, local officials or key stakeholders to determine known controversies or possible threats to the planning process.

Bob Nisbet, AGM ASD stated ASD is responsible for many of the public meetings. ASD is responsible for preparing land use plans for all parks. Much thought and preparation is done in advance when developing a park, how it will be built, how it will be opened to the public, etc. Public meetings are the starting point for new or modified parks. ASD is also involved in the construction of parks or the building of large capital projects. Once a land use plan is created for a park, it is then implemented. The staging areas and trails are built, and habitat restoration projects are done. During many of these larger capital projects, ASD will take the opportunity to reach out to the public, and ask what kinds of things they want in a project, by meeting with various stakeholders, neighbors and certain park user types.

Nisbet touched on the importance of having agenda standards, a welcome opening message from an EBRPD District Board Member and an introduction of the project lead. The project lead will incorporate District background information, the mission and masterplan of the District, project history and project goals into the presentation. Nisbet demonstrated the importance of holding breakout groups, having room visuals, providing a summary of the feedback and project, and next steps. Nisbet said after the public meeting there are many ways to underscore the message

via uploading the meeting PowerPoint to the website, holding liaison committee meetings with other cities to discuss the project, Board committee updates, District communication using E-News, website, e-mail blasts to participants and political follow up when necessary. Nisbet stressed the importance of staff training and noted staff required to make presentations on behalf of EBPRD must attend the following training modules: Presentation Best Practices, Facilitation Skills and Communications, and Messaging. Nisbet stated the District will get different opinions during public meetings on land use plans with various stakeholders. It's good to have different opinions, have dialogs and come to collective agreement on the plan. It is only reached by the collaborative process, where the District is willing to engage with the community, get different viewpoints, and put them into a whole.

PAC members Robinson, Kern and Bueren commented the process is effective and the District is doing a good job with their community meetings.

Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.

- (R) c. **Dog Use Policy Report – Bruce Kern PAC member, Julie Bueren, PAC Chair**
PAC member Kern gave a brief history about the two-year process that culminated in the draft Dog Use Policy Report. Over a period of several months, testimony was taken from the four divisions that touch the issue of dogs in the parks: Operations, Public Safety, Public Affairs and Planning. Listening sessions were held with dog advocate groups, environmental groups, grazing tenants, District volunteers that work in the parks and District volunteer safety patrols. This input provided information which resulted in the release in November of the draft Dog Use in the Parks report. It has been reviewed by District staff as well as the Park Advisory Committee. Kern stated two workshops were held by the PAC, one in December in Alameda County and one in February in Contra Costa County. What resulted are the following recommendations.

Recommendations:

1. With the exception of active cattle grazing areas, the PAC is not recommending, at this time, changes to the District's existing off-leash dog policy.
2. The following trails are recommended to be monitored by the District and evaluated to identify additional management and operational changes including Ordinance 38 revision.
Mission Peak, McLaughlin Eastshore and Albany trails including San Francisco Bay Trail at Albany Bulb, Leona Canyon, and East and West Ridge trails in Redwood Park.
3. The District should adopt a regular trail monitoring program that reviews the impact of changing trail conditions resulting from increasing congestion, increasing citations and other conditions.
4. Amend Ordinance 38 Section 801.2 Exhibit C to add dogs must be on leash when cattle are in sight or if posted that cattle are in a particular area or park.
5. Community education and engagement is key to improve dog owner compliance.
6. Target dog use compliance enforcement at staging areas most frequently used by dog owners and commercial dog walkers.

7. Require park users who are cited in violation of Ordinance 38, to take a District sanctioned dog training class.
8. Place more dog disposal waste cans (200 to 300 feet from trail heads) on trails highly used by dog owners and commercial dog walkers.
9. Review and add signage at park trail heads for authorized grazing areas and post on District website “real time” information about where cattle are grazing to inform park users.
10. Review signage at all trail heads to ensure rules are clearly defined, including signs marking sensitive habitat areas.

Commercial Dog Walker Program

1. Require all persons seeking a professional dog walker permit to complete District sanctioned training that focuses on best practices for handling large groups of dogs, public safety and the protection of natural resources.
2. Update the dog walker permit fee structure and evaluate the “secondary permit” used by independent contractors.
3. Convene yearly meeting of professional dog walkers hosted by the District.
4. Evaluate the feasibility of dispersing trail use by increasing the permit fee for trails heavily used by professional dog walkers.
5. Develop brochure that outlines trail etiquette, Ordinance 38 and other requirements for professional dog walkers.
6. Encourage all permit holders to be ambassadors of the District including educating park users who may be uneasy around dogs, picking up trash and reporting violators of parkland use requirements.
7. Review commercial dog walker staging areas and make trail adjustments to minimize conflicts with other users.

Process for New areas to be Opened to the Public

1. Consider all new trails as multi-use and then consider why specific use groups should be excluded due to concerns for wildlife, natural and historic resources, appropriateness of terrain, and other potential conflicts.
2. New commercial dog walker trails should be designed as loop trails, located when possible on ridge lines away from creeks and sensitive habitat.

Community Engagement and Public Education

1. District sponsored training
Commercial dog walker training, voice and sight control dog owner training (pilot)

2. Community educational opportunities
Classroom, at park or on-line education on trail etiquette. Expand social media promoting dog handling tips.
3. Community engagement opportunities
Link dog owner groups websites to EBRPD for future events and education. Sponsor “adopt a trail” program for periodic cleanup of trash on trails.
4. Pilot a year study of new trail signage to educate users on trail etiquette.
5. Produce new informational brochures.
New dog brochure(s) in different languages. Notification of cattle grazing areas.
6. Review number and placement of garbage cans, locate 200’ to 300’ from trail heads on popular trails.
7. Opportunities for joint events with dog advocacy groups.

Suggested Framework for Action

1. Implementation is estimated to take 3-5 years and the recommendations will need to be considered within the framework of financial and resource constraints of the District.
2. Coordination among District staff will be essential and a working group should be established of the principal Divisions with a lead staff to support the effort and work with the community.
3. Community support and active participation of dog advocacy and environmental groups will be key to the success of the District’s effort to manage dog use in the parks.

PAC member Robinson stated Contra Costa County doesn’t have the same density of use as Alameda County parks. She speculated with the development occurring in the next 5-10 years, parks in East Contra Costa County might have a different usage. Robinson suggested an addition to the last page of the study to include, ‘monitor East County parks’ to see the change in usage. PAC member Skaredoff suggested signage be provided announcing the location of trash cans ahead. PAC member Gregory inquired about the extra costs that will be incurred. Chair Bueren explained the report is framed as a recommendation. Staff can determine if this is feasible or resources are available to implement.

Mary Barnsdale voiced she wished data was more emphasized. The report should underscore what is learned is through the reflection of data, not through opinions or antidotes. Barnsdale expressed interest how this will all work, specifically how the District will interface with dog walkers. She would like to be part of the working group. Diane Livoti, owner of Metro Dogs, thanked the Park District for their inclusivity of dogs. Commercial dog walkers are the District’s extension of eyes into the parks. They want to be constructive and see trail use programs are successful. She suggested signage which makes it clear groups of six dogs may be present. Currently, it is not clear to the public which trails are designated for commercial dog walkers.

Cameron Wu thanked the PAC members, District staff and stakeholders for their hard work and thoughtful consideration during the process. He pointed out the District's efforts of inclusivity, diversity, engaging the community, the focus on health and wellness, and the stewardship of the lands are all of major significance to the dog walker community who are practicing these good life activities. Claudia Kawczynska would like an update of the 2008 statistics of users in parks. She would like to see more data about the other stakeholders in the parks; the mountain bikers and equestrians and what incidents have been reported about their impact environmentally. Maribel Izquierdo, a professional dog walker, expressed interest in opening the Point Pinole loop trail to commercial dog walkers. Rochelle Mason, vice Mayor of Albany, spoke as a citizen. She asked that any reference to the Albany Bulb not be included in the report because it is not currently part of the Park District lands. Jan Taylor, a professional dog walker, commented the parks aren't safe to walk without her dog.

Recommendation: Motion made by PAC member Wilkins and PAC member Skaredoff seconded the motion to approve the Dog Use Policy report. The recommendation passed unanimously.

7. PAC Member Comments

Skaredoff shared a map that noted where interpretive panels are located at the Alhambra Creek Watershed.

Robinson reported she attended the Contra Costa Delta Atlas Agency Stakeholder meeting, put on by the District's future planning group. They are looking at what potential there is to expand parks in the Delta.

Gregory stated he watched kids from Camp Sweeney Mentoring Program having fun in the park.

PAC member Yee reported he is talking to staff at Washington Hospital and Valley Care in Pleasanton about the Park Prescription Program available through the District.

8. Report from Chair – No report.

9. Board Committee Reports – None.

10. Old Business – None.

11. New Business – None.

12. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the January 22, 2018 minutes.
2. The PAC approved the Dog Use Policy Report

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay, Confidential Secretary