

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 March 24, 2014

ATTENDING: Godfrey, Kern, Coffey, Vann, Mercurio, Bank, Palacios, Simmons, Coomber, Shalaby, Gregory, Best, Yee.
 NOTATTENDING: Kirby, Madsen, Volin, Pellegrini, DeMarcus, Beyaert.
 STAFF ATTENDING: Barial, Pfuehler, Scheer, Johnson, O'Connor, Ortiz.
 GUESTS: None.
 PUBLIC: None.

The meeting began at 7:05 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes: PAC member Godfrey moved and PAC member Vann seconded approval of the February 24, 2014 minutes with one correction. The motion passed unanimously. There were a few abstentions due to absence from the meeting.

2. Introductions: PAC Vice Chair Mercurio asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves. Jim O'Connor staffed this meeting due to Erich Pfuehler's attendance at the NRPA Legislative Forum in Washington, DC.

3. Public Comments: None.

4. Presentations:

a. Introduction of Cultural Services Coordinator – Jim O'Connor, AGM Operations

Jim O'Connor, AGM Operations gave a background as to the origins of this newly created position. There will be several tasks; namely to serve as the liaison to the Native American communities as well as the cultural and historic archives and resources of the District. O'Connor read a small part of her extensive biography. Ortiz will not only manage the oral history of the district at both staff and the parklands/field level, she will do an audit of our cultural sites, speak to staff in the field to discuss the parks' resources and whether they are being damaged or not and lastly she will educate O'Connor on laws policies and procedures related to the cultural resources. The expectation is to come up with a 5 to 10 year plan. PAC member Vann was impressed with Ortiz' credentials and asked if there was interest shown by the Native American community in the position? O'Connor replied that to his knowledge no one applied. PAC member Kern expressed his excitement on the appointment and commented on the tensions expressed by the Native American Community when they attended a PAC meeting and expressed their concerns. PAC member Simmons welcomes Ortiz and asked that she come back to the PAC in about 15 months and give us an update on progress. Bev Ortiz, Cultural Services Coordinator emphasized her passion in both historical areas and in areas that involve local tribal peoples. Ortiz started her career with agencies as an oral historian, has done work with Ohlone Bay Miwok peoples and has published on historical topics. Ortiz reiterated that she was passionate in all areas of this job and is honored and privileged to have been selected for this new position. PAC member Mercurio remarked on the great match and added that he has personal regional interest in this appointment because he lives in Concord and is concerned with the Naval Weapons station's resources. O'Connor added that this position will also be a part of a project team on Land Use Plans.

b. Statewide Drought Effects – Jim O’Connor, AGM Operations & Anne Scheer, Chief of Parks

Jim O’Connor, AGM Operations handed out the Key Messages of the EBRPD to the committee. O’Connor commented on the Governor’s drought declaration and what if any would be the impact of the summer at our more popular water parks. O’Connor gave a brief explanation of what the impact of no rain has been up to this point on Del Valle. Del Valle is an emergency water storage and because the salinity was so high in the Delta it was thought that it would exceed water quality standards and DWR might have to use Del Valle water for direct supplies to their customers. Del Valle is presently being filled and by mid-April it will be at capacity. DWR owns the water and runs the reservoir and they give us an allocation every year. This year the allocation is insufficient. The District is asking for an exemption for health and safety from DWR. We have since had 2 significant storms which have slightly improved the situation in the Delta. There is a follow up meeting on April 7th where we can predict the situation at Del Valle. In the meantime, a decision had to be made on reservations. We will cut off reservations after Sunday, June 8th – special use permits, group reservations and camping. We have developed a contingency plan if the water is going to be used and slowly close down various aspects of Del Valle. Scheer has asked staff to follow the governor’s recommendation and reduce water usage by 20% which will result in significant browning of turf areas this summer. If there are mandatory reductions in communities our parks will most likely be the only place to go, so the District going to try to keep the park open as long as possible. Anne Scheer, Chief of Parks, commented on some of the questions that she has gotten from the public on why District lawns are so green. Scheer said that staff has been instructed to cut back mandatory 20% and are working to tweak the irrigation systems. Some parks aren’t on a watering system; i.e. Contra Loma and Garin and years ago we changed out our toilets to low flow and waterless urinals. Scheer commented that the golf courses have also cut back on water. O’Connor commented that because we weren’t getting any grass and soft water resources a lot our small grazers were pulling their cattle for health reasons, some taking their cows to market with the possibility of bringing cattle back in the summer. Fire and species control then become areas of concern. PAC member Kern added that Oakland did not pass the increase for fuels management which could have implications. PAC member Vann asked if we are including signage notification to the public stating that the District is engaged in drought management. AGM Johnson said that there is a sign program on the way which will have a lot of these messages. Vann commented that Oakland already has signage in some of their parks. PAC member Palacios asked if the park district uses recycled water and added that EBMUD has a recycled water program. Scheer added that in some of our older parks, getting recycled water would require a redo of all of their pipes; however the District should still look at the possibility. PAC member Godfrey commented on the uncertainty in the amount of rain with the largest consumption area being lawn and turf. Scheer continued that in planning new parks we now look at the footprint of turf. PAC member Coomber asked if DWR is required to keep a minimum flow through the Arroyo del Valle. O’Connor said that in December the

thinking was no and after the meeting we will know more. PAC member Simmons stated that we live in a Mediterranean environment and have no business putting grass out there. It is essential that we have ½ acre of grass. I encourage the District to take the lead as the environmental organization to develop and install the type of landscape material that involves in this environment. Palacios asked about possibly incorporating recycled water at Oyster Bay. Scheer said she would get that information for that park and recycled water. O'Connor said that he will report back after the April 7th meeting.

c. Regional Parks Foundation Updates – Carol Johnson AGM Public Affairs
AGM Johnson began her powerpoint of the Regional Park Foundation's (Foundation) Strategic Planning and Mission-Driven Fundraising Model presentation. The Foundation raises and spends funds on membership, environmental conservation, campership, legacy and special projects. The membership program has 7,605 new members with an 83% renewal rate; there are new benefits like free passes for fishing, providing free access during select months and a new publication for members and donors called *Compass Magazine*. Environmental Conservation provides funding support and partners with other corporations to help restore fragile wildlife habitats and conserve open space. The Foundation provides campership scholarship support for under-resourced kids. Legacy is about how can our donors leave gifts and keep our parks in good shape. She touched on estate planning workshops. Special projects are those that are not included in the District's budget; i.e. installation of the fitness zone at Lake Chabot and supplying tents, sleeping bags, etc. to the recreation department. The Trails challenge is managed by the Foundation with 7,010 participating in 2013. Johnson highlighted a few of the exceptional board members of the Foundation. In 2014 we are celebrating the Districts and the Foundation's anniversary. PAC member Shalaby asked if we know what are the numbers for brand new members and Johnson replied not yet. Shalaby commented on one of the barriers to fishing is that people don't know what they need to have to fish and have we considered a fisherman-in-the-box program. Johnson thought this is a great idea and will look into it. Shalaby asked if the Foundation was still doing the memorial benches and trails program. Johnson said now it goes through Operations. PAC member Godfrey commented that bringing corporations in is a powerful direction in HPHP. Johnson highlighted Children's Hospital Claremont Avenue clinic has a resource desk that when patients check out of the clinic they will check into the resource desk. The Foundation will provide transportation to take them to various locations and will pay for the bus, provide the materials for kids and show parents how to get to the parks through public transportation. We are calling it parks prescriptions. The clinic is also renaming all of their clinic offices after our parks. PAC member Simmons asked where is the \$100,000 being spent at Redwood Park. Staff oriented him to the location. Vann asked if the Foundation takes advantage of the donate your car campaign. Johnson said we get about \$30,000 a year from the cars. PAC member Gregory underscored the corporate outreach as a growing phenomenon adding that more companies are creating wellness programs. PAC member Mercurio liked the wellness aspects of corporate involvement. O'Connor responded to Shalaby that we have 1292 new memberships.

d. PAC Member Comments – PAC member Simmons relayed a story regarding his friends who began cleaning up trash along EBRPD trails. Johnson asked for their names so that they can be acknowledged. PG&E has proposed a Pipeline Pathway Project

(PPP). They want 10 ft. clearance along each side of the center line. Simmons gave a brief history about this project. Last Friday 17 cities of Alameda and Contra Costa County met to decide how they were going to respond. Simmons bought the chart for the PAC challenge where the wine labeled Odyssey, will be the prize. Shalaby shared his concerns for this PPP as it impacts his agency regarding their sewage lines. PAC member Gregory would like to have an update on the Crab Cove legal battle and on Albany at some future meeting. Gregory joined a delegation that went to the NRPA in Washington, DC and met about money for planning; working with ACTC and will ask for funding moving south. AGM Johnson added that the District will be dedicating two transportation corridors this year. PAC member Kern announced the next Plan Bay Area Subcommittee meeting April 28 at 6:15 pm in the Board Conference Room. He handed out a summary of the last meeting. He wants to bring it back as an action item. Kern attended the Finance Committee meeting and was impressed with the controls and the transparency of its financials. Vann mentioned requesting an update on Oakland Strokes. This item is agendaized for the April meeting.

6. **Report from the Vice – Chair** - Mercurio mentioned the California Trails and Greenways Conference in Palm Springs that he will be attending.
7. **Board Committee Reports** – Bank attended and gave an update on the board Operations meeting and Natural Cultural Resources committee meetings.
8. **Status of Recommendations** – Updated.
9. **Old Business** – None.
10. **New Business** – None.
11. **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The February 24, 2014 meeting minutes were approved.
2. The next PAC meeting is April 28, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,
Yolande Barial, PAC Secretary