

AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

5. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

c. Operations (Thursday, July 16, 2015) _____ (Sutter)

Present

Board: Directors John Sutter (Chair), Diane Burgis, Doug Siden

Staff: Jim O'Connor, Mimi Waluch, Mark Ragatz, Dania Stoneham, James Frank,
Sharol Nelson-Embry, Ira Bletz, Erich Pfoehler, Denise Valentine

Guests: John Maunder, Michael Maunder

I. Update UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland Collaboration with monthly Healthy Parks Healthy People Programs: Crab Cove Visitor Center

Supervising Naturalist Sharol Nelson-Embry presented an update on the Crab Cove Visitor Center collaboration with UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland (CHO) on the monthly "Parks Prescriptions" Healthy Parks Healthy People programs. Parks Prescriptions comes from the Children in Nature movement, where it was discovered children are not getting much outdoor time. As a result, some physicians are prescribing outdoor time to their patients. At CHO, transportation and program information is provided to assist in connecting the patients with community resources. The information is located at the Family Information Navigation Desk and Family Information Nature Desk (FIND). Several programs are available at Crab Cove, including the Fish Feeding, exploration of the mud flaps, and free play time at the park. Due to the success of the program, it was decided to schedule trips to four different parks.

Naturalist Morgan Dill shared her role in the Crab Cove programs and interactions with the patients and adults. She indicated there was hesitation at first by the adults to explore other parks, but after encountering the parents more than once, some were willing to participate in other trips she led at other parks. Ms. Dill conveyed that the purpose of the program is to build life-long park users.

Director Siden inquired if the general public is allowed to intermingle with the patients on the trips. Ms. Dill replied yes, that the program is advertising in the Regional In Nature guide. He expressed his concern in reference to supervision and having the public interact with the patients. Ms. Nelson-Embry clarified that the families attend the trips with the patients and provide the supervision needed. The District's role is to provide the programs as part of their experience.

Ms. Dill indicated that Redwood and Lake Chabot are next on the trip list. Ms. Nelson-Embry shared some of the quotes provided by the park users about their trip experiences. She stated we've had approximately 200 participants to date, with positive feedback. CHO is now interested in partnering with Public Affairs and Operations to conduct a more scientific study on health benefits.

Director Siden inquired if funding is provided by the Regional Parks Foundation. Ms. Nelson-Embry replied yes, it is being provided by a grant from the foundation.

Director Sutter inquired if all the kids who attend are patients with prescriptions. Ms. Nelson-Embry indicated that the program is open to anyone who signs up at the hospital. Director Sutter inquired on the number of participants. AGM O'Connor stated at this time we do not have those statistics, but we can request and provide that information.

2. Update *Fish Friends Program: Mobile Education & Outreach*

AGM O'Connor recalled when he arrived at the District, he was surprised by the idea of a giant fish tank on wheels. He shared his amazement on the interaction of park users with the tank.

Supervising Naturalist James Frank provided a PowerPoint presentation and short film on the Fish Friends Program. As the fish tank does not provide a hands on interpretative experience, he found that litter is one thing that does affect the aquatic environment that we have access too. This discovery led to the Fish Friends Program. The Fish Friends Pledge was then created. Kids take the pledge to pick up litter and put it in the proper place. The kids sign the pledge with their thumbprint, which represents a scale that protects fish; and the school posts the poster in the school hallway. Students are invited to send letters on what they've learned. Staff responds to all letters received which is approximately 100 letters per year.

Schools throughout the District are visited and provided an opportunity to join the Fish Friends Program. Eighty percent of the students served are fish friends. Mobile Services serve 19 percent of students served by the entire District. Ms. Frank closed by providing the next steps of the program and initiating those in attendance into the Fish Friends program.

Director Burgis indicated the San Francisco Regional Board is discussing the topic of how to reduce trash. The Board is thinking of how to get the message to the classroom and believes Mr. Frank should attend a meeting to provide information presented today. She inquired on the cost to visit each school. Mr. Frank replied currently there are two full time employees and a \$15,000 services/supplies budget for 24 fish exhibit visits along with other programs. Director Burgis commented the budget should be increased.

Director Sutter inquired if there could be anything done to allow kids to have touch experiences. Mr. Frank shared that after an introduction is completed, the program provides the opportunity to touch a rubber fish that simulated effects that represent the feeling of a live fish.

Director Siden recounted from the presentation that the current goal is to obtain funding for the program. He inquired on where the funding is being sought. Mr. Frank replied the Regional Parks Foundation. Funding would provide transportation and materials to pick up litter at schools.

Director Burgis inquired on the reason kids above 5th grade are not included. Mr. Frank replied it is due to the difficulty of coordination of the program. Those students below 6th grade are in the same class all day with one teacher compared to higher grades switching classes through the day.

3. Update Status of Reservoirs: Don Castro and Cull Canyon Regional Recreation Areas

Unit Manager Dania Stoneham provided a detailed update through a PowerPoint presentation on the history of the reservoirs. She indicated the land is leased for recreational purposes at both lakes. She recalled in 1961 the District entered into a 25-year lease with a 25-year renewal option for the purposes of the Davis Renske Act. Alameda County Flood Control (ACFC) and the District share responsibilities of maintenance through the Act. One responsibility for ACFC was to periodically dredge the lakes. The lakes have been dredged two times to full capacity.

Ms. Stoneham displayed photos of the lakes current levels, discussed the small dredging pilot program conducted in 2000; and spoke on the conditions of the trail systems. She explained there were maintenance issues at Cull Canyon in the picnic areas. In 1996, trails that went by the lake and picnic areas are now under silt. Maintenance issues presented a challenge in re-negotiating the lease. In the current lease agreement the overall concern is what is the ultimate goal of ACFC with the lakes. Ms. Stoneham presented the future options for the two lakes and stated the new maintenance agreement will be completely re-written. The existing lease was written under the Davis Renske ACT, and is now expired. Director Burgis inquired how often the lakes need to be dredged. Ms. Stoneham replied it depends on what rain flow is being received.

Director Sutter inquired if we do receive a lot of rain this winter, will there be flooding. Ms. Stoneham replied we should not see any flooding. Director Sutter inquired to what extent do we allow the public access into the water. Ms. Stoneham replied there is no access allowed. Director Sutter asked what is the ideal goal. Ms. Stoneham replied to make it safe and educate the public on why the transformation is be completed from a lake to a natural stream. In regards to maintenance, we want to ensure if a stream is engineered, it would constructed where more silt could be put in.

Director Siden requested a summary of the lease agreement and a list of responsibilities of the District and ACFC. He also complimented the upgrade of Cull Canyon for recreational type uses.

AGM O'Connor indicated the current 5-year extension on the lease will allow us to view different scenarios and look at other funding sources.

4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

5. AGM Comments

AGM O'Connor provided updates on the following:

- Blue/Green Algae - Temescal and Quarry Lakes remain closed. The report received this week indicates the levels are still too high to reopen at this time.
- Lake Chabot – An apparent suicide occurred over the weekend and the search has now been suspended with no results.
- Elworthy Dedication – The event went well and is now open.

- City of Fremont – Staff is working on a potential permit parking program with City staff.

6. Board Comments

Director Sutter commented he understands we should be receiving a report on costs to mediate the gun range; and will have hearings on how to proceed. He indicated it would generate conversation and visitors on the subject. He recalled when the topic was brought before the Board to review, one idea was that this Committee not make a recommendation and instead forward it to the Park Advisory Committee (PAC) then to the full Board. The reasoning was due to the same public comments being made at this Committee and at Board meeting. The Board guidelines state the recommendations are to be made by the Committee, the PAC if appropriate, and the full Board. If the procedure of the Committee not making a recommendation is followed, it would deviate from the set Board guidelines. The Board did not pass a resolution to proceed this way, however, at a prior Committee meeting it was discussed we were not going to dominate the calendar with comments on the topic. Director Sutter indicated that the normal guidelines should be followed in this process and welcomes any comments on the topic.

Director Burgis commented the goal is to complete this in a process that is transparent. We do not need redundancy, if necessary. We need to follow the procedures to process the item, which provides everyone the opportunity to speak.

Director Sutter stated we are concurring to follow the usual procedure stated in the Board guidelines.

AGM O'Connor commented he views this as an opportunity to bring the draft staff report before the Committee and provides us a chance to receive input before presenting to the full Board. It is a benefit to the staff to receive that input from the Committee before proceeding to the PAC.

Director Sutter indicated due to potential speakers at the meeting, we should consider the scheduling times and number of items on the agenda.

Director Siden inquired on the timetable on submission of the reports and decisions. AGM O'Connor replied the intention is to come before this Committee in September. This will include all reports and background information requested.

Director Siden inquired when the recommendation would be brought before the Committee on the Camping Study. AGM O'Connor replied at the August meeting.

Director Sutter commented that no other topics should be included on the agenda with the gun club. The reasoning is that we have experienced other issues that draw large numbers of people to the meeting and his belief is that the gun range falls into that category.

Meeting adjourned at 2:16 p.m.