

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 10-25-10

ATTENDING: Bank, Mercurio, Madison, Soderstrom, Johnson, Williams, Kirby, Vann, Madsen, Shalaby, Godfrey, Simmons, Pelligrini, Vann, Volin, Walkling, Beyaert
 NOT ATTENDING: Southworth, Weiss, Hudson, Coomber
 STAFF ATTENDING: Barial, Pfoehler, Wilson
 GUESTS: Ayn Wieskamp
 PUBLIC: None.

The meeting began at 7:03 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The September 27, 2010 meeting minutes were approved with a minor edit.

1. **PAC member Volin** moved and **PAC member Simmons** seconded approval of the minutes. There were two abstentions.

2. **Introductions:** **Chair Glenn Kirby** asked PAC Members and District staff to introduce themselves.

3. **Board Member Comments:** **Director Ayn Wieskamp** discussed the \$10.2 million TIGER II grant the District received for its Green Transportation Initiative. She recognized the work put into the grant application by **General Manager Pat O'Brien** and **Legislative Affairs Manager Erich Pfoehler**. She mentioned she would be attending the Fremont City Council meeting to discuss the Patterson Ranch project. And she added that she is unopposed in her re-election which saves the District a significant amount of money.

In response to the Green Transportation discussion, **Chair Kirby** mentioned a letter writing campaign which calls on AAA to support non-highway funding as part of the national transportation bill. AAA has been working to remove non-highway funding and is now getting inundated with letters from bikers and hikers. **Kirby** said that more information, including draft letters, can be found at rtc.org. **PAC member Mercurio** added he supports this letter writing campaign.

PAC member Beyaert asked if the District would be hiring contactors to meet the ambitious schedule for the Green Transportation Initiative. **Director Wieskamp** commented that many of the projects are already underway. **PAC member Volin** mentioned the trail system is one of the most innovative, forward thinking projects the District has undertaken. **Director Wieskamp** added it is incredible. **PAC member Mercurio** suggested the District make a Green Transportation presentation at the Trails and Greenways Conference which is to be held in San Ramon next year. **PAC member Walkling** asked why the Richmond Parkway overpass was not included in the list of Green Transportation projects. **Pfoehler** responded the criteria of the grant application required projects to demonstrate a pretty clear connection to a transportation hub or corridor. He also suggested speaking with **Trails Manager Jim Townsend** if PAC members would like further clarification.

4. **Public Comments:** None.

5. **Presentations:**

a. **Camping Program Task Force Report – Jeff Wilson, Chief of Park Operations**
Wilson stated he will be discussing the camping program and not an actual task force report. One of the challenges the District has is to find good sites for backpack camping. Finding flat, remote locations is difficult. **Wilson** mentioned some projects were completed in 2010 and suggested the camping task force may again be activated in 2011 to see if new locations can be determined.

PAC member Beyaert asked if the District kept data on occupancy rates and types of uses. **Wilson** expounded that family camping areas created in the 60's and 70's are booked solid at Anthony Chabot and Del Valle, but there has been a demographic shift in how people camp. There are now more motor homes and not as many car campers. He added that Camp Arroyo has been a great success. He also referenced the District's application for an ACOE permit.

PAC member Vann asked for a clarification of ACOE. PAC member Beyaert said it is an Army Corps of Engineers permit. Wilson added the permit allows the District to conduct routine wild-land maintenance in remote areas. Vann also inquired about funding for showers at Del Valle. Wieskamp added woodpecker holes and subsequent acorn infestations are a real maintenance challenge for wood camping structures. Wilson mentioned the new restroom will be concrete. Kirby asked about the possibility of camping opportunities along a new stretch of the ridge trail near Five Canyons and Stonebrae. Wilson said the area would be considered by the camping task force and in the Land Use Plan (LUP). Kirby speculated if the LUP didn't allow for camping, the PAC could consider recommending an amendment to the LUP. PAC member Mercurio asked about the need for a bridge at Round Valley. Wilson answered the ACOE permitting process does not like board crossings or culverts, but they will approve bridges if they are not in the stream bank. PAC member Soderstrom referenced the demographic changes suggested by Wilson and wondered if people might just be tired of the District's existing campgrounds and going elsewhere. Wilson responded the District doesn't have specific data, but there is a surge in group and family camping requests. PAC member Volin added young people from other countries are using District camps. Wilson concurred that in the summer months District parks see an increase in foreign tourists using campsites. Beyaert wondered if giant motor homes would diminish the camping experience for others. Director Wieskamp added the Doolan Canyon purchase may afford a campsite opportunity and would make a great field trip for the PAC.

6. PAC Member Comments :

PAC member Walkling acknowledged the California Appellate Court recently ruled in favor of the District in the Breuner Marsh acquisition. He wanted to acknowledge Bob Doyle, AGM – Land Division and Nancy Wenninger, Land Acquisition Manager for their hard work.

PAC member Simmons obtained information about the distribution of the local match portion of Measure WW from the District's grants department. He was able to distribute the information to the Contra Costa Mayors Conference. Chair Kirby noted some eligible jurisdictions haven't yet applied.

PAC member Beyaert discussed the re-opening of the Richmond Natatorium Plunge. The renovation is creating a resurgence of swimming and the Richmond Swims organization held its first open water race. The District lifeguards were important in making this a success. The back wall of the natatorium is a mural of the Miller Knox Lagoon area.

PAC member Soderstrom discussed the helicopter ride along in which he participated. He believes the air crew is a valuable part of the District.

PAC member Mercurio commented the Concord plan to redevelop the Naval Weapons Station is being renamed the Los Medanos Area Plan. The District is working to develop a 2,300 acre regional park on about half of the property. The property is currently owned by the Army who recently allowed the District more access. PAC member Simmons asked if the PAC could tour the property. Kirby agreed this was a good idea and would suggest it to staff.

7. Report from the Chair - PAC Chair Kirby attended the John Waters room dedication at Black Diamond Mines and acknowledged PAC member Volin attended as well. Kirby continued by discussing the PAC's goals for 2011. He will be making a presentation to the Board's Executive Committee on November 23rd and would like input from PAC members.

Beyaert asked if "trails" could be included in goal number 10 "Healthy Parks – Healthy People." Kirby explained this was an initiative the General Manager learned about in Australia at Parks Victoria, so it may already be "branded." Simmons asked if the committee ever looked at the amount of land banked property the District has and how those parcels could be more actively used. Kirby said it is a Board driven process, but is a question the PAC could raise. He added PAC members could also ask questions about land banked property of Doyle who will be attending the next PAC meeting. Mercurio, Soderstrom and Vann had comments and suggestions on particular goals.

PAC member Vann made a motion and PAC member Volin seconded that ongoing goal number two read: "Make periodic park field trips to coincide with PAC review of planning documents or other purposes." The motion passed unanimously. Wilson added he would be available to lead tours requested by the PAC.

PAC member Beyaert motioned and PAC member Simmons seconded that the PAC take a look at the process for land banked properties, review the trails program every year and include "trails" in the healthy parks – healthy people initiative. The motion was unanimously approved.

PAC member Soderstrom wondered if the PAC needed to further modify the field trip goal. Kirby responded the goal probably didn't need to be modified further. Kirby also expressed sensitivity to staff time in arranging the tours and mentioned that some PAC field trips have been sparsely attended. Vann suggested this topic was discussed in the previous motion. Beyaert commented PAC members can also tour the parks on their own.

Kirby announced the PAC's holiday dinner will be the first Monday in December at Scotts in Walnut Creek. Simmons added the new Walnut Creek Library is in walking distance of Scotts. He welcomed committee members to come early and take a look at it.

8. Board Committee Reports – Kirby added the PAC Executive Committee has already reported about the goals discussion. PAC member Bank read her operations committee attendance notes.

9. Status of Recommendations – Current.

10. Old Business – There is no announcements on the General Manager position.

11. New Business – None.

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The September 27, 2010 meeting minutes were unanimously approved with one edit.
2. The next meeting is scheduled for November 29, 2010.
3. PAC Holiday Dinner is scheduled for December 6th at the Scotts in Walnut Creek.

Respectfully submitted,
Yolande Barial, PAC Secretary

Vann – item 3 – unopposed in her re-election that saves the district money. Dave explained.
Comment – inappropriate to list them as guests more like board liaisons – Glenn we have scheduled meetings and board members sign up.