

**Approved Meeting Minutes**  
**PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
 September 26, 2016

ATTENDING: Kern, Best, Bueren, Coffey, Coomber, Godfrey, Gregory, Ho, Mercurio, Palacios, Rickard, Sanwong, Texeira, Thompson, Wilkins, Yee  
 NOT ATTENDING: Beyaert, Madsen, Simmons, Robinson, Volin  
 STAFF ATTENDING: O'Connor, Holt, Dougan, Kassebaum, Koh, Pfuehler, Clay  
 GUESTS: None.

PUBLIC: Morgan Fletcher, Mike Udkow, Amy Arth, John Roberts, Jim Arth, Audrey Taylor Jones, Lauren Haughey, Dylan Gong, Tom Gandesbery

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

1. **Approval of June 27 and July 25, 2016 Minutes:** A motion was made by PAC Member Best and seconded by Vice Chair Mercurio to approve the June 27 meeting minutes with edits. The motion passed. A second motion was made by PAC Member Palacios and seconded by PAC Member Rickard to approve the July 25 minutes. The motion passed.

2. **Introductions:** PAC Chair Kern asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.

3. **Board Member Comments:** None.

4. **Public Comments:**

Mike Yudcow, President of the Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay (BTCEB), gave an overview about his organization. On behalf of BTCEB, he asked the District to build more single-track trails for mountain bicycles. Amy Arth thanked the District for the trails at Crockett Hills. Arth suggested BTCEB meet with District staff to discuss trail maintenance and development. John Roberts commented more children are riding bikes and park users with sports injuries are turning to bicycles for their exercise. Roberts announced he is a candidate for Ward 2. If elected to the District Board, he would be a voice for mountain bikers. Tom Gandesbery talked about his work at Huckleberry Park and trails development. He suggested staff tour other bike trial networks. Morgan Fletcher stated he is part of the Oakland Composite. Oakland Composite teaches school age children mountain biking, bike etiquette and safety. Fletcher would like to see more narrow trails created for bicycles to reduce conflict on mixed use trails.

5. **Presentations:**

(I) **a. Mountain Bike Use – Jim O'Connor, Assistant General Manager (AGM) Operations; Sean Dougan, Trails Development Programs Manager**

Jim O'Connor, AGM Operations gave a balanced view about the challenges of managing mountain biking as an activity in Regional Parks, as well as some of the progress that has been made.

Sean Dougan, Trails Development Programs Manager gave a brief overview about the trails in the District. Currently, there are a total of 1,250 miles of trails. The majority of the trails – 812.5 miles (65%) – are unpaved roads. There are 137.5 of paved roads and trails in the District. Of the remaining 200 plus miles, 156 miles do not allow mountain bikes or bike access.

O'Connor discussed bicycle trails in Briones. In 2014, the District hired an intern, Daniel La Flash, to find and GPS all the bootleg trails in Briones. La Flash found 22 miles of illegal trails which he documented. One illegal trail found at Briones was the "Hank and Frank" trail. Unauthorized gap jumps had been built and trees were cut down. The District is working on ways to deal with illegal trails with a mix of enforcement, restoration and closures. Efforts made by the District include outreach to local bike shops and International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) to get the word out that "Hank and Frank" was not a legal trail. The District also conducted four days of enforcement, 70 riders were approached and five riders were cited for illegal use. Costs to enforce for four days were: patrol \$9,131.36, closure \$941.76, sign production, \$411.00 and administration \$1,010.96. Total cost for enforcement was \$11,495.08. O'Connor stated this year \$28,000 has been added to the Operations budget to restore the "Hank and Frank" into a safe, legal trail.

Dougan indicated the District built 15 miles of single-track (narrow natural surface) trails in 2015 in Crockett Hills, making it a very popular park for mountain bikers. The cost to build the trail was approximately \$50,000. O'Connor and Dougan discussed the trail's attributes: grade reversals to get gain momentum and control speed, great sight lines in a grassland area, banked and climbing turns, etc. O'Connor said the ride is great from either end of the trail, etc. PAC Member Coomber asked if it was open just to bicycles. Dougan responded it is a multi-use trail and added future single track trails will also be designated multi-use.

Dougan explained another impediment for mountain bikers are gates. The District recently received a grant from REI to purchase three roll-over gates. Roll-over gates allow cyclists to pass over and through a gate without having to dismount. The gates also prevent cattle from crossing.

Dougan stated biking loop brochures are being developed. Dougan and his team went out to identify trails legal for biking, and talked to local biking groups for location suggestions.

Dougan discussed the renovation work being done at Oyster Bay. The proposed Land Use Plan (LUP) includes a 13-acre bicycle skills area. A feasibility study will be done by the end of this year, followed by a grading plan in the spring. A kid's track, skills park, pump track and a jump park are all being considered. O'Connor said the District is still researching how to maintain and run this type of park. It could be a combination of food and bike repair concessionaire agreements. PAC Member Sanwong mentioned the City of Pleasanton has a BMX bike area near Shadow Cliffs. She commented she didn't think there were designated staff maintaining the bike area.

PAC Member Thompson asked if there is a formal process to engage with the bicycle community. O'Connor replied there is not yet a formal process. Dougan said for parks, like Oyster Bay, there is a formal engagement process when the LUP is developed. Dougan stated there will be a public meeting in spring, which will include discussion of the bicycle skills area.

Kern asked about the legalities involved with bootleg trails. O'Connor replied they can be taken care of by individual court cases. O'Connor stressed when illegal jumps or trails are found, staff removes them as soon as they can.

Dougan commented East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) is updating their East Bay Watershed Master Plan. They are considering a pilot program to open up about ten miles of four segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail for bicyclists to use on a permit basis. The District manages some of the trails for EBMUD, and some of the District trails that lead to these segments do not allow bikes. If EBMUD approves the pilot program, the District will have work to do.

PAC Member Mercurio asked about erosion issues with single track trails. O'Connor replied appropriate water drainage and proper maintenance make a difference. Mercurio asked how much thought is put into trail maintenance. O'Connor stated trails with heavy bike use aren't good for hikers. That's why the District is looking at policy changes to make some trails for single uses, i.e. equestrian only, bike only, etc.

PAC Member Gregory inquired if the District keeps records of bicycle accidents. Staff replied many accidents aren't reported. Coomber asked how wide the bike trails are. Dougan responded 5 feet wide, but sometimes less because of vegetation.

PAC Member Yee inquired about education for trail users. He announced he patrols Mission Peak by bike. O'Connor said there is great program called *Ring Out Call Out* being used on the Iron Horse Trail.

O'Connor stated one of the biggest challenges in implementing the Master Plan is receiving permits from the regulatory agencies. The trail system is currently being evaluated in each park. Some existing trails are being converted to bicycle trails.

**(I) b. Community Outreach – Anne Kassebaum, Chief of Interpretive and Recreation**

Anne Kassebaum, Chief of Interpretive and Recreation reported 84 programs have been planned by Community Outreach which will serve over 200 participants. 67% of the programs have provided transportation through Parks Express. For 13%, participants were able to get themselves to the parks. For another 20%, programs were held at non-District facilities. Transportation is funded through the District's General Fund and also with support from the Regional Parks Foundation. The budget for these 84 programs is between \$ 27,000 and \$30,000.

Groups served are community groups, people with disabilities, families, senior groups and youth groups. Senior groups served are from Antioch, Newark, Albany and the East Bay Asian Development Senior Centers. Interpretive and Recreation also works with a variety of libraries, Crest Park Multicultural Center based in Richmond and Redefining Educational Services (RES) based in Pleasant Hill. Program providers are the Interpretive Services and Outdoor Recreation staff. Kassebaum explained the Interpretive and Recreation Department initiated subcommittees to work on a variety of topics: technology, training for staff, environmental education programs and community engagement. The community engagement committee worked on a universal application. Interpretive and Recreation created a space on the website to find programs being offered, how a bus can be booked and the best way to be in contact. Interpretive and Recreation would like to use the same format for programs, volunteering and Parks Express bus transportation. An initiative was created: Outreach seeks to *Engage, Educate* staff and participants; *Equip* partners and participants with the buses, reservations and resources needed for safe trips; and ultimately *Empower* partners and families to enjoy the regional parks on their own.

One of the initiatives focused on having ongoing, repeated experiences. A two-year partnership program was developed which provides participants three environmental education programs a year, one recreation program a year, transportation and a consistent District program leader. Some of the organizations the District works with are: the Livermore American Indian Center, Alameda Point Collaborative, Antioch Senior Center, Pinole Grove Senior Housing, Project Pride, Shepherd's Gate and Union City's Kid Zone.

One of the programs the District piloted this year is *Adventure Crew*. It is a leadership development program for at risk youth ages 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The District is partnering with Nature to Neighborhoods. The program's goal is to introduce the regional parks and natural resources to at-risk youth through interpretive and recreation opportunities. This is a new pilot program and Richmond is the first city participating. They will have two monthly field trips, boating, hiking, camping, backpacking, fishing, wilderness skills, land/navigation skills, survival skills, GPS, equestrian, archery, rock climbing and service learning. The District is also working with San Jose State on doing a literature review for this program. The District wants to begin to track the health and wellness of the youth and the experiences they are having. Specifically, to understand the impacts from being outside, if they are making healthier choices and if they begin feeling more comfortable in the outdoors. The plan is for it to be a four-year program and a budget request has been submitted for 2017.

Kassebaum discussed the Stay Healthy in Nature Everyday (SHINE) program. Kassebaum commented Interpretive and Recreation is partnering Public Affairs and the Regional Parks Foundation. This is a partnership with Children's Hospital. Children and families meet the first Saturday of the month at the hospital, Parks Express picks them up and brings them to the parks. The program is in its third year. Studies are being done to monitor the health benefit to patients participating in this program.

Interpretive and Recreation is using interns to conduct a community needs assessment, focusing on visitor center sectors. An assessment was done at Big Break (Delta Sector) looking at the needs, identifying organizations within that sector – schools, churches, day care, etc. – and asking questions about the various organizations and what the participants would like to see. This data will be used to develop programs, events and opportunities for audiences.

In 2015, Interpretive and Recreation developed a District Youth Job Fair. Human Resources showed participants how to find and fill out Park District employment applications. A variety of District staff provided participants with insight into jobs/careers available at the District. Rangers, interns, recreation leaders, interpretive student aides discussed their jobs. It is a great way to market the District.

Kern asked about the Community Engagement Plan prepared by San Francisco State. Specifically, how well the District is progressing on the plan. Kassebaum replied Interpretive and Recreation formed a taskforce to review the information in the Community Engagement Plan and are working on providing an update. The District is putting the ideas into practice, doing the community needs assessment, looking at the barriers beyond transportation. Issues such as community engagement, job fairs and youth employment. Kern asked about the culture of District employees in accepting the plan. He wondered if different perspectives are being brought into the organization. Kassebaum replied Dereca Blackman, Associate Dean and Director of the Diversity and First-Gen Office at Stanford, has provided trainings for Interpretive and Recreation to better work with diverse audiences. The District has been working to train staff to develop cultural sensitivity. Mona Koh, Community Relations Manager, replied the District's Human Resources department has also retained Equity Partners to train internal staff.

- (I) **c. Advance Planning and Concord Hills Update – Brian Holt, Principal Planner**  
Brian Holt, Principal Planner provided an overview about the Advance Planning unit of the Planning/GIS Department. Advance Planning was created through the reorganization and merging of the Land and Planning, Stewardship and Design Divisions. Advance Planning is responsible for

engaging in interagency planning processes, regional policy development, and development review across the two counties, 33 cities, and numerous special districts and regional agencies which govern planning and land use in the East Bay. Advance Planning is guided by one of the main vision points in the Master Plan: Working to provide leadership to guide land use decisions in the East Bay that relate to the District.

Holt explained Advance Planning works closely with the development community to try and identify mutual opportunities and protect the District's interest. Holt stated one of Advance Planning's main activities SAGE (Strategic Actions of Governmental Entities) is a weekly process wherein Advance Planning looks through agendas for all city councils in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties: including planning commissions and special districts. Advance Planning looks for items of interest to the District which might impact trails and/or open space. They also look for opportunities to protect or acquire land, and to coordinate and partner with other agencies. Advance Planning relies on the PAC, stakeholders in the community, to be the District's eyes and ears. Holt indicated this work often results in projects completed by others – getting park infrastructure built by private developers. One example is the Dublin staging area which was built by the developer of the Schaefer Ranch project. Working with developers helps facilitate the environmental review and permitting processes. It can be hard for the District to get a small stretch of trail or staging area if that's the whole project. If, however, there is a thousand unit housing development with a small staging area identified within the project, it makes it easier for the District's part of the project to move forward.

Holt said Advance Planning looks at the subject area, looks at District lands, looks at what is approved development, where's the most critical habitat, what are the regional trail connections the District would like to see, and if there is opportunity for the development to build the District some staging areas. Holt explained Advance Planning also works closely with the Greenbelt Alliance, Save Mount Diablo and other groups to make sure the District is partnering where it can.

The Faria Preserve in Southern Las Trampas in Danville/San Ramon is currently under construction. The development is providing the District with the dedication of 144 acres of open space and developing a 25-car staging area off of Bollinger Canyon Road. They are providing the District with a Community Facilities District (CFD) assessment of \$140.00 per unit to provide financing for District projects and maintenance.

Holt gave an update about the Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS). The District needs the biological opinion complete, so the Navy can circulate their environmental impact statement and begin conveying land. The current schedule has the District receiving the land in July or August of 2017. With the change of the Federal Administration, Holt is concerned it might alter the schedule.

In July, the District helped with the 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Commemoration Event of the explosion in Port Chicago. There was a crowd of about 700 people, probably the first public event that's been held on the actual CNWS property in many years. Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior, visited the property for a tour and to help keep the process moving forward with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife to finish the biological opinion.

**(I) d. Camping Program Update – Will be rescheduled.**

**6. Report from Chair – Kern stated the Economic Report is being held over until next year.**

It should be received in February or March of 2017. In October, an outside presentation from The Nature Conservancy will be on the agenda. Also, Kern and Pfuehler will present 2017 PAC goals.

7. **Board Committee Reports**

Sanwong reported she attended the Shadow Cliffs Solar Panel dedication in Pleasanton. Gregory thanked the PAC and Board of Directors for their work to close the Chabot Gun Club. He stated he was pleased with the quiet surroundings at Anthony Chabot Regional Park since the gun club's closure. Gregory mentioned a recent article that quoted PAC Member Simmons' comments honoring long time Environmental Preservationists Bill and Lesley Hunt from Walnut Creek.

PAC Member Coffey thanked staff for the wonderful memorial given for former Board Member Ted Radke.

8. **Status of Recommendations** – None.

9. **Old Business** – None.

10. **New Business** – None.

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

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the June 27, 2016 PAC minutes
2. The PAC approved the July 25, 2016 PAC minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay  
Confidential Secretary