

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
May 22, 2017

ATTENDING: Best, Bueren, Godfrey, Gregory, Ho, Madsen, Mercurio, Palacios, Rickard, Robinson, Sanwong, Skaredoff, Trotter, Yee, Thompson, Wilkins

NOT ATTENDING: Volin, Kern

STAFF ATTENDING: O'Connor, Pfuehler, Castile, Love, Ciaburro, DeQuincy, Clay

GUESTS: Board Member Dennis Waespi

PUBLIC: Kathleen Roth, Molly Kenefick, Mike Savage, Marla Schmalle, Elizabeth Peterson, Mary Barnsdale, Daniel Jones, Joyce Jones, William Yragui, Kelly Abreu, Nicolas Martin, Emily Rosenberg, Jessica Gelin, Michelle Lenihan

The meeting began at 7:07 p.m.

1. **Approval of the April 24, 2017 Minutes:** The April 24, 2017 minutes were approved with edits. The motion to approve was moved by PAC member Trotter. PAC member Wilkins seconded approval of the minutes. The motion was approved. Correction of minutes to add John Roberts as an attendee. PAC members Madsen, Thompson and Best abstained due to being absent.
2. **Introductions:** PAC Vice Chair Bueren asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:** Director Waespi announced on May 15 Vargas Plateau reopened. He commented it is a great 1,200-acre addition to the southern end of the park system. Waespi reported at the May Board Operations Committee there was discussion about the use of e-bikes in the Park District. Waespi stated a pilot program for e-bikes is going to be implemented on three District trails: Iron Horse Trail, Alameda Creek Trail and the Contra Costa Canal Trail. Waespi reported there was an interactive Board Workshop on Stewardship, Trails and Development this week. He stated that there are 423 capital projects currently in progress. Waespi commented this week the Park District is hosting a Volunteer Recognition Dinner. Waespi was pleased to report there were 21,166 volunteers last year for a total of 150,782 hours of volunteer time.

Waespi invited the PAC members to visit the parks on Memorial Day stating it is a great opportunity to see the work park staff does on holidays.

4. **Foundation Update:** Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager reported on behalf of Juliana Schirmer, Foundation Development Director. Pfuehler stated membership revenue is up 31%. A number of good candidates are in the running for the foundation board, including a representative from REI and

the founder of Drake's Brewery.

On June 2, the Foundation is holding a fundraiser at Drake's in San Leandro. On June 8, the Foundation will host a similar fundraiser at Three Sheets Brewery in Dublin, and on July 8 there will be a fundraiser in Tilden Park.

5. Public Comments:

None.

6. Presentations:

(I) a. Lifeguard Services Update – Pete DeQuincy, Aquatics Manager

Pete DeQuincy, Aquatics Manager presented a PowerPoint about the Lifeguard Services program. DeQuincy stated there are 170 seasonal lifeguards who guard at 11 aquatic facilities in Alameda and Contra Costa County. They serve about 500,000 people.

Dequincy explained lifeguards are 16-22 years old, young vibrant and smart. They are the last defense when an aquatic incident occurs. DeQuincy reported the District has not had a drowning in guarded areas in seven seasons. DeQuincy discussed how the District works to connect with the trainees. The District has a very high standard for their training. District swim facilities are among a very few in the Bay Area which are open water. DeQuincy explained he tells his interns they are drowning prevention experts who serve their community. Aquatics works hard to instill the qualities needed to be a Regional Parks Lifeguard. The District provides a structure to encourage skills development and advancement potential which all lifeguards follow. Aquatics provides benchmarks and seasonal events to help build a culture for students, establish task books to keep students on track for learning, skill development opportunities for additional classes offered to regular employees, special assignments, internships, mentoring, and to take pride and promote their accomplishments at work and in life. Currently, lifeguards work for an average of three years, but DeQuincy would like to extend it to five years. DeQuincy commented after five years it is more likely they will remain at the District.

PAC member Yee thanked DeQuincy for his work at the Park District. PAC member Mercurio asked how many lifeguards are at a site. DeQuincy replied each facility has a team that works together. PAC member Skaredoff asked how many rescues are done in a typical year. DeQuincy replied the District averages about 100 rescues per year. Jim O'Connor, AGM of Operations commented, as a preventative measure, District lifeguards do active guarding, which means they are in the water making contact with the park users and not on the sidelines.

(I) b. Managing the Existing Dog Policy – Jim O'Connor, AGM Operations, Lieutenant Alan Love, Public Safety

O'Connor provided a PowerPoint about the current dog policy. He briefly outlined Ordinance 38 which guides the District's dog policy. He defined the areas deemed prohibited for dogs, leash required areas, the number of dogs allowed per owner, and that a permit is required if you exceed the limit. O'Connor discussed expected dog behavior in the parks and the definition of a dangerous dog. He explained no dog, cat or other animal

may be left unattended. O'Connor discussed when dogs are presumed to not be under control: When they threaten, harass, chase or harm other animals or wildlife. This does not include play chase with other dogs. They are presumed to not be under control when they physically harm people directly or indirectly by their actions. O'Connor commented one of the biggest challenges is dog waste being left in the parks.

Lt. Love discussed the commercial dog walker permit program. He outlined the permit parameters and rules for commercial dog walkers. He explained the ordinance has been changed to allow a maximum of six dogs per permitted commercial dog walker. A noncommercial dog walker with four or more dogs can apply for a not-for-profit dog walking permit. Commercial dog walkers must comply with all park rules regarding dogs.

O'Connor talked about compliance. O'Connor reported there were 111 dog related citations last year, the most citations issued to date. There were 26 dog bites and 76 documented warnings issued in 2016. Most of these violations pertain to off leash dogs in leash required areas.

O'Connor said one of the topics the PAC will explore is outreach to the dog community. He thanked the dog groups that work to educate dog users about visiting the parks.

Trotter thanked O'Connor for his presentation. PAC member Gregory recommended PAC members visit Point Isabel to see the success of this type of park. He also suggested dog owners should respect the impact their animals have on nature.

Public Comments:

Vice Chair Bueren read a comment submitted by a citizen suggesting the District ban dogs from the park, or issue more citations.

Emily Rosenberg thanked the District for notifying dog owners prior to the PAC meeting. Rosenberg suggested the District should implement an educational component for park users uncomfortable with dogs. Daniel Jones commented he understands the issues with the waste problem and fears of non-dog owners. He thanked the PAC for their work. Marla Schmale commented she hopes the District won't prevent dogs and children from enjoying the creeks. Juliane Gellan commented garbage cans are only found in the parking lots. It would be great if more cans were installed. She suggested the District use cardboard cans which can be discarded when they are full. Molly Kenefick stated she is a professional dog walker. She went through the Dog Walking Academy where pet management is taught to prevent problems. Kathleen Madsen thanked the public for their comments. She commented dog owners should leave no trace with the dog waste. Skaredoff agreed dog owners should carry the dog waste and not leave it on the trail. Education is important. PAC member Ho observed education and the sharing of information is important.

(I) c. Trails Damage Assessment – Steve Castile, Chief of Park Operations

Steve Castile, Chief of Park Operations presented a PowerPoint about the trails damage assessment. Castile explained there were significant storms systems during January, February and March of this year that caused damage to the parks. Because of the damage, there are currently

177 projects in progress. The damage consists of landslides, culvert failure, tree damage and roadway collapses in over 29 park sites. To date, the approximate damage estimate is \$8 to \$10 million.

Castile explained in order to assess the storm damage, staff needed to come up with a way of determining how the damage would be remediated. A system of categories was developed from A to D. Category 'A' are storm recovery projects to be completed in 2017. The damage assessment was 22 of the 177 projects will be accomplished by Park staff in that category. The list is broken up by six different unit areas: The Shoreline Unit, Delta Unit, Lakes Unit, Interpretive Parklands Unit, Parkland Unit, and within Operations there is an Interpretative and Recreation component as well.

Castile clarified Category 'B' are storm recovery projects to be completed in 2017 with work by staff, but also with the assistance of Maintenance and Skilled Trades, Roads and Trails, and Stewardship with design and permits. In that category, there are 73 projects.

Category 'C' are projects with major storm damage that will be completed in 2018 and beyond. These are projects that require supplemental funding, permits, additional work, will involve FEMA grants and have major storm damage including areas with significant road slides. There are 23 projects in this category.

Category 'D' are storm recovery projects that have already been completed this year. Staff completed 59 projects at last count. In February, over 55 trails and park areas were closed. Today, there are 16 park trail closures left. The District is actively working to get all parks open. Many of the parks are still going through the FEMA permitting process, have culvert damage, landslide damage, or need trees removed to get the trails open again.

Castile reported 21 bridges were washed out at Redwood Canyon Golf Course. Of all of the bridges, only one is still standing. New bridges with longer footings to withstand flooding will be installed. Roads have washed out in Wildcat, Las Trampas, and Briones. The Roads and Trails crew are working diligently to repair and reopen these roads. O'Connor stated the District already has a full list of projects, and are reprioritizing projects to readjust and complete the storm damage repair. Staff time is limited and as a result the major focus is on opening critical public access points.

7. PAC Member Comments

Yee shared a flyer that was passed out at Mission Peak. He expressed concern the flyers will create a negative environment between park users and residents.

8. Report from Chair – None.

9. Board Committee Reports – None.

10. Status of Recommendations – None.

11. Old Business – None.

12. New Business – None.

13. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

- I. The PAC approved the April 24, 2017 minutes with edits.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay
Confidential Secretary