

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
July 23, 2018

ATTENDING: Best, Bueren, Corkin, Gregory, Ho, Kern, Rickard, Robinson, Skaredoff, Thompson, Tsutsui, Sanwong, Williams, Yee

ABSENT: Burke, Brubaker, Godfrey, Madsen, Mercurio, Trotter, Wilkins

STAFF ATTENDING: Pfuehler, Koh, Love, Nisbet, Bondurant, Ciaburro, Zuckerman, Kassebaum, Holt, Bletz, Saito, Newey, Clay

GUESTS: Directors Coffey, Dotson, Lane, Rosario, Waespi

PUBLIC: Lynda Deschambault, Kelly Abreu

The meeting began at 7:03 p.m.

1. **Approval of the June 25, 2018 Minutes:** The June 25, 2018 minutes were approved with edits. The motion to approve was moved by PAC member Kern. PAC member Yee seconded approval of the minutes. PAC members Bueren, Thompson and Williams abstained due to being absent.
2. **Introductions:** PAC chair Bueren asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:** Director Dennis Waespi welcomed the PAC and thanked them for their support. Waespi announced Senator Steve Glazer and Assembly Member Catharine Baker were able to appropriate \$5 million dollars in excess of Proposition 68 for Del Valle. A portion of the funds will be used for the water treatment plant and interpretive center. Waespi remarked the District is collaborating with Save the Redwoods League on restoration work at Redwood and Roberts parks.
4. **Foundation Update:** Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager reported REI in Concord and Fremont are now selling Foundation memberships at their stores. Pfuehler added the Berkeley and San Francisco REI stores will be selling memberships too.

Assistant General Manager, Public Safety Anthony Ciaburro announced Sergeant Tyrone Davis is working with staff to host a fishing excursion with the Oakland Police Activities League (PAL) Camp on Wednesday, July 25. Assistant General Manager, Acquisition Stewardship and Development Bob Nisbet, Chief of Stewardship Matt Graul and Fisheries Program Manager Joe Sullivan will help with the event. The lake will be stocked 1,000 lbs. of fish. The Foundation will contribute funding for the event.

5. **Public Comments:** Kelly Abreu asked the District to support Alameda County Supervisor Richard Valle, who along with Caltrans, is spearheading a proposal to build bike and pedestrian

facilities to reduce the fatalities on Niles Canyon Road.

6. Presentations:

(I) a. Volunteer Program – Ira Bletz, Interpretive and Recreation Services Northwest Regional Services Manager, Jeremy Saito, Recreation Supervisor

Ira Bletz, Interpretive and Recreation Services Northwest Regional Services Manager introduced Jeremy Saito, Recreation Supervisor for Community Service Outreach. Saito provided an update about the District-wide volunteer program and shared highlights from the 2017 events.

Saito explained the District-wide Volunteer Program is made up of many programs. Special Event Volunteers, Wildlife Volunteers, Public Safety Volunteers, Trail Maintenance Volunteers, Park Operations Volunteers, Regional Parks Ambassadors, Docent Groups, and individuals and families that come out for large public volunteer events, such as Earth Day and Coastal Cleanup Day. Saito reported the Volunteer Program also provides logistical support such as, food and refreshments, recreation leader support, check in and registration support for large events, green waste dumpsters, sanitation trailers, tools, supplies and equipment, recognition items, and volunteer administration. Community Volunteer Services is also the initial point of contact for the public seeking volunteer opportunities. Volunteer Services works to match the volunteers with field staff and projects.

Saito stated in 2017 there were a total of 24,090 volunteers that provided 168,700 hours of service which equals about \$4,907,583 in labor costs. In the past five years, the program has grown by 49%. Some events such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, Earth Day and Coastal Cleanup Day are coordinated directly through the volunteer program. In 2016, there were over 2,500 volunteers that collected debris at 16 different sites. At MLK Day, there were over 400 participants that removed over 3,000 pounds of shoreline debris and planted 20 native trees. Saito commented these events offer a great opportunity to educate the public about the dangers of trash in the Bay.

The Volunteer Services Program also hosts four Special Kids Fishing Derbies each year in Oakley, Antioch, Fremont and the Pleasanton Tri-Valley area. 600 special needs students are served from various communities. Service clubs volunteer to cook breakfast and lunch. These derbies are heavily supported by volunteers and are co-funded by the Regional Parks Foundation, which provides support for transportation and supplies.

An increase in Corporate Caring Days have impacted the District positively. Corporate requests to volunteer have grown from 18 groups in 2014 to 60+ in 2017. To accommodate these requests, staff developed an interdivisional plan. A pilot volunteer program for expansion was planned. It was determined parks staff should pre-plan a minimum of three in-park volunteer projects within each of their parks. From this information, Volunteer Services is able to create a menu of available projects, build time for volunteers into the operational plan, accommodate the corporate group requests, distribute the workload more evenly, and provide a variety of projects and opportunities.

PAC member Williams asked if the areas where the volunteers have worked that has acknowledgement signage indicating the work has been done by volunteers. Williams

suggested it might inspire others to volunteer. Saito said the Park District hosts an annual Volunteer Recognition dinner to recognize individual volunteers and volunteer groups, and agreed it would be good to post signage in areas volunteers have worked.

Recommendation: This was an informational item only.

(I) b. Sibley Land Use Plan Amendment - Julie Bondurant, Principal Planner

Julie Bondurant, Principal Planner, presented a Power Point about the draft Land Use Plan (LUP) Amendment and Environmental Impact Report for Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve. She indicated the project is currently in the public review process. Bondurant explained the purpose is to amend the 1985 LUP to incorporate the Western Hills and McCosker sub-areas, as well as develop local trails into Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve. Project objectives include the protection and support of natural plant communities and wildlife habitat, creek restoration, trail development, recreation facility and interpretive program elements, operations and maintenance, and climate adaptation and resiliency.

Bondurant clarified the project has two main components: project-wide recreation and public access improvement, and McCosker sub-area creek restoration and habitat enhancements. The recreation and public access improvements include six main elements: 1) improvements to existing staging areas, 2) improvements to existing park roadways, 3) bridge installations, 4) trail system expansion, 5) recreation facility development, and 6) improvements to utility infrastructure.

Bondurant reported a total of six staging areas will help distribute use throughout the project area. In the Preserve sub-area, improvements will include expansion of the existing parking capacity from 34 spaces to approximately 73 spaces in the Sibley Main Staging Area parking lot and 13 spaces to approximately 33 spaces at Old Tunnel Road. Incorporation of the Western Hills Open Space will provide two access points, increasing access opportunities to the Preserve from the Lafayette-Orinda-Moraga (Lamorinda) area. Parking will also be increased at the McCosker site. Internal circulation improvements within the McCosker sub-area will include: roadway improvements, installation of three new bridges, and ADA trail access from the staging area to the developed recreation area and along the restored creek.

Bondurant explained the LUPA proposes adding 8.3 miles of trails to the project area for a total of 22.2 miles. It will incorporate trails in the three sub-areas, as well as connections into Huckleberry Preserve, and it will provide greater connectivity with other District lands and neighboring residential communities.

Kern asked if loop trails will be accommodated. Bondurant replied yes, there are a number of loop trails proposed. McCosker loop trail is an existing trail and is currently open to the public. With the new improvements, new loop trails will be created at McCosker, and a loop that will combine Huckleberry and McCosker. The proposed trails will provide continuity to other areas, to fill gaps, provide neighborhood access, or connections to the Bay Area Ridge Trail. PAC member Ho asked if the loop trails are complete loops for each type of user. Bondurant answered that is the goal, but in some cases, it isn't possible, as some trails feed into multi-use trails.

Bondurant explained the community process identified what the public wanted; connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods, especially the Orinda area. There was also significant input about dogs off leash and no dogs allowed at all. Bike use was also identified as a community interest. From these discussions, the public realized in order to achieve these goals, not every trail would be multi-use.

Recreation facility development in the McCosker sub-area will include two sites: Fiddleneck Field and Fern View Terrace. Fiddleneck Field will include a recreation area designed to accommodate interpretive programs and rustic camping for up to 50 people with parking for approximately 43 vehicles. The Fern View Terrace will offer an informal picnic site that will incorporate existing concrete walls remaining from the former construction and quarrying business. Landscaping in the recreation areas will augment existing habitat located at the perimeter of these sites, as well as provide screening, shade and aesthetic value for park visitors. Soil excavated to “daylight” to create an open, natural creek channel, will be placed as fill to create the combined camping and interpretive area. Utility infrastructure improvements in the Preserve sub-area will include installation of a water tank to service the existing backpack camp. In the McCosker sub-area, infrastructure improvements will include installation of prefabricated toilets and development of a potable water supply. Connections will also be made to existing electrical and communications services to meet recreation and maintenance needs at the combined group campsite and interpretive program area.

PAC member Corkin asked with the increased staging areas, trails and camping areas, will the District expand operations staff to manage the land. Bondurant replied yes, and there are also endowment funds coming from the developer to help with the maintenance of the Western Hills area. Some funding also came with the McCosker site specifically to help with operations. PAC member Best asked about the timeline to complete the project. Bondurant replied construction should begin in 2019, and the restoration work will take approximately two years. Staging area improvements will be scheduled differently through the Maintenance Department. The trail work will be scheduled through the Trails Development.

PAC member Skaredoff inquired about trails being used for other purposes. Bondurant replied the existing ranch roads will be used for emergency and District vehicles. Skaredoff inquired about parking lot security with these new projects. Bondurant replied there will be Park security residences at each staging area, but there will be no kiosks.

PAC member Gregory commented this isn't a new development and there is an established community close by. Gregory inquired about the views of the community of Canyon. Bondurant replied the Canyon community has been involved in all of community meetings. The community meetings started out with concerns about camping. Overall, however, the concern has been greatly reduced over the course of these meetings.

Kern made a motion to recommend moving the Sibley LUPA forward, while acknowledging the public process is ongoing. Bueren seconded the motion to recommend the Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Report for Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve project move forward to the Board Executive Committee. She acknowledged the PAC was not approving the plan, but moving the process forward.

Recommendation: Motion to recommend the draft Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Report for Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve project move forward to the Board Executive Committee for consideration was made by PAC member Kern. PAC member Bueren, seconded the motion to approve and recommend the Board of Directors.

Nisbet commented there will be five more land use plan amendments coming in the next year: Miller/Knox, Black Diamond Mines, Concord Hills, Coyote Hills and Las Trampas.

7. PAC Member Comments

Williams felt the recommendation wasn't clear on the Sibley LUPA, and suggested the recommendation be part of the staff memo or listed on the agenda.

Yee brought his award for community service by Assembly Member Kansen Chu to share with the PAC members.

Ho commented a friend of hers has completed running and walking the Bay Ridge Trail.

Corkin asked if there was an update about the possibility of using Concord Hills to detain immigrants. Pfuehler replied he spoke with Assembly Member Grayson, and it is a dead issue at this point.

Skaredoff asked if a presentation can come to the PAC in the near future about car theft in the parks. The members decided it would go on the PAC Work Plan in 2019. Director Rosario mentioned Public Safety staff did a report at a recent Board meeting about a study on car theft in the parks.

8. Report from Chair – None.

9. Board Committee Reports – None.

10. Old Business – None.

11. New Business – None.

12. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned 8:42 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the June 25, 2018 minutes.
2. The PAC recommended that the draft Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Report for Robert Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve project move forward to the Board Executive Committee for consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay
Confidential Secretary