

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
May 20, 2019

ATTENDING: Best, Bueren, Burke, Corkin, Deschambault, Godfrey, Ho, Sanwong, Skaredoff, Tsutsui
ABSENT: Andrade, Brubaker, Dieter, Gregory, Lacy, Nason, Obringer, Rickard, Robinson, Williams, Yee
STAFF ATTENDING: O'Connor, Pfuehler, Kassebaum, Brede, Phulps, Rizzotti, Hornbeck, Baldinger, Ciaburro, Clay
GUESTS:
PUBLIC: William Yragui, Kelly Abreu, Priscilla Browne

The meeting began at 7:05 p.m.

1. **Approval of the May 20, 2019 Minutes:** The May minutes will be approved at the July 22, 2019 meeting.
2. **Introductions:** PAC Chair Bueren asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:** None.
4. **Foundation Update:** Legislative Assistant Lisa Baldinger announced on May 30 there will be a What's Brewing in the Parks? event at Lake Chabot. The Foundation is bringing a proposed Capital Campaign before the Board of Directors for approval in June.
5. **Public Comments:**
Kelly Abreu commented about parking tickets being issued at the Mission Peak parking lot. Abreu remarked on the missing signage for drinking water at Ohlone College.

William Yragui spoke about inclusivity and diversity in the parks. He distributed a document from the Sierra Club called *Area of Change*.

Priscilla Browne reported on a flock of domestic ducks abandoned and stranded at Lake Temescal late last Fall. Browne would like to work with the District to reintroduce ducks into an animal sanctuary.

6. **Presentations:**
 - (I) a. **Park and Public Interest Community Engagement Project – Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager; Lisa Baldinger, Legislative Assistant**
Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager presented a PowerPoint about the Park and Public Interest Community Engagement Project. He explained Government Affairs has launched a community outreach program to gather data from the broader community. The District wants to solicit information tied to the work being done at each park. The survey is also consistent with Land Use Plans for each park and the Master Plan. Lisa

Baldinger, Legislative Assistant commented she researched each park to determine which improvements are needed.

Pfuehler stated the State Legislature is considering several bills regarding open space, climate and resource protection. Pfuehler commented legislators and staff are asking for more and more data. This makes it a very good time to take information gleaned by the survey to Sacramento and D.C. Plans are to discuss issues of interest with the electeds so they can learn their constituents' concerns.

Baldinger talked about various ways the survey will be used to engage the public: Facebook, E News, Instagram and in-park signage. The survey will encompass both counties and all parks currently open to the public. Baldinger explained based on demographics from research done by Public Affairs, the electronic survey will be offered in English, Spanish, Korean and Chinese. It will also be shared at public libraries. In-park tablet surveys will be coordinated to assist with less tech savvy park users.

Some survey questions include: if people are aware of the parks; what is the value of the Park District; why and what parks users are visiting; what amenities and features they currently use in the parks; preferred park activities; location of visitor centers; future park activities desired; reasons for visiting; obstacles to park visit; are they noticing the effects of climate change; and preferred form of communication. These conversations will take place through paid social media posting to drive traffic to the survey, stakeholder e-mails, in-park surveys with ambassadors and interns, event engagement, signage in parks, and stickers and bookmarks in partnership with interpretive programs. The survey goes live June through August 2019 and is located at: <http://eastbayparksurvey.com/>

Baldinger stated the Regional Parks Foundation is a strong supporter of this project, and as an incentive, have offered to give one free month of membership to anyone who completes the survey and submits their e-mail at the conclusion of the survey.

PAC member Sanwong asked if the survey is being done in-house. Baldinger replied Government Affairs is working with a messaging/communications consulting firm. PAC member Godfrey asked if the survey will list options. Baldinger said it isn't open-ended, although each question has an open-ended option. Suggestions will be provided within the realm of the Master Plan. PAC member Burke asked if the District will approach their partners, such as the San Francisco Bay Trail project and Bay Area Open Space Council, to provide a link to the survey on their websites. Baldinger replied yes. PAC member Ho suggested cities and counties might be willing to put a link on their website. Bueren recommended county libraries, county supervisors and city official offices. PAC member Best suggested city councils usually put out newsletters and would be willing to add the survey.

PAC member Skaredoff said the District should be mindful about the sampling to ensure it is representative of a reasonable cross-section of the community. Pfuehler explained it's not a traditional poll, but a way to gather a wide sampling of data. If the budget allows, a scientific report will be done to compliment the data.

Recommendation: This was an informational item only.

(I) b. Youth Employment and Engagement – Anne Kassebaum, Chief of Interpretive and Recreation Services

Anne Kassebaum, Chief of Interpretive and Recreation Services provided a brief outline about the Youth Strategic Plan 2013, an informal assessment done by Dr. Nina Roberts and Dr. Mary Fortune of San Francisco State University. The plan was provided to the District in 2013. The plan covers how the District is, and can be more, engaged with youth. This plan is used District-wide by staff and many of the recommendations have been implemented. Kassebaum explained Jaimee Rizzotti, Outreach Coordinator works closely with interpretive and recreation staff to implement youth engagement programs.

Rizzotti stated one of the recommendations from the Youth Engagement Study was the Youth Job Fair. The District has hosted such a fair twice a year for the last five years. Rizzotti stated when youth register for the job fair their zip codes are gathered to determine from what cities they have come. Staff use the data to determine geographic gaps in attendees. This helps determine where future job fairs will be held and provides the opportunity for more youth to attend. PAC member Tsutsui asked if students self-select to attend or are there organized school trips planned for youth to attend. Rizzotti replied some organizations bus them to the event, but mainly parents inform other parents about the job fairs.

Rizzotti talked about the various programs offered by Interpretive and Recreation staff. Environmental Education one-time programs served up to 2,400 classes in 2019. Adventure Crew is a longitudinal youth engagement program for youth 11 to 13-years old, under-represented, low-income, urban youth in the Richmond/San Pablo area. This program fosters youth leadership, increases environmental literacy, teaches outdoor skills, promotes a sense of connection and stewardship, and improves health and wellness.

Two Mobile Visitor Centers bring the parks to people. The Mobile Fish Exhibit serves hundreds of people at a time. There is a Fish Friends Program serving elementary schools. Rizzotti commented the Regional Parks Foundation supports youth-focused programs, such as: Girls, Inc. a program focused on middle school girls; Fish Friends; Backpacks to Parks; Job Fair; Ash St. Day Camp and Campfire; Family Camping at Ardenwood; Explore Your Watershed; Fishing Derbies; Teen Eco Action; etc.

Rizzotti stated the Recreation Partnership hosts one-off boating, biking and fishing programs. They also do deep engagement partnership programs through the Park'n It Day Camp and the C2C Teen program. Teen Eco Action is a week-long program in partnership with community organizations where teens participate in service and engagement projects. Teens receive a stipend at the end of the program.

Rizzotti described Parks Express as a subsidized transportation program where eligible schools and organizations can obtain a bus for \$120 dollars and the District will cover the rest. In 2018, Parks Express provided 438 busses.

Rizzotti reported Lifeguard Services do amazing work to engage and employ youth. They visit schools, host swim practice workshops and a 9-day academy with 48 lifeguards some of whom get jobs with the District.

Workforce Development is a three-tier partnership program. District staff work with the Workforce Development Boards, which are the funding source. One program called Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) serves youth 16 to 24 years old that are out of school, low-income, basic skills deficient or English language learners, placed in the juvenile or adult justice system, homeless, runaways, in or aged out of foster care, pregnant or parenting and have disabilities. There is also an in-school youth, 14 to 21 years old, program with similar barriers.

Godfrey observed the outreach numbers to classes by naturalists are impressive. He asked, within the District, how many naturalists are there to do outreach. Rizzotti answered there are about 40 naturalists, interns and many docents that help to lead these programs. Godfrey inquired about the youth of the homeless population and whether outreach is done for them. Jim O'Connor, Assistant General Manager Operations explained the District partners with established community outreach efforts which have existing relationships with the youth participants. Ho expressed her appreciation for staff's impressive work.

Recommendation: This was an informational item only.

(R) c. Special Use Agreement for the Portuguese Water Dog Club – Katy Hornbeck, Acting Business Services Manager

Katy Hornbeck, Acting Business Services Manager, provided an overview about the Portuguese Water Dog Club proposed agreement. Hornbeck began with an explanation about a Special Use Agreement and how it must meet District objectives for appropriate public benefit and priority. Hornbeck explained the approval process for such an agreement. The proposal comes to Business Services and is circulated to appropriate staff for review. Once finalized by staff, it is routed to the General Manager for review and approval. The second phase is to obtain public and Board approval. Should the Park Advisory Committee approve the proposed agreement, it will then go to the full Board for approval. The Portuguese Water Dog Club of Northern California agreement is for a five-year term, with a mutual consent option for a second five-year term.

The non-profit Portuguese Water Dog Club of Northern California was founded in 1992. Training takes place at Shadow Cliffs Regional Park from May to September. They do not train on weekends or holidays. Training includes a series of water work exercises to encourage obedience, tracking, agility and performance of in-water trials. It is very controlled group. Only one to two dogs are in the water performing training exercises at any given time. The dogs are otherwise crated when not in training. O'Connor explained the Portuguese Water Dog was bred to perform water rescues.

Tsutsui asked who reviews the license when it is up for renewal in five years. O'Connor stated this is a brand-new use agreement. If it is renewed for an additional five years, it will be handled at the staff level.

PAC member Deschambault asked what determines how, why and who receives a special use agreement. She asked for clarification on the types of special use agreements issued. Staff explained for this particular request, since it is both outside of Ordinance 38 policy and normal general use, it needs an exemption from Ordinance 38. A permit is required for the club to conduct their activities.

Public Comment

Kelly Abreu provided a history about the people who brought the Portuguese Water Dog to Portugal.

Recommendation: Motion made by PAC member Burke to recommend the Board of Directors approve a five-year Special Use Agreement with the option of a second five-year extension with the Portuguese Water Dog Club Chapter of Northern California. Seconded by PAC member Best. The recommendation was approved unanimously.

(I) d. Nighttime Bicycle Access to Transportation Trails – David Phulps, Patrol Watch Commander

Lance Brede, Captain, Public Safety Operations Division introduced David Phulps, Patrol Watch Commander. Phulps reported the pilot program has been in place since February of 2018. The purpose of the program is to provide bicycle commuters an opportunity to utilize specified trails near public transportation routes outside of established curfew hours. Currently, there is a modification to the Ordinance that allows special permit holders access two hours beyond the 10 PM curfew and allows entry onto the trail one hour prior to the 5 AM trail “opening” time. Brede commented the District trail system is extremely safe. The curfew hours directly correlate with when BART and bus service begins and ends.

Phulps outlined the 2019 Safety requirements that must be followed prior to issuance of the permit: 1) photo ID will be required; 2) applicant must provide most preferred routes and hours commuting, this information will be used for safety considerations for after-hours use in case of a missing person report; 3) the permit expires three years after issuance and must be in the bicyclist’s possession when using approved trails after hours; 4) staff will strongly recommend during the application process that a helmet is worn, the bicycle has a forward facing white light and a rear flashing red light.

Phulps explained the electronic bike pilot program will continue and includes five additional trails: Big Break Trail, Contra Costa Canal Trail, March Creek Trail, Lafayette/Moraga Trail and the George Miller Regional Trail. The after hours permit pilot coincides with this e-bike extension.

Best asked if lights are still required. Phulps answered yes bicyclists must adhere to California code. PAC member Corkin asked if they are only permitted after hours in the park to commute or can they be recreation cyclists. Phulps replied it is for commuting, but if they go through the permit process and stay on the preferred routes, they will be allowed.

Tsutsui asked if there are commuters currently using the trails after hours without permits. Phulps replied yes. Brede said it is a small percentage, but staff would rather have the permit program be open so they can commute legally. Sanwong commented there are bicyclists that don't speak English fluently and are commuting from work at night. There may be a language factor to consider. Brede replied there is. If someone who does not speak English is verified as commuting, they will likely not be issued a citation.

Godfrey asked what triggered the 2017 rules. Brede replied there has been an established curfew in place for many years. It is for safety. Brede said staffing is cut back at hours of less park usage, so there is less of a police presence. Bueren stated trails should be open for transportation and not have to be permitted.

Corkin asked if this has been adopted and approved or it is still a pilot program. O'Connor said a change in Ordinance 38 would have to be done to make this program official. Ho commented it is prudent of staff to approach this carefully and monitor any complaints from neighbors adjacent to the trails. Ho asked if there are any plans to put surveillance cameras on any of the trails. Phulps replied there are surveillance cameras concentrated in the park areas, but the regional trail system is too expansive for camera surveillance. O'Connor added if there is a spike in crime, then cameras are put in place for targeted enforcement for a period of time.

Recommendation: This was an informational item only.

7. PAC Member Comments

Tsutsui commented he enjoyed the Special Park District Forum. He was struck by how impressed conference attendees were with the District and the great work done by staff.

Skaredoff stated he enjoyed the Special Park District Forum. He learned from the different park districts who attended the forum.

8. Report from Chair – Bueren thanked staff that helped with the Special Park District Forum. She commented that Interpretive staff were awesome, and the event was well received.

9. Board Committee Reports – None.

10. Old Business – None.

11. New Business – None.

12. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC recommended the five-year Special Use Agreement and option for a second five-year term with the Portuguese Water Dog Club Chapter of Northern California, as presented by staff, move forward to the full Board.