

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

April 1, 2013
6:30 p.m.
City Hall

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ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Manna, Hersman, Allard, and Allen.

Absent: Commissioners Rothans, Cajka and Roth.

Others Present: Parks and Recreation Director Richard Gill and Recording Secretary Mary Kirchwehm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The December 17, 2012 minutes were approved as written.

CEREMONIAL

None.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Manhattan Beach resident Dr. Edward Caprielian requested remedial action regarding the procedures of the Manhattan Beach Senior Softball Association. He stated that he has discussed this with the City Manager and the Director of Parks and Recreation. Dr. Caprielian expressed the following concerns:

- The league has become more competitive than recreational;
- Age discrimination – older players are given less playing time;
- Membership: All of the City’s Older Adult Programs start at 55+ years, while the Senior Softball Association starts at age 60;
- Team Parity – Ensure that the teams have balance to ensure more of a recreational experience;
- Residence Requirement – Appears that 70% of the players are non-residents;
- Lack of membership and team assignment procedures;

- Expansion of the league is necessary to accommodate new players and any players who want to play;
- The City's principle, "Our Promise to Kids," is not being observed by the Association; and
- Oversight by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Dr. Caprielian also stated that the Association is subsidized by the City of Manhattan Beach and does not pay for the use of the field, nor do they provide insurance for any liability. He is seeking additional help from the Commission to improve the program by expanding it to the residents of Manhattan Beach and making it truly recreational.

Manhattan Beach resident and Commissioner of the senior softball league, Steve Nicholson responded to Dr. Caprielian's request to the Commission. Mr. Nicholson stated that the league comprises of five sponsored teams. The sponsors pay for all the equipment, balls and umpires, and the participants prepare the fields. It is a 20 year league that is self-governed and operates much like other recreation leagues. There are 70 participants who do not have any problems with the way the league is run, and there is only one person who is not satisfied.

In response to Dr. Caprielian's concern with age discrimination, Mr. Nicholson explained the reason for the minimum age requirement of 60 years old is a safety issue. It was found that participants between the ages of 55 – 60 years hit the ball harder and play at a faster pace.

In response to Dr. Caprielian's concern regarding the expansion of teams, Mr. Nicholson reported that there are not enough players for an extra team. There are currently three people on a standby list—currently not enough to form another team.

In response to Dr. Caprielian's concern regarding the league being too competitive and not recreational, Mr. Nicholson reported that on Tuesdays there are pick-up games which are fun and league games on Thursdays. He explained that for the Tuesday games, players show up and get picked on a team and play. On Mondays and Fridays there are skills drills where participants practice hitting and throwing.

Freddi Segal-Gidan, Chair of the Senior Advisory Committee, spoke about concerns regarding parking and access to the Older Adult Programs at the Joslyn Center. She reported that Dial-A-Ride is working to its full capacity and it is difficult for seniors to find parking. Ms. Segal-Gidan reported that there are a growing number of employees from the downtown businesses and residents using the parking for long periods of time. The members of the Senior Advisory Committee is seeking some resolution.

Manhattan Beach resident Gerry O'Connor requested to revisit the subject of the Sand Dune fence at Sand Dune Park. Approximately one year ago, the Parks and Recreation Commission brought to City Council the issue of improved aesthetics of the fence around the sand dune. There were a series of community meetings held and the input from those meetings (for a sand colored fence) went back to the Commission and went to City Council. The comments were not to have a sand colored chain link fence in a galvanized steel frame, which is currently there. The outcome is not at all what was expected. Mr. O'Connor encouraged everyone to view the fence at the Dune and to look at other fences around the City, such as the one at Pacific School, Polliwog Park, and Manhattan Heights. He stated that he believes the fence

should be redone. He believes the solution of the fence was not properly implemented and would ideally like to see this subject agendaized for a future meeting.

Vice Chair of the Senior Advisory Committee Dick Zief thanked the City for the successful implementation of the Older Adults Program and stated that he hopes the parking issue will be resolved without hindering the Older Adults Program.

GENERAL BUSINESS

13/0401.1 – Parking Problems for Joslyn Center and Live Oak Park Users Recommendation from Senior Advisory Committee

Parks and Recreation Director Richard Gill reported that approximately ten years ago the City began with a small program where only five hours a week of staff time were dedicated towards almost non-existent programs at the Joslyn Center when parking was not an issue. However, over the years the programs have grown and continue to grow. Nearby residents who have limited parking, possible downtown employees, and beachgoers along with the growing programs are impacting parking.

Commissioner Tom Allard reported that at the last Senior Advisory Committee meeting, they prepared a resolution to the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Parking and Public Improvement Commission urging the City to explore parking options around the Joslyn Center to accommodate a growing number of older adults who are attending classes, activities and special events. Although Dial-A-Ride helps, it is not enough, and this is being brought to the Commission in the hopes that it can be brought to the attention of City Council.

Director Gill reported that this issue has been brought to the attention of department heads and if the Parks and Recreation Commission approves, the issue will be directed to the traffic engineer for review.

Commissioner Fred Manna stated that he agrees that parking is an issue and believes it should be reviewed by the Traffic Engineer, the Parking and Public Improvements Commission and City Council.

Commissioner Hersman reported that another possible avenue to consider would be to reduce the number of programs being offered.

After much discussion, the Commission agreed for Director Gill to recommend parking problems be addressed to the traffic engineer.

Ms. Madonna Newburg, John Street, expressed her concern that the traffic engineer would not be aware of the different groups that are impacted by this parking problem. She inquired the name of the traffic engineer.

Director Gill reported that he would work with the Community Development Director and obtain a timeline and report back to Commissioner Allard.

Mr. Steve Nicholson stated that this is not only a Joslyn Center issue but a Live Oak Park users issue. There is a need to optimize the parking and provide service to users of Joslyn Center and Live Oak Park. Mr. Nicholson proposed a four hour time limit from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Gerry O'Connor stated that this issue should be brought before the Parking and Public Improvements Commission and the traffic engineer rather than the Parks and Recreation Commission.

12/1217.2 – Renaming Baseball Field at Marine Park

With Commissioner Cajka's absence, this item has been moved to the next meeting.

12/1217.3 – Department Appreciation Event

This item has been moved to the next meeting to include all the Commissioners for discussion.

Commissioner Tom Allard inquired if Dr. Caprielian's concern should be agendized to the next meeting. Director Richard Gill reported that after meeting with all parties involved, he has written a letter to all those involved. Mr. Gill stated that the Parks and Recreation Department cannot be involved in every league that operates on the City's fields. However, Dr. Caprielian's inquiry gave the Department an opportunity to make some recommendations to the league such as making Manhattan Beach residents a priority and request the league to obtain a City permit. The league will also work with the Older Adult's Program in an effort to advertise more.

Commissioner Manna inquired who oversees the older adult softball league. Director Gill reported that the league oversees themselves and have been doing so for over 20 years. They have recreational components and the team is set up the same way as the adult softball leagues.

Commissioner Manna inquired if the competitive structure of the team is determined by the league. Director Gill affirmed that the structure is determined by the league.

The Commission agreed to agendize this topic to the next Commission meeting for further discussion.

Commissioner Manna also suggested agendizing the Sand Dune fence issue that was brought up by Mr. Gerry O'Connor.

COMMISSION ITEMS

None.

STAFF ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.