

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

January 23, 2012
6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers

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ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Cajka, Rothans, Nicholson, Hersman, Murray, Manna and Taylor.

Others Present: Director of Parks and Recreation Richard Gill, Recreation Services Manager Eve Kelso, Recreation Services Manager Gina Allen, Recreation Supervisor Jessica Vincent, Older Adult Supervisor Jan Buike, Volunteer of Outdoor Activities Tom Allard, and Recording Secretary Mary Kirchwehm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the December 13, 2011 Parks and Recreation Commission minutes were approved as written.

CEREMONIAL

None.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

GENERAL BUSINESS

2012/0123.1 – Recommendation from the Manhattan Beach Senior Advisory Committee to Install Petanque and Shuffleboard Courts and a Horseshoe Pit on Veterans Parkway, Across From the Joslyn Center, for the Older Adults Program

Director Gill introduced Recreation Services Manager Eve Kelso, Older Adults Supervisor Jan Buike, and Volunteer of Outdoor Activities Tom Allard.

Ms. Buike reported that the Older Adults Program (OAP) became a full time program four years ago and is headquartered in the Joslyn Community Center. The OAP offers emotional, physical, social, educational, and recreational programs. The recreation programs are a very important feature of the Older Adults Program because it encourages older adults to remain active. For example, ping pong is particularly important for those with cognitive impairment and those with Alzheimer's disease.

Mr. Allard reported that ping pong began two and a half years ago with participants playing once a week. Within the past seven months, participants are now playing four times a week and there are over 1,000 players, averaging 150 players a month.

Mr. Allard reported that petanque is the longest playing sport in the Older Adults Program. It began four years ago with participants playing twice a month. Participants are currently playing once a week on Live Oak field. Within the past seven months there have been approximately 216 participants, averaging 31 players a month.

Mr. Allard reported that participants have been playing horseshoes for two years on the grass area between Joslyn Center and the Scout House. Within the past seven months there have been approximately 216 participants playing once a month, averaging 30 players a month.

Mr. Allard reported that shuffleboard began less than a year ago. It is the most recent sport added to the OAP. Shuffleboard is played in the auditorium of the Joslyn Center. For the past seven months there have been approximately 169 participants, averaging 24 players a month. After the renovations are completed, the OAP would like to make all these activities available for participants twice a week.

Mr. Allard reported that new courts in the parkway would be a great asset not only to the OAP but to the entire community. The new courts would be available on the weekends for the community to use.

Ms. Kelso presented the current locations for these activities and the prospective locations on Veterans Parkway. Ms. Kelso reported that the total anticipated cost for this project is \$31,500. This would include two petanque courts, one horseshoe pit, two shuffleboard courts and other amenities such as tables, chairs, benches, etc. The goal is to keep the courts looking as natural as possible. Ms. Kelso stated that this was included in the original Capital Improvement Project (CIP) request to the City and it will be presented to City Council when they look at CIP projects. Ms. Kelso also reported that staff will be looking at potential donations. The Senior Advisory Committee is seeking support from the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Hersman inquired if the Veterans Memorial will be impacted in any way by these additions. Mr. Allard reported that the location will not interfere with the memorial. Commissioner Hersman also expressed concern about the horseshoe pit being too close to the path where it may impact people walking or running along the path. Mr. Allard reported that a fence can be installed around the pit. Mr. Gill reported that a back stop can also be installed.

Commissioner Nicholson inquired about required maintenance. Mr. Allard reported that the only maintenance would be raking or sweeping the petanque courts which could be done by the players. Mr. Allard does not foresee any maintenance required by City staff.

Commissioner Manna inquired if equipment for these activities would be available to the entire community. Mr. Allard reported that the equipment they have would be available to the older adults but that the general public would have to bring their own. Mr. Gill reported that if there is a demand from the public, equipment could be checked out at the Joslyn Center.

Commissioner Taylor inquired if it would be possible to move the shuffleboard court to avoid having to remove the tree. Mr. Allard reported that he would have to re-measure the area. Ms. Kelso reported that they will have an answer prior to going to City Council.

Commissioner Rothans inquired if these plans have been run by the City Engineer. Ms. Kelso reported that the plans have been reviewed by the superintendent of Public Works. Commissioner Rothans reported that there may be issues with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and suggests the plans be reviewed by the City Engineer. Commissioner Cajka inquired if the location would have any effect on the Hometown Fair. Mr. Allard reported that he did not think the location would have any effect on the Hometown Fair.

Commissioner Murray inquired if donations would be accepted by corporate donors. Ms. Kelso reported that donors have not yet been secured. Commissioner Murray inquired if a 501(c) has been set up for donations. Director Gill and Commissioner Nicholson reported any donations made to the City would be tax deductible.

Commissioner Nicholson made a motion to accept the recommendations by staff with regards to the shuffleboard courts, petanque courts and horseshoe pits on Veterans Parkway and recommend City Council proceed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rothans.

Ayes: Commissioners Cajka, Taylor, Murray, Manna, Hersman, Nicholson, and Rothans.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

2011/1213.2 – Discussion of Sand Dune Park Operations, and Consideration of Additional Reservation Time Slots per City Council Direction; Consideration for Permanent Fencing for the Top and Bottom of the Sand Dune

Director Gill introduced Recreation Services Manager Gina Allen and Recreation Supervisor Jessica Vincent. Director Gill provided history of the Sand Dune reservation system. Director Gill reported that after one year of the implementation of the reservation system, staff provided a report to City Council with positive feedback on the status of the reservation system. City Council directed staff to add a time slot during lunch from Monday – Thursday (12:30); add more hours on Saturday subject to daylight hours; allow older adults to utilize the dune without a reservation (subject to availability); and issue up to 50 pre-paid passes allowing pass holders to utilize the dune without a reservation, subject to availability. City Council was clear that no more than 20 people per reservation time slot are permitted on the dune.

Ms. Vincent reported that staff provided an update to City Council on October 18, 2011 on the status of the reservation system. City Council requested staff to hold two community outreach meetings to acquire more information from the community as to whether the existing fence around the sand dune should be replaced with a permanent fence and if so to get input from the community as to what color and style would be preferred for a permanent fence. In addition City Council asked staff to inquire from the community if reservation times should expand to include Sunday and reservation times prior to 8:00 a.m. Staff distributed a variety of public notifications informing the community of the two outreach meetings. Staff held these two community outreach meetings on December 7 and December 14, 2011. During these meetings, staff received feedback from the community.

Regarding the fence around the sand dune, the majority of those who attended the meeting were in favor of a fence more aesthetically pleasing preferably the color of sand or green. The color

black was also recommended since this is the color of the fencing at the City's other parks. One person at the meeting recommended no replacement and another person recommended seeking another option.

Regarding expanding the reservation system, the majority of those who attended the meetings wish to leave the reservation system alone rather than expanding hours.

Ms. Vincent also reported that it was recommended to remove the orange maintenance fence which is located at the top of the sand dune. Ms. Vincent reported that she spoke with Maintenance Superintendent Juan Price who is exploring possible options. One option would be to install a bollard. For safety reasons, some type of barrier would need to be installed. It was also requested that the community be surveyed before making any changes because it was thought that the membership and older adult passes were created prematurely. The community indicated that they would like to be notified of anything relating to the sand dune. Ms. Vincent reported that staff created an e-news posting that will provide information to anyone interested in news related to the sand dune. It would require individuals to register for e-news on the City's website and click on Sand Dune News. In addition staff circulates all notifications to participants who have registered for a class or who have made reservations on ActiveNet.

Attendees also recommended that staff maintain good records of those using the dune and any type of waitlist that may occur. Since its inception in December there is an average of approximately five older adults using the dune per day (Monday through Friday) and only one membership since inception. Staff will continue to track usage of the dune as well as track those who are turned away (due to the limit) and use the stairs. Some of the meeting attendees also recommended increasing the hourly and membership rates to offset support operations. They also recommended increasing the youth age to 16. Staff does not support the recommendation of increasing the youth age at this time because of the likely increase in teams using the sand dune. In summation, Ms. Vincent reported that staff recommends no changes at this time other than replacement of the fence.

Commissioner Hersman requested clarification of the one membership--one member on the dune or one membership purchased. Ms. Vincent reported that one membership has been purchased since its inception in January for \$20 a month. Commissioner Hersman inquired of the frequency the sand dune reaches its 20 maximum. Ms. Vincent reported that it varies but that it peaks during the summer months. Ms. Allen reported that it has only reached its maximum capacity a couple of times since August 2010.

Commissioner Hersman inquired why Friday at 12:30 is not included with the additional time slot. Ms. Vincent reported that Friday is street sweeping at noon and if a time slot is opened during that time, cars will either park in the neighborhood or park and receive a ticket.

Commissioner Hersman requested clarification on changing the older adult age to 65. Ms. Vincent reported that staff has no recommendation. Commissioner Hersman inquired if many residents were opposed to the age change. Ms. Vincent reported that she did not recall many residents opposed the older adult age change.

Commissioner Manna inquired if the staff recommendation to leave the reservation system the same included the membership pass that was implemented in December. Ms. Vincent reported that the staff recommendation to keep the reservation system as it is does include the membership pass and the older adult pass.

Commissioner Manna inquired if there is a breakdown showing the number of residents who use the dune compared to those who are non residents using the dune. Ms. Allen reported that the

majority of users are non-residents. Commissioner Nicholson stated that he saw statistics that reported 15% of the users are residents and that the utilization of the dune is at 45%. Ms. Allen confirmed that both are correct.

Commissioner Taylor inquired about the process of reservations made by groups of more than 20 people. Ms. Allen reported that no more than 20 people are allowed on the dune at any reservation whether it is a membership, older adult or a group. Ms. Allen stated that group reservations cannot be made; however, each person in the group would have to make an individual reservation.

Commissioner Rothans requested clarification on the number of people who attended the community meetings. Ms. Vincent reported that she did not have the attendance report on hand but more than 17 people attended each meeting and 17 is number of people that voted.

Commissioner Rothans reported that the chain link fence appears to be a temporary fence and inquired if a more permanent looking fence such as a wrought iron fence would appear more established. Ms. Vincent reported that the suggested chain link fence would be a permanent 6 ft. high fence that would be powder coated and appear permanent.

Commissioner Nicholson inquired when staff anticipates the next review period. Director Gill reported that staff would continue to monitor the dune and recommend that no more changes be made unless there are problems.

Commissioner Hersman inquired if staff has an opinion on Sunday reservations. Ms. Vincent reported that children and parents can go on the dune without reservations on Sundays.

Commissioner Murray reported that she would like to see a fence that is aesthetically pleasing. Director Gill reported that it was decided to continue with the chain link fence since that is what is at the other parks in the City. Ms. Vincent reported that the chain link fence is more durable. Commissioner Cajka expressed some safety concerns with the fence blending into too much with the sand and people possibly running into it.

Commissioner Manna inquired about the structure of the membership—if it is strictly for residents or non-residents. Director Gill reported that the membership has to be offered to everyone.

Manhattan Beach resident Gary Osterhout reported that he favors no change except for the fence. Mr. Osterhout is in favor of removing the bottom fence and using other ways to monitor the dune usage. He would like to see alternatives that would make the park look attractive.

Manhattan Beach resident Dennis White requested the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend to City Council that no further expansion of hours be made to the dune facility until full impact of the recently added weekday and Saturday hours can be evaluated. Mr. White does not wish to expand to Sunday hours. He reported that it should be re-evaluated after one year. He also is in favor of a fence because the dune cannot be regulated without a fence.

Manhattan Beach resident Wendy Watanabe Winter reported that she does not understand why a change occurred in December 2011 when the Staff Report in October 2011 did not recommend a change. She reported that the restrictions that were put in place in August 2010 were working well. Ms. Winter also stated that she believes more people would have attended the community meetings in December if advance notice was given and if they were not in the midst of the holiday season when a multitude of other programs were occurring. Ms. Winter is asking the

Parks and Recreation Commission to relay to City Council to keep in mind the mandate of the community.

Manhattan Beach resident David Peterson reported that he fully concurs with last two speakers.

Manhattan Beach resident Jacob Rome reported that he is co-founder of C.O.R.E. and that there are 700 people who have supported expanding the usage of the dune. Mr. Rome reported that he lives a couple hundred yards from the dune and works from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. Therefore, he cannot utilize the dune until the weekend where Saturday morning time slots fill up. Mr. Rome reported that he believes the low usage hours are because the hours are during the week when people are working. Mr. Rome stated that there are no complaints during the week or on Saturdays, and therefore would not expect any complaints on Sundays.

Manhattan Beach resident Sandy Franchini stated agrees that a fence is absolutely needed at the bottom of the dune and would like to leave Sundays for the children since adults have other options. She would also like the older adult age to be changed to either 62 or 65 years of age. Ms. Franchini requests that City Council pay attention to the residents who live by the dune and who are impacted by the dune.

Manhattan Beach resident Don Trucker reported that he believes changes were suggested because utilization was below what was expected. Mr. Trucker does not suggest a wrought iron fence because during the sand replenishment a fence would need to be temporarily moved to provide access for equipment. Mr. Trucker also reported that the age for seniors in Manhattan Beach is 55 years—the golf card and tennis card is available at 55 years. In addition, not all seniors are computer literate and this provides them an opportunity to utilize the dune without significantly increasing numbers.

Director Gill reported that two years ago, it was the target to have two sand replenishments each year, this was calculated by the number of people who use the dune. However, last year there was only one replenishment because half the number of people used the dune. This was also part of the reason why City Council took into consideration of opening it up to the seniors and the passes.

Manhattan Beach resident Rhonda Peterson reported that when the sand dune was completely open, there was a time when sand replenishment occurred every two weeks when there were 10,000 to 15,000 people a month on the dune. Ms. Peterson also stated that she is very upset that it took 12 years of discussion to get anything significant done for the citizens who live next to the park, and it took only one year for a small group of people to speak to City Council to get changes made without public input.

Manhattan Beach resident Mark Wilson presented a photo of his son after he was hit by a car on Bell Avenue by someone leaving the sand dune. Mr. Wilson recommends not to expand the hours of the dune.

Manhattan Beach resident Bob Vargow concurs with Mr. Wilson, and the first two regarding the park.

Manhattan Beach resident Bill Franchini concurs with Sandy Franchini and what has been said by the people who are requesting that no additional changes be made.

Manhattan Beach resident Kathleen Spilane reported that the last year has been heaven and is frustrated and upset by the changes and does not understand why the changes occurred when

Staff recommended not to change anything and why changes were made without community input.

Commissioner Rothans reported that while he can understand those who want to increase some of the hours slightly without causing disruption, he supports the overwhelming view of no additional changes.

Commissioner Murray reported that she agrees and concurs with staff and the residents that no changes be implemented. She also stated that she would like to see a fence that would be more aesthetically pleasing with perhaps some flowers.

Commissioner Hersman reported that she is sympathetic to the residents that live near the sand dune and does not think more time slots need to be added prior to 8:00 a.m. Commissioner Hersman also agrees that it would be nice to have a fence that is more aesthetically pleasing.

Commissioner Nicholson reported that a fence is necessary for control reasons and thinks that the report staff presented should be supported.

Commissioner Manna supports to leave the staff report as it is right now. He also reported that a fence is important to keep control of the dune.

Commissioner Cajka supports the staff report of no further changes and cautions that any changes made, even if it's minor, would eventually return the neighborhood to what it was prior to August 2010.

Commissioner Nicholson made a motion to accept and honor the recommendations of the staff report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rothans.

Ayes: Commissioners Cajka, Taylor, Murray, Manna, Hersman, Nicholson, and Rothans.
Noes: None.
Abstain: None.
Absent: None.

2012/0123.3 – Discussion of Staff Recognition at Commission Meetings

Commissioner Murray reported that the Santa Monica Parks and Recreation Commissioners have embraced the staff appreciation event for their employees and have taken it a step further by inviting recognized staff to attend monthly commission meetings to be acknowledged for their outstanding work. Commissioner Murray reported that it has had a positive impact on employees and their morale. In addition, it keeps the Commissioners and City Council informed.

Commissioner Nicholson suggested the possibility of each division describing their function to the Commission on a quarterly basis. In this way, the Commissioners will become more knowledgeable of the programs and services that are provided while acknowledging staff simultaneously.

Commissioner Hersman reported her concerns that the sentiment of some staff may be that they are being overlooked. She was also concerned that it adding more work to Director Gill.

Commissioner Rothans inquired if the City has an “Employee of the Quarter” program. Director Gill reported that although the City did have a recognition program, they no longer have it in place. Director Gill reported that he would speak with the managers and report back to the Commissioners with possibly a quarterly plan and possibly recognizing individuals.

Commissioner Murray expressed her concerns about the hourly staff who do not get recognized by City Council. Commissioner Murray very strongly supports that the appreciation done on a monthly basis.

Commissioner Manna expressed his concern with the exclusionary aspect of the recognition.

COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Rothans recognized that Commissioner Nicholson has been in Manhattan Beach longer than anyone present at the meeting.

Commissioner Murray thanked staff for the tree dedication. She also informed everyone that the CAPRCBM award nomination results will be announced in February. Commissioner Murray reported that she will forward the CPRS conference schedule to everyone.

Commissioner Murray thanked everyone for the CAPRCBM Outstanding Commissioner nomination.

Commissioner Nicholson thanked staff for working on the application for the CAPRCBM Outstanding Commission nomination.

Commissioner Nicholson provided an update on the Scout House plans. He reported that there is a working plan to build a two story senior center/scout house on the current scout house site. The Property Owner’s Association would donate \$500,000, and the scouts believe they could raise \$1.2 million dollars. The first floor would be primarily for seniors with shared dedicated space and the upstairs would be primarily for scouts. It will be proposed to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Commissioner Nicholson reported that feedback should be received within the next month or two.

Commissioner Cajka inquired about the status of the size of the wood chips at the dog parks. Director Gill reported that he spoke with Maintenance Superintendent Juan Price and was informed that the company who provides the wood chips will make an adjustment to the chip size.

Commissioner Cajka inquired if Director Gill has spoken to Patrick Donohue regarding involvement at the concerts in the park. Director Gill reported the request has been denied.

Commissioner Manna requested that he would like to reopen the conversation of a skate park. Director Gill reported that it would be put on the next Parks and Recreation agenda for further discussion before going to City Council.

STAFF ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned to the next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on Monday, February 27, 2012.

Mary Kirchwehm
Recording Secretary

Thomas Cajka
Commission Chairperson