

Parks and Recreation Commission
Skateboard Park Ad-hoc Committee Meeting
February 24, 2014 6:00pm at Marine Avenue Park

Meeting Notes:

Introductions & Background

- Parks and Recreation Commissioner and Ad-Hoc Committee member Nancy Hersman welcomed meeting attendees and introduced committee, invited participants, and city staff.
- Nancy provided a brief statement outlining the goal of the commission, noting that the City of Manhattan Beach has always supported its residents and the City's skateboarders have not been provided for in the same way as other athletes.
- Parks and Recreation director Mark Leyman gave a brief description of the meeting process and topics of discussion.
- Recreation Services Manager Idris Al-Oboudi gave background and summary information of past discussions, research and recommendations (See "Skateboard Park Info Brief" document)
- Idris opened it up for questions from Meeting attendees

Questions and Comments from Attendees:

Location:

- What is the recommended site currently used for?
 - Idris explained fitness station and provided usage statistics from past user studies
- Has a site on the west side of the city been considered?
- North-east end of Veterans' Parkway and the Manhattan Village Field parking lot suggested as other possibilities
- What will the impact be on all surrounding facilities that are already heavily used?
- Could the proximity of the proposed location to Northrop Grumman cause problems?

Survey:

- Can a survey gauging interest and support be distributed to the middle school and high school students?
- Mira Costa students commented on ways they can assist in distributing surveys at their school
- Is there real value in conducting a survey? What purpose does it serve?
 - Most recent survey information is from 2001 and city Council will ask for numerical data to show interest and support for a skateboard park
- We should add questions about design preferences, skill level, distance people are willing to travel, etc.

Funding:

- Money will likely be the biggest issue to work through in the process
- Funding options:
 - Privately funded and operated skateboard parks have been researched, but there has not been interest
 - Grants are most often reserved for lower-income areas and past research has shown there are very few available to us, and those that are will be very small
 - Funding from the City's Capital Improvement Project
 - Public funding campaigns and community fundraising (e.g. Kickstarter)

- Private sponsorships
 - A combination of sources
- Many comments in support of a community effort and having City's youth heavily involved in the fundraising process
- The City does not ask any other group (Older Adults, Youth Sports, tennis players, etc.) to pay up-front for the facilities they want and need. It could set a precedent for future projects.
- Grassroots fundraising could build support and be compounded by private donations
- Rewards of some type could be offered to encourage people to get involved in fundraising
- We should have a clear vision before seeking money
- A pay-to-use system could help recoup funds and cover maintenance costs
- There was a request for someone to step up and take the lead on a fundraising effort
- Supporters need to go out into the community and ask

Operations:

- Should we have a staffed or unstaffed park?
 - Staffing a skateboard park could actually put the City at higher risk of liability
 - State law protects unstaffed parks
- Are there ways other than staffing to monitor use and reduce unauthorized use?
- Will the park be attract and be open to non-residents?
- We cannot exclude non-residents and all of our facilities and programs are open to non-residents
- Programming is an important component of having a successful skateboard park
- How can we determine how many people will want to use the park and how can we control capacity?
 - Like new facility, use will spike at first, then level off

Other Comments:

- Liability issues should be major concern
 - Because it is defined as a hazardous activity, risk of liability is lower than expected
- Design is the best way to control use and limit liability