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CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

April 24, 2006
6:30 P.M.

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ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Cohen, Lamb, Lear, Marrill and Paralusz

Absent: Commissioner Harris

Others Present: Parks and Recreation Director Richard Gill, Recreation Services Manager Idris J. Al-Oboudi, Recreation Services Manager Mark Leyman, Keith Fulthorp and Recording Secretary Jane Grace

AGENDA CHANGES

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 27, 2006 Commission Meeting were approved as written.

CEREMONIAL

None

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

GENERAL BUSINESS

96/0327.1 – Implementation of CPRS/NAYS (California Parks and Recreation Society/National Alliance of Youth Sports) Youth Sports and Fitness Initiative

Idris J. Al-Oboudi, Recreation Services Manager, introduced the team that will be making the presentation of the CPRS/NAYS Youth Sports and Fitness Initiative: Keith Fulthorp, currently an instructor at Long Beach State University and a counselor at Redondo Beach Union High School; Mark Leyman, Recreation Services Manager (Sports and Aquatics); and Idris Al-Oboudi, Recreation Services Manager.

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that CPRS (California Parks and Recreation Society) in partnership with NAYS (National Alliance of Youth Sports) created the Youth Sports and Fitness Initiative. Mr. Al-Oboudi was selected by CPRS to be the first chairman of the task force in order to create a model plan for California which was then published as “Raising Community Standards.”

Mr. Mark Leyman reported that the department, in collaboration with CPRS, has been sharing positive coaching information with our user groups for three years, hoping to make Manhattan Beach a model city for positive coaching. Mr. Leyman identified the following community recommendations:

1. Adopt philosophy – the NAYS organization has been in existence and implementing their philosophy for the past 25 years in all 50 states. Mr. Leyman suggested that we want to adopt the philosophy in order to have a positive experience for our youth on our fields.
2. Appoint a Professional Youth Sports Administrator – Mr. Leyman reported that he, as well as several staff members, has been certified as a Youth Sports Administrator. We will be sharing information with all of the user groups and help them see the value of the NAYS program.
3. Accountability – holding people accountable for their actions.

Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that the proposed philosophy for the City of Manhattan Beach Youth Sports Initiative differs little from the national philosophy to change the youth sports culture and reported that the philosophy has been transcribed into the proposed resolution.

Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that the task force concluded that values and standards needed to be adopted as part of the framework of Youth Sports & Fitness Initiative in order to change youth sports in California. Mr. Fulthorp identified the following 11 core values of the initiative:

- Proper sports environment
- Programs based on the well-being of children
- Drug, tobacco & alcohol free environment
- Part of a child’s life
- Training
- Parent’s active role
- Positive role models
- Parental commitment
- Safe playing situations
- Equal play opportunity
- Drug, tobacco & alcohol free adults

Mr. Fulthorp reported that the vision of the VIP (vision, insight, planning) is “We create positive youth sports experiences, better sports for kids, better kids for life” and we are advocating that everyone adopt this vision as well.

Mr. Al-Oboudi suggested that we are the creator of kid’s experiences and reported that when the members of CPRS were surveyed, it was discovered that 97% of these sports experiences, good

and bad, are occurring on city owned fields. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported on the following reasons why they get their kid's involved in sports and reasons for parental misbehavior:

- Living vicariously through child
- Vision of stardom
- Securing a college scholarship
- Family values
- Professional role models
- Win at all cost attitude

Mr. Al-Oboudi identified the following missions of the initiative:

- Provide recreational youth sports opportunities
- Increase youth sports participation
- Teach fair play and good sportsmanship
- Facilitate coach/parent training and development
- Improve youth fitness and nutrition
- Reduce obesity in youth
- Strengthen youth sports image and value to the community
- Support professional growth in youth sports leadership

Mr. Fulthorp reported that in a survey to youth sports administrators across California, over 75% of the respondents reported that they had problems with parents that were misbehaving, 62% reported challenges with conducting background checks on volunteers, 58% reported challenges with youth participants, 56% reported challenges related to working with community organizations about league management, and 52% reported a lack of coaching education. Mr. Fulthorp suggested that the bonus in advocating implementation of NAYS programs is that the coaching education is canned and coaches can get certified on-line by taking NAYS classes and parents can view videos from the Parents Association for Youth Sports (PAYS) on how to be an appropriate parent and best support your child.

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that there is a very small percentage of out-of-control parents in Manhattan Beach and suggested that we have excellent and well organized organizations in Manhattan Beach, i.e. AYSO, Manhattan Little League; however, we are the landlords of our facilities and we need to strengthen our organizations.

Mr. Al-Oboudi identified the following strategies for implementing the core competencies of the initiative:

- Communicating the vision
- Forming partnerships
- Expanding professional competencies
- Strengthening the sports and fitness ethic
- Documenting results
- Documenting best practices
- Impacting public police
- Expanding resources

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that we are asking you to consider the impact on our public policy by adopting the philosophy as well as a resolution and making these national standards part of the City of Manhattan Beach and implementing more of the NAYS recommendations, specifically to mandating parents and coaches go to orientation and training.

To summarize, Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that we are interested in adopting the recommended Youth Sports philosophy, appointing our youth sports administrator, encourage accountability to the philosophy and use resources that are available through NAYS and CPRS organization to change the youth cultural, making it a more positive youth sports culture in the City of Manhattan Beach.

During a discussion among the commissioners, the following points were made:

1. Commissioner Lamb inquired about the authority of the professional youth sports administrator over the local sports organizations, i.e. AYSO, MLL.
 - Mr. Leyman indicated that the only authority the administrator would have would be to oversee the established minimum standards which would be established by contract between the City and the local organizations as a condition for field use.
 - Mr. Fulthorp indicated that the city's user groups, i.e. AYSO and MLL, already have accountability standards for behavior and we are augmenting those standards and encouraging these groups to adhere to their standards.
 - Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that the City would require that the user groups adhere to our code of ethics; this code of ethics already exists in their organization and if there is a dispute, the user group will resolve the issue.
 - Mr. Gill indicated that the City wants to work with the user groups without being imposing or dictatorial in the implementation of this program
2. Commissioner Gill reported that as a parent involved in sports for ten years, he has seen too many incidents and thanked staff for introducing the NAYS program to the Commission. He inquired whether it will become a requirement of the user groups to join NAYS before they will be permitted to use our fields. Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that the user groups will be required to adhere to the minimum standards of ethical conduct on the field. Mr. Gill indicated that if we obtain City Council buy-in on the program and pass a resolution, it would become a requirement for field use.
3. Commissioner Paralusz suggested if we obtain City Council approval, the organizations should have to comply with standards; otherwise there would be no point in adopting the program.
4. Commissioner Cohen suggested that you obtain buy-in from the organizations before you present the program to City Council. Mr. Gill indicated that staff has received some resistance from the organizations who see this program as an imposition.

5. Commissioner Cohen suggested that someone has to become the ultimate authority. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the City of Manhattan Beach, by this resolution, says that we are the landlord of the facilities; and we will have basic requirements with minimum standards when a field is reserved.
6. Commissioner Lear suggested that there may be some resistance from local organizations, i.e. Manhattan Little League, who have self-policed for many years and might say that they can handle their own business without the city's rules. Mr. Leyman suggested that we are making some progress in that the trainers are seeing the value of this program and our vision for the ball fields with rules that will impact change.
7. Commissioner Cohen asked whether the success of the program has been measured. Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that the NAYS website reports on the program successes. He suggested that by adopting the NAYS policy, the organizations agree to the following three items:
 - Positive youth sports involvement
 - Training for parents and coaches
 - Hold people accountable for their actions
8. Commissioner Lear commended staff for their presentation but suggested that they should anticipate resistance from the organizations because of their paranoia that the city may usurp their authority. Mr. Al-Oboudi suggested that we need to strengthen and find allies within these organizations
9. Commissioner Lamb indicated that he was involved with Manhattan Little League for several years and only experienced one person that was a problem in the organization; he suggested that the problem, at least in Manhattan Beach, has been overstated. He suggested that if the program is presented to City Council after obtaining buy-in from the organizations, it would have a better chance of being passed. Mr. Leyman suggested that we would start off by obtaining 20% adoption and with increases each year would show the success and value of the program.
10. Commissioner Gill reported that he was in the middle of a fight between two AYSO coaches, in front of eight year old children; he feels there as been a big change in parents and he feels very strongly that this program is needed. Mr. Gill agreed that during his many years volunteering in youth sports, he has also seen a big change in the expectations of parents.
11. Commissioner Marrill agreed with Commissioner Gill. She indicated that during her nine years playing AYSO, she has known many children that have been deterred from playing because of the attitude of parents. If some parents choose not to participate, she is concerned that the kids will be punished by not being able to participate. Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that NAYS does not punish the child for the acts of their parents.
12. Mr. Lamb suggested that a trend that is developing in youth sports is that it is seen as a path to a college scholarship. Mr. Al-Oboudi suggested that the NAYS program teaches "competing with honor" i.e. good conduct and building skills.

13. Commissioner Cohen indicated that she is in favor of the program but should strengthen it by talking to the organizations and receiving their buy-in.
14. Commissioner Paralusz would like a second presentation made to the Commission, once staff has met with other organizations and honed the recommendation, before making a final presentation to City Council.
15. Commissioner Lear suggested that we might not need another formal presentation before it goes to Council but he would appreciate a report back on how the organizations responded. If we get the buy-in from the organizations, City Council might respond favorably.
16. Commissioner Gill suggested that we need “teeth”, saying the organizations can’t use our fields without buy-in to the program.
17. Commissioner Paralusz suggested that as the landlord to the facilities, we might be liable if an incident happens on the field. Mr. Gill did indicate that the organizations indemnify the City with insurance.
18. Commissioner Lamb agreed that if we bring the organizations in, it will be an easy sell to City Council. He suggested that it is not necessary to use fear to sell the program but instead show the organizations where the program benefits them.

OTHER COMMISSION BUSINESS

Commissioner Lear indicated that no nominations have been submitted for the Youth Services Award. He has been in contact with some of the local organizations and their board members and will be asking them to submit possible nominations for the May Commission meeting.

Mr. Gill asked the Commission to suggest possible items for the City Council Work Plan.

The following items were suggested:

- Commissioner Paralusz – Community Garden
- Commissioner Lear – Dog Runs, Skate Park, Aquatics Center

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. to the next scheduled meeting on May 22, 2006.