

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
Monday, July 24, 2023  
**4:00 PM**  
Location: City Hall - City Council Chambers  
**MINUTES**

**A. CALL TO ORDER** – Vice Chair Allen called the meeting to order at 4:06 pm.

**B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

**C. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Greenberg\*, Vice Chair Allen, McCarthy, Zimbalist, Komatinsky.

**Absent:** Doran, Windes

**Others Present:** Parks and Recreation Director Mark Leyman, Senior Recreation Manager (SRM) Melissa McCollum, Senior Management Analyst (SMA) Linda Robb, Recording Secretary Rosemary Lackow

\* joined meeting at 4:08 pm

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 24, 2023**

It was moved and seconded (Zimbalist/Komatinsky) to approve the minutes as submitted.

Roll Call:

Ayes: McCarthy, Komatinsky, Zimbalist, Vice Chair Allen

Noes: None

Absent: Doran, Windes, Greenberg

Abstain: None

**E. CEREMONIAL** – None

**F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit)** - None

City Engineer Katie Doherty gave a brief status report on the Polliwog Playground project noting several construction challenges that have resulted in delays. Much progress has been made and the re-opening is expected in September.

Public Works Maintenance Manager Sean Roberts provided reports regarding landscaping at Sand Dune Park and Polliwog Park.

**Sand Dune Park;** Manager Roberts reported that, in response to complaints, a city team, including the Public Works Department and other departments, Urban Forester and landscaping contractor has investigated conditions at the park. The team found that close to a dozen (out of 36) strawberry trees are distressed, and the irrigation system has had some problems, including failure of a couple of monitor heads and a physical turn off by unknown persons. In addition, a large grassy area near Bell Avenue has browned. The Public Works maintenance staff, working with Merchants Landscaping (park

maintenance contractor) has worked to resolve irrigation problems. The grassy area has been fertilized and hand watered (using as much reclaimed water as possible) and the irrigation system has been secured and the monitor heads repaired. In addition, vegetation has been trimmed so that the watering will have improved coverage. He feels that the situation is well under control.

Manager Roberts responded to Commission questions indicating that Public Works became aware of the irrigation shut off two weeks prior and the plan is to focus first on reviving distressed trees and the grassy area. He feels confident the grassy area will start to “green up” in the next several weeks, but some areas of ground covering on the slope is in a dormant state and is not expected to green up until winter. Any of the strawberry trees that do not survive, will be replaced, likely with another type of tree. He emphasized that out of hundreds of trees planted during the revitalization of the park, most (e.g. melaleucas, and Brazilian peppers) are doing well. For a project of this scale the loss of a dozen trees is not considered unusual and the project budget will cover the cost of replacing the trees, and, the current vegetation condition is not considered a fire hazard. Lastly, Manager Roberts noted that, going forward, systems will be in place whereby the park landscaping will be watched closely to address such situations.

**Polliwog Park:** Maintenance Manager Roberts reported that the Public Works Department will, in late August begin to plant around 100 new trees in Polliwog Park, parallel to Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Redondo Avenue. The new trees will be 48-inch box in size (6-8 inch trunk diameter). Concurrently, about a dozen existing trees which have been found to be diseased and which pose a safety threat will be removed. Although mature trees are slated for removal, the net gain in the number of replacement trees will, in time, result in a more dense tree canopy.

Manager Roberts noted that staff will inform the city council through a city manager briefing report and the school district will be kept in the loop. There is no plan as yet to formally notify the surrounding community.

Commissioner McCarthy suggested that the neighborhood be informed or some form of public notice be provided as she feels residents will appreciate knowing of the plan to plant many new trees. Commissioner Komatinsky suggested that the work if possible be delayed until after the fall school term starts up.

Vice Chair Allen inquired as to his observation on Sunday where he saw irrigation was on continuously for a 2-hour period (11:30 am to 1:30 pm) at the Pacific Elementary school field. Manager Roberts speculated that this may be related to a recent rehab of school fields but will look into this situation.

## **G. GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **1. 23/0723.01 Hometown Fair Agreement**

SMA Robb gave a brief introduction, noting that the current ten-year agreement will expire

September 3, 2023. City staff has been working with the Hometown Fair Board of Directors (HTF) on a new ten-year agreement, a copy of which is attached to this meeting's staff report. Staff recommends that the Commission for the City Council to approve the attached revised agreement, with a change on page 2, Section 2 (City Responsibilities), paragraph C where the amount of \$15,000 would be reduced to \$10,000, relating to third party public safety costs. SMA Robb also noted that an indemnification section has been taken out for review by the city's legal staff; that section will be put back into the agreement.

SMA Robb concluded by stating that this item is expected to be brought to City Council at its meeting on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Commission discussed the draft agreement. Staff clarified that third party public safety costs that would be covered by the proposed \$10,000 cap includes things like private security staffing and temporary traffic control measures that exceed normal city resources.

Vice Chair Allen called for public comment; seeing none, he called for a motion.

It was moved and seconded (Zimbalist/Komatinsky) that the Commission recommend that the City Council approve the submitted draft agreement with the Hometown Fair, with a change as noted in paragraph 2.C (reduction from \$15,000 to \$10,000).

Roll Call:

AYES: Allen, Komatinsky, Zimbalist, McCarthy, Greenberg

NOES: None

ABSENT: Doran, Windes

ABSTAIN: None.

Vice Chair Allen announced the motion passed 5-0-2-0.

Commissioner McCarthy inquired as to the status of the 2023 holiday fireworks show that is shot off the pier. Director Leyman stated that staff is working with all involved parties and agencies and he feels positive that permits will be issued to allow continuance of this event as in past years. More detail will be available at future meetings.

## 2. 23/0123.02 Work Plan Items Discussion

### a. Dog Parks & Community Parkettes

Vice Chair Allen noted that the committee has no new information on this work plan item. Vice Chair noted the inadequacy of the shade canopy at the Live Oak Park dog park (shading less than 5% of the space) and suggested some measures could be looked at to provide additional shading with input from Little League.

Regarding Polliwog Park, Director Leyman noted that one tree has been removed and other items on the long term deferred maintenance priority list are forthcoming. Staff continues in its regular monthly meetings with the school district to discuss the need for a plan to relocate school structures to accommodate the dog park expansion.

- b. Explore Repurposing Pay 'n' Play Racquetball Land/Building. (Windes, Greenberg)

In Commissioner Windes' absence, Director Leyman indicated that this project remains on hold.

- c. Sand Dune Park Master Plan (Nature Areas & Trails, building)

Commissioner Zimbalist reported that as the next major step since the community outreach, the City Council will be considering amending an existing contract with landscape architect David Volz which is expected to go before the City Council on September 5. After the contract is amended the design firm will develop schematic plans for the park improvement options as has come forward through community input. Director Leyman confirmed that the contract amendment for Sand Dune Park is part of a larger portfolio of projects.

- d. Explore Aquatics Facility

Commissioner McCarthy reported that on August 1<sup>st</sup> the City Council will be considering authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement for Professional Architectural and Aquatic Preliminary Design Services for the Begg Pool project. She feels that the consultant being recommended is highly creative and in doing due diligence, she found the firm has an excellent track record for this type of work. No new funding will be needed as there will be a re-allocation of approximately \$100,000 to cover the contract which will look at the option of having two pools.

Once an agreement is executed, the consultant will develop schematic plans and community meetings will be held; this initial phase taking about six months. Commissioner McCarthy re-emphasized her concern that the scope of this project is being misunderstood by some in the community as being a large regionally oriented aquatics center, but in fact the facility envisioned is a "community" scale facility as has been established at this site for 80 years.

- e. Donation Policy and Programs

Commissioner Komatinsky updated that the committee and a subcommittee continue to meet, so far focusing on the organization structure of the organization. She anticipates having a comprehensive report ready to show the City Council in October.

- f. 2024 Juneteenth Celebration

SRM McCollum reported on the July 22<sup>nd</sup> listening session. Approximately 40 persons attended, educational presentations were made and discussions and brainstorming occurred in small groups with ideas brought together in the large group setting.

The session input will be added to the survey input after it closes on September 15. The survey can be accessed at [www.manhattanbeach.gov/survey](http://www.manhattanbeach.gov/survey). She noted that the committee is partnering with Mira Costa High School in figuring out how to involve students and youth. Preliminary ideas from the community include: a fair with music, art,

food and vendors, and an education component such as having a speaker series. Other ideas raised included having satellite venues and event programming for all ages, developing strategic partnerships, and potentially using an experienced event organizer. The committee collected a list of people who are interested in staying involved or informed.

The Commission briefly discussed. Commissioner Komatinsky noted that the timing may be complicated as in the days/week around the Juneteenth holiday (June 19<sup>th</sup>) there are several important school events happening. She suggested that a good resource may be the city of El Segundo which had a community Juneteenth celebration this year.

#### g. Enhanced Holiday Events and Checklist

Director Leyman briefly described the background and action needed to establish a new committee. The committee will look into placement and duration of display of American flags on holidays such as Fourth of July, Memorial Day, Veterans Day – such holidays when such patriotic display is appropriate but the committee could potentially add in any other holidays. Staff will get into more details with the committee, but the basic goal would be for the committee to, collaboratively with community input, compile a list of holidays including but not limited to those with flag displays or other enhancements. This list will memorialize the events and operational activities to ensure that these activities are done on a recurring basis.

Subsequently, Commissioners Greenberg and Komatinsky volunteered to serve with Commissioner Windes (who had indicated her interest through Director Leyman) on this committee.

## H. STAFF ITEMS

### City Council Recap and Parks and Recreation Department Updates

Director Leyman made announcements covering past, and upcoming events and activities:

- Recent events successfully held this past week: Shakespeare by the Sea (2 productions); the Manhattan Open Tennis Tournament (Live Oak and Country Club); Concerts in the Parks (ongoing); and the Manhattan Beach Grand Prix Bike Race.
- In recognition of the fact that July is National Parks and Recreation Month, Director Leyman described that he and SRM McCollum recently distributed ice cream and popsicles to the city team as well as to all youth participants at all facilities throughout the city, as thanks for a very successful summer program.

Vice Chair Allen took this opportunity to thank his fellow Parks and Recreation commissioners for the work they do as well.

- Ribbon cutting Save the Dates: Strand Par Course (expected towards the end of

July); Catalina Classic commemorative sculpture and Velzy surf shop plaque (tentatively on August 24 to coincide with this year's Catalina Classic event).

- The City Council approved a new 10-year joint use agreement with the School District, which provides for public use of school facilities and fields. Some noteworthy provisions include: 1) Mira Costa pool operations will be under the purview of the school district, but the city's Dolphin Swim Team will be allowed to use the pool for three hours a week; 2) The Mira Costa small gym (Pavilion) will be available to the city for a Summer Sunset Basketball League (starting next summer, the programming is being discussed); and 3) City will have available for use in summer camps, 2 classrooms for an 8-week period. The coming together of the city and school district in this agreement is a great benefit to the community.

## H. COMMISSION ITEMS

### **Older Adult Program Update.** (McCarthy)

Commissioner McCarthy reported: 1) On a temporary basis, Mary McCabe is now acting as staff liaison but a permanent liaison will start soon; 2) Seniors continue to be very concerned about the slow pace of the Senior and Scout Community Center Project at Live Oak Park; Councilmember Lesser informed at a recent meeting that the project plans are scheduled for Planning Commission review on August 23; 3) Seniors continue to be very concerned about parking difficulties at the Joslyn Center; meetings are being held to explore solutions; and 4) Seniors have expressed concern that some new street signs installed at Polliwog Park on a trial basis are difficult to read due to lack of contrast between their light colored background and the sky. Commissioner McCarthy has communicated these comments to City Council.

The Commission briefly discussed the parking issue at Joslyn; Commissioner McCarthy noted that attention is being focused on this and a combination of solutions are being discussed. Director Leyman noted that this issue is being studied by the Traffic Engineer with the PPIC (Parking and Public Improvements Commission) and the goal is to come up with a solution that makes sense and will help the seniors as much as possible but there are many constituents affected and the challenge is to find a balance.

**School District Update** (Komatinsky) Commissioner Komatinsky congratulated the city and school district in finalizing the joint use agreement as this symbolizes the very collaborative relationship between the city and school district for the good of the community. Otherwise, with school out for the summer, the district is focusing on hiring for the next year and planning the 2024 calendar.

**Student Update** (Greenberg) Student commissioner Greenberg reported: 1) the documentary film "Grandpa Cherry Blossom" by 2023 Mira Costa graduate Maddox Chen was recently shown locally and he highly recommends the film; 2) the "Where Community Grows" city parks photo contest is underway until July 31; and 3) a new intergenerational chess club (older adults/Mira Costa students) has started up on Saturdays from 11 am to 1 pm. at the Joslyn Center.

## **I. ADJOURNMENT**

At 5:23 p.m. it was moved and seconded (Komatinsky/Greenberg) to adjourn to Monday, August 28, at 4:00 p.m. The motion passed 5-0-2-0 with a voice vote (Commissioners Windes, Doran absent).