

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

Tuesday, October 23, 2023

**4:00 PM**

Location: City Hall - City Council Chambers and Zoom and Teleconference  
by Commissioner Allen (per Government Code Section 54953(b))

**A. CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Doran called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

**B. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

**C. ROLL CALL**

Present: Allen (remote), Zimbalist, Chair Doran, McCarthy, Windes, Greenberg, Komatinsky

Absent: None

Others Present: Parks and Recreation Director Mark Leyman, Senior Recreation Manager (SRM) Melissa McCollum, Senior Management Analyst (SMA) Linda Robb, Public Works Maintenance Manager Sean Roberts; Urban Forester Ernest Area, Recording Secretary Rosemary Lackow

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 26, 2023**

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

Roll Call:

Ayes: Allen, Greenberg, Komatinsky, Zimbalist, Chair Doran, McCarthy, Windes

Noes: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Chair Doran announced the motion passed 7-0

**E. CEREMONIAL** – None

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

**G. GENERAL BUSINESS**

**1. 23/0123.03 Work Plan Items Discussion**

a. Dog Parks & Community Parkettes

Commissioner Allen noted that the committee and staff met about two weeks ago with the city consultant, David Volz Design (DVD) regarding various dog park and parkette improvements. Staff expects to receive cost estimates from DVD this week.

b. Explore Repurposing Pay 'n' Play Racquetball Land/Building

Commissioner Windes noted that this project is still awaiting direction from City Council.

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

Commissioner Zimbalist updated that the ad hoc subcommittee (Zimbalist, Windes, Allen) and staff met with David Volz Design (DVD). DVD has all community meeting input and together they reviewed a list of community issues and ideas (such as lighting, building replacement, preservation of mulberry trees, replacement of the original park sign, and playground equipment). The timeframe discussed called for: submittal in about two weeks of conceptual renderings and schematics followed by another meeting to review the plans; scheduling of a third public outreach event in early December and, submittal of final conceptual plans to City Council no later than March, 2024.

Commissioner Windes added that she would like to learn more about decorative fencing, including addressing its compatibility with the playground area and timing for processing design approval through the Cultural Arts Commission. Commissioner Windes expressed concern about the extent of outreach for the December community event. Commissioner Zimbalist asked whether the subcommittee might collaborate with the Cultural Arts Commission on the decorative fencing.

Director Leyman stated that, pending direction from the council, the decorative fencing would typically be a separate public arts project of the Cultural Arts Commission.

Director Leyman described the typical RFP art selection process undertaken by the Cultural Arts Commission and noted that decorative fencing will be reviewed within the context and scope of the park master plan being developed. While a joint committee is possible between Parks and Recreation and Cultural Arts, this would be up to Council.

Commissioner McCarthy recalled that a request for decorative fencing arose from residents who attended prior outreach events, at locations both at the bottom of the park slope and top, where residential streets dead end.

Director Leyman informed that the prior notification of community meetings went to residents within a 1,000 foot radius of the park which covered about 1,000 households. Commissioner Komatinsky suggested that the subcommittee augment this by handing out informational flyers to residents.

Commissioner Zimbalist updated that the park continues to be lush and railroad tie maintenance is being done. Commissioner Windes reported seeing a lot of water at the top of the dune, on the south side. Director Leyman will inquire with Public Works Manager Roberts as to whether the irrigation schedule will be seasonally adjusted.

d. Explore Community Aquatics Facility

Commissioner McCarthy reported that staff and the committee will be meeting this week with the city consultant, HMC, and the first community meeting has been scheduled for November 13 at Manhattan Heights Park, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The community meeting is very important in that residents will be able to share important issues and what they'd like to see incorporated into the project. Input can also be provided on a survey on the city's website, on the Parks and Recreation Department page, linked at "Begg Pool Project".

Commissioner McCarthy urged the commissioners to spread the word about the community meeting in November, and has a form letter that she can share. Manager McCollum stated that notice will be published on November 9<sup>th</sup> in the Beach Reporter, postcards will be mailed to households in a radius measured 1,000 feet from the exterior boundaries of the park, and the city communications team will send e-blasts including to MBUSD and various social media postings. Commissioner Komatinsky suggested letters to the editor of the Daily Breeze; Director Leyman advised that newspaper letters should be authored by non-Commission community members.

e. Donation Policy and Programs/Non-Profit Discussion

Commissioner Komatinsky provided an overview of the draft 501(c)(3) "LoveMB Foundation" proposal attached to the agenda staff report, covering its various components, including: History of the Donation Program, Mission Statement; Donation Opportunities; Governance and Board of Directors; Administration and Finance; Communication Plans; Bylaws and MOU Documentation and Development; Website links for review (examples of other long-standing municipal similar programs; and The 'Ask" (guidance being sought from City Council).

Commissioner Komatinsky fielded questions and comments, noting that the website will have a visual menu of various items that people can support with a donation and, for now, facility naming rights will not be on the menu of donation possibilities. Commissioner Komatinsky emphasized that the foundation is designed so that donations will start out as relatively small but over time can grow.

It was moved and seconded (Komatinsky, Windes) that the Parks and Recreation Commission support the proposed LoveMB Foundation 501(c)(3) formation proposal and attachments as submitted.

The motion passed 7-0 by a voice vote.

f. 2024 Juneteenth Celebration

Commissioner Windes thanked the subcommittee for their efforts and reported that so far 1,700 survey responses have been submitted of which 280 are from residents and the remainder from Mira Costa Students. In addition, 15 students from the high school's Black Scholars Union have volunteered to help. She acknowledged Mira Costa Principal Gerger for the high school's great support. Next step: a community meeting has been scheduled on November 4<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. at the library to discuss the survey results and how to incorporate into a celebration for 2024. The committee plans to bring a draft proposal to the Commission in November for a recommendation that could then be forwarded to City Council in December.

g. 23/0926.03 Enhanced Holiday events and Checklist

Director Leyman summarized that the subcommittee has come up with a list of holidays and enhancements as stated in the staff report. Staff is currently awaiting updated cost estimates for American flags, which will be incorporated into a future report to City Council with other appurtenant information (flag quantities, display locations, timeframe for display etc.).

2. 23/0926.01 Consideration of New Concept Proposed in Lieu of the Veterans Recognition Wall Program

Director Leyman gave a recap of the City Council discussion at its October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting regarding this project. City Council directed that the Parks and Recreation Commission further refine a Fallen Soldier program, looking at various issues such as criteria for being recognized, size/scale and form for the monument, and location (civic center plaza suggested) and the program name, suggesting that “soldier” be replaced by a more applicable term, such as “heroes” (e.g. “Fallen Heroes Monument”) that is applicable to all branches of military service. It was also noted that the existing Veterans Monument includes both “fallen soldiers” and veterans.

Director Leyman called for Commissioners to form a new ad-hoc committee for this project which is added to their Work Plan, accept further information from Gary McAulay, who is present, and provide any additional input.

Commissioner McCarthy volunteered to serve on this new ad-hoc committee and expressed concern that the word “heroes” as a replacement for “soldiers” seems too broad and does not capture the military service aspect

Director Leyman noted that the subcommittee could consider an alternative name for the monument and confirmed that the Council’s intent was to specifically recognize individual names of Manhattan Beach military servicemembers who lost their lives in defense of country and though a wall monument was the initial concept, going forward, the monument could be expressed as something other than a wall, such as a statue, sculpture or other entity. A location suggested by the Council was the Civic Center plaza.

Chair Doran stated that he will assist Commissioner McCarthy who agreed to serve as the chair.

Gary McAulay addressed the Commission. He clarified that the project would honor those from Manhattan Beach who died while serving in the military, which he believes numbers about 25 or so, not those who have served in the military, which would number in the thousands and would not include fallen City police officers which are typically honored differently. He also clarified that the word “soldier” typically refers to army service and agrees that the project name needs to be inclusive of all service branches. Traditionally memorials have been called things like a “War Dead Memorial” but in this case he believes that the desire is for some other name. This will take some discussion by the committee after perhaps looking into other such memorials that have been established.

He recognized that the existing city monument recognizes both veterans (who survived military conflict) and those who died during conflict, but feels strongly that those who gave their lives in service should be honored separately from veterans. He feels that the form of the monument could be a wall with plaques or something else that might involve an artwork. He personally favors a modest expression, scale wise and understands that it is

a balancing act: to recognize those who have died, but to still maintain a happy environment in public places. As to location, it should be somewhere that can accommodate a Memorial Day event.

Mr. McAulay noted that establishing a relationship to Manhattan Beach can be complicated and tricky. He has performed a great deal of research including checking into records with the American Legion and many other sources. He confirmed that eligibility would not necessarily require losing life during combat, but could be through other service related activities.

Director Leyman noted that, should the Parks and Recreation committee, upon working out details, recommend a memorial that encompasses an artwork, then, at the Council's direction, the project would be forwarded to the Cultural Arts Commission to develop and process an RFP as this is required for projects funded through the Public Art Trust Fund. The Director confirmed that the two-member subcommittee will be working with him closely, and will start with an exchange of information and community input will be generated going forward.

## **H. STAFF ITEMS**

### **Public Works project updates (note: this item heard prior to General Business)**

City Urban Forester Ernest Area updated regarding the Polliwog Park tree project, corrected prior information by stating that no trees have yet been purchased but otherwise information remains the same regarding the number of trees, minimum size, height when planted and minimum distance between ground and overhead branches (6-foot minimum).

A community meeting to discuss options for selecting new trees has been scheduled for October 25 (Wednesday) 11:00 am to noon at the Begg Pool parking lot. Attendance is open to the public and several individuals and groups such as Audubon Society, Botanical Garden, and Friends of Polliwog Park have been invited. Public Works has also been working with the school district and is aware of its concerns regarding maintaining visual line-of-sight through the trees. The final decision on the types (species) of replacement trees will be a collective decision. The tree planting process is expected to take two weeks.

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

Director Leyman announced/reported:

Upcoming events:

- October 27, MBAC opening for exhibit honoring the legacy of Homeira Goldstein—all encouraged to attend.
- October 29, at the pier, annual Pumpkin Race
- November 11: Annual Veteran's Day ceremony, Veterans memorial, 11:00 a.m.
- November 15, Pier Lighting

City Council updates:

- October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting: Director Leyman presented updates for 22 active work plan projects and highlighted 17 that are completed. Council expressed support for staff but also concern for workload.
- October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, Senior Recreation Manager McCollum presented regarding options for spending the city's \$9.5 million surplus library funds. City Council directed to: 1) move forward with digitizing the historical collection (through consultant HAI); 2) develop plans for expanded library programming (L.A. County Library working with MB Library Commission); and 3) move forward to explore the development of a concept for a "Cultural Library"—which could encompass programming as art center (exhibits and glaze lab), a "makerspace", historical collection storage and access, and a library book component; Councilmember Napolitano will be city council "point person" working with the County Library, with extensive community input and involvement including polling the community on potential sites on the city's east side. In discussing, Commissioner Komatinsky was encouraged to provide names of local residents who were involved with developing an innovative facility (e.g. makerspace) for the school district and who may be good resources for this project. Commissioner McCarthy sees that having a "Cultural Center" could provide a space to have more robust cultural events with tie-ins to not only books but other media forms.

Director Leyman briefly reviewed the new workplan process: in January the Commission will finalize its proposal for the next year's list of projects which will be presented by Director to the Council in March for approval; thereafter quarterly the council will be updated on workplan progress.

## I. COMMISSION ITEMS

**Older Adult Program Update.** (McCarthy) Commissioner McCarthy reported, with the Scout House project progressing now, there has been talk about resuming planning for a fundraiser that had been cancelled in 2020. The group has also been filling out a survey regarding programming; attendance at technology training events has been very strong.

**School District Update** (Komatinsky) Commissioner Komatinsky reported that, beside regular activities, the district has started to gear up for a community conversation on the parcel tax renewal measure that will be on the March, 2024 ballot.

**Student Update** (Greenberg) Commissioner Greenberg reported on activities such as football and the recent homecoming, the upcoming pop choir concert and fall play Peter and the Star Catcher.

**Pumpkin Race** Commissioner Windes reminded that at 1:30 on October 29<sup>th</sup> the Commission's race is scheduled and encouraged all to join in. The pumpkin will feature a small pool that represents Begg Pool.

## J. ADJOURNMENT

At 5:56 p.m. it was moved and seconded (Komatinsky/Zimbalist) to adjourn to Monday, November 27<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. The motion passed 7-0.