

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

February 23, 2009  
6:30 P.M.

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**ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Cajka, Gill, Harris, Murray and Nicholson

Absent: Commissioners Fitzpatrick and Rhodes

Others Present: Director of Parks and Recreation Richard Gill, Recreation Services  
Manager Mark Leyman, Aquatics Supervisor Jesus Sandoval and  
Recording Secretary Jane Grace

**AGENDA CHANGES**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the January 26, 2009 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting were approved as written.

**CEREMONIAL**

None

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

None

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

02/23/09-1 – Review of the Aquatics Section of the Facility Strategic Plan

Recreation Services Manager Mark Leyman reported that the Commission, at its last meeting, requested that a review of the Aquatics Section of the Facility Strategic Plan be made at a future meeting.

Recreation Services Manager Leyman reported that the Facilities Strategic Plan recommended building three swimming pools which would be moved from the current site to the west side of Peck Avenue in conjunction with an indoor recreation facility and multilevel parking structure at an approximate cost of \$80 million. This master plan includes an indoor instruction/recreation pool, outdoor 30 meter pool and a recreational “splash” pool. Mr. Leyman indicated that industry trends and the Facilities Strategic Plan recommend the importance of a “splash” pool to help subsidize the pool operational costs.

Mr. Leyman reported that because of the poor economic conditions that exist today, staff has submitted a request for the renovation of the locker rooms and outside landscape through the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP). These are only cosmetic changes because the current conditions in the locker rooms are so deplorable that staff believes immediate steps need to be taken just to make the current inadequate pool a little more acceptable.

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

- Commissioner Gill suggested that the city has never explored alternate options to the \$80 million aquatics facility in the Facility Strategic Plan and would like to look at a smaller scale aquatics facility.

Parks and Recreation Director Richard Gill reported that the FSP determined that there was logic to building the entire complex rather than one pool at a time. He reported that the swimming community wanted a competitive pool which is considered a money drain and research shows that communities are adding recreational water elements to their renovations. Mr. Gill reported that MDA Johnson Favaro suggested that if you don't want to throw money into a competitive pool, you need to add a recreation element. Mr. Gill reported that three pools and required parking would not fit in the present location. Commissioner Gill suggested that the \$80 million facility is not feasible and if we lower our expectations and present a more realistic aquatics facility, it might be reachable in a few years. Mr. Gill suggested that whatever direction the Commission is going, staff would need to receive direction from City Council before getting involved in more research.

- Commissioner Harris inquired whether the proposed recreation pool and competition pool would fit into the present area. Mr. Leyman suggested it would fit in the present location if the basketball courts and a portion of Begg field were included; an area for parking would still have to be considered.
- Commissioner Gill indicated that the school district maintenance yard might still be available and might be suitable for the aquatics facility or parking.
- Commissioner Nicholson suggested that research should include Santa Clarita's aquatics facility that was built for \$10 million (probably \$15 million in today's economy); however, he questioned whether City Council would even be interested in having a conversation for spending \$15 million for an aquatics facility.
- Commissioner Harris suggested that we should report to Council the anticipated maintenance costs for the next five years vs. the cost of a new facility, suggesting it might be wiser to spend the money on a new facility. Mr. Leyman indicated that a lot of the continuing issues are with the locker rooms and swapping out hardware and the boilers; those upgrades are included in the renovation CIP item and would take care of the bulk of the ongoing costs. Mr. Leyman does not anticipate any huge hardware costs for maintaining the pool.
- Commissioner Cajka suggested a possible four-year plan:
  - In two years, build two outdoor pools in conjunction with the existing pool
  - In four years build a bigger facility including parking in an upper area

Commissioner Cajka, understanding that the Council is now dealing with a negative budget, suggested that the Commission should encourage City Council to add some sort of a Facility Strategic Replacement Plan to their Workplan in the next 12-18 months. Commissioner Cajka suggested that something has to be done because our facilities are not going to get any younger and continue to require work. He suggested that if we can't move quickly on a pool, we might stretch it out over a 10-15 year period where we set

aside money in some sort of capital improvement fund, similar to what was done with the Police/Fire facility.

- Commissioner Nicholson suggested that it is very unlikely that the Council would be willing to spend any capital improvements in our negative budget.
- Commissioner Harris inquired whether the revenue from a splash pool would be enough to maintain the pool facility. Mr. Leyman reported that research from the Sports Management Group as part of the FSP indicates the following:

Competition, in combination with recreational – 80% cost recovery

Competition only – 15% cost recovery

Recreational only – 131% cost recovery

- Aquatics Supervisor Jesus Sandoval suggested that the request for the renovation of the locker rooms and outside landscape through the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) would be sufficient to take us through the next five years.
- Due to the economic climate, Commissioner Gill suggested that the Commission table the discussion about a new aquatics facility at this time.

**A motion was made that the Parks and Recreation Commission endorses and recommends that City Council consider the request for the renovation of the pool locker rooms and outside landscape through the City's Capital Improvement Program. (MSC: Nicholson/Murray; Unanimous).**

#### **COMMISSION ITEMS**

- Commissioner Harris reported that she and her daughter will be going to Vietnam in April to help build a pre-school library outside of DaNang and will be taking 400 pounds of pre-school books; Commissioner Harris is hoping that donations will be made of gently used pre-school and young-reader books, with inscriptions from local students.
- Commissioner Nicholson asked whether the Commission should again discuss a feasibility study for passive recreation at the Ladera School Field. Mr. Gill reported that Councilmember Nick Tell suggested that Ladera is not a dead issue and would like City staff to use outside expertise and resources to look into the accessibility and ADA issues at the Ladera site. Mr. Gill reported that our City building engineers review building modifications and accessibility issues daily; and staff will be contacting a local resident who represents a special-needs group to recommend possible options for the area. Commissioner Harris suggested that concrete pathways could be installed from the Sand Dune stair switchbacks to provide accessibility for emergency personnel; Mr. Gill indicated that Fire Department personnel have indicated that they would not be able to transport the gurney on steps. Mr. Gill reported that our City Attorney will be investigating possible ADA waivers or exemptions.
- Commissioner Gill congratulated staff on the terrific new special-needs play equipment at Polliwog Park and how wonderful the opening-day reception was; Mr. Gill indicated that it was great to see all the smiles on the children and their parents.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. to the next regular meeting on March 23, 2009.

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Jane A. Grace  
Recording Secretary

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Ned Gill  
Commission Chairperson