

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

March 26, 2012
6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers

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ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Cajka, Rothans, Nicholson, Manna and Taylor.

Others Present: Recreation Services Manager Idris Al-Oboudi, Recreation Supervisor Brianne Sternad, Senior Recreation Leader Andrew Berg, and Recording Secretary Mary Kirchwehm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of January 23, 2012 Parks and Recreation Commission minutes were approved as written.

CEREMONIAL

None.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

GENERAL BUSINESS

2012/0326.1 - Discussion of Skate Park Past Information for a Skate Park in the City of Manhattan Beach

Recreation Services Manager Idris Al-Oboudi presented a summation of the history of discussions and information during the past ten years regarding a possible skateboard park within the City of Manhattan Beach; but due to the projected cost the project was put aside. However, as part of the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) Parks and Recreation once again requested a skateboard park at Marine Avenue Park. City Council is currently directing Staff to present information on any new ideas for the possible installation of a skateboard park.

Mr. Al-Oboudi introduced Recreation Supervisor Brianne Sternad and Senior Recreation Leader, Andrew Berg.

Mr. Al-Oboudi presented a map of Marine Avenue Park depicting the desired area for the skateboard park. The area would be located in the back northeast side of the park. With

the shifting of the walkway next to the fence, a large area would be available for a skateboard park. This location is ideal for the following reasons:

- It is a distance from residential homes
- Noise can be isolated
- Accessible parking
- A drop off area would be possible
- Easy to keep locked
- Can be kept well lit
- Approximately ½ mile from Manhattan Beach Middle School

The square footage would be approximately 11,000 sq. ft. It would be larger than the skateboard park at the City of Hermosa Beach.

Commissioner Steve Nicholson inquired how the skateboard park would be staffed. Mr. Al-Oboudi stated that there are different alternatives in staffing skateboard parks. He explained that there are streetscapes where you can enter at your own risk without the monitoring of staff. Another option is to install a gate with a lock, and staff the skateboard park during specific hours and for specific purposes such as classes and birthday parties.

Senior Recreation Leader Andrew Berg reported that the State of California defines skateboarding as a hazardous activity. With proper signage, liability is limited by the skateboard park operators. It was suggested to have an unsupervised skateboard park that is monitored which means that the park needs to be kept clean, free of hazards, and the user rules would need to be enforced. This would require a cooperative effort between park staff, including the park ranger, and police to enforce the municipal code.

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the City of El Segundo have staff nearby at their skateboard park who are conducting programs at their teen center. Andrew reported that the El Segundo park is officially separate from the teen center and is officially an unstaffed unsupervised skate park. However, due to the proximity of the teen center to the skateboard park, the Parks and Recreation staff are always at the skateboard park. Although staff can discourage users from using the skateboard park if they are not wearing protective gear, they may not always be able to enforce the rules if staff is not supervising the site.

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that it would be prudent to staff the skateboard park during the hours when youth are out of school. He also reported that although we have staff at Marine Avenue Park, they also make rounds to Manhattan Village and Marine Complex.

Commissioner Nicholson inquired if Parks and Recreation has a park ranger. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the City does not currently have a park ranger.

Commissioner Manna inquired if cost and liability were the biggest hurdles with implementing a skateboard park. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that cost is a big concern as well as community approval. Commissioner Manna inquired if there was a change in City Council attitude towards the park. Mr. Al-Oboudi stated that some contributing factors towards the change could be due to the change in City Council as well as the realization that skateboarding is very popular among the youths in the community and a location is very much needed.

Commissioner Manna stated that he has received feedback from skateboarders that they would definitely utilize a skateboard park anywhere in Manhattan Beach.

Commissioner Taylor inquired about the space on Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Sepulveda. Commissioner Nicholson reported that it will eventually be a Rite Aid. Commissioner Taylor reported that he foresees a problem of an unsupervised skateboard park and has concerns that safety gear would not be worn with a lack of supervision. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that it would be proposed to have supervision after school, and the gates would be locked after the curfew. There would be different weekend, summer and holiday hours.

Commissioner Rothans reported that he spoke with two municipal risk managers regarding skateboard parks and inquired if there were any public hearings in 2001 to make sure the City was transparent in making sure the public was included in the discussion. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that there were Parks and Recreation meetings with public invitations and there were petitions from parents and supporters. Commissioner Rothans inquired if there are plans for community input since it was last done over ten years ago. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the youth and community would be invited to public meetings and their input would be welcomed.

Commissioner Rothans stated that it is his understanding that a lot of cities who have skateboard parks in California require parental written waivers and inquired if the City has considered this in the plans. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the City has considered this and could establish written waivers.

Commissioner Rothans inquired if the design of the park would be feasible to different age groups. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that it would be the goal to design a park that would interest different skill levels. He would like feedback from the public with details and challenge levels.

Commissioner Rothans inquired if the City is envisioning competitive tournaments. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that this location is not feasible to accommodate competitive tournaments.

Commissioner Rothans inquired if the City is aware of any lawsuits in a local municipality relating to skateboard parks. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that he is not aware of any lawsuits.

Commissioner Cajka inquired how often staff is at the building at Marine Avenue Park. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the Teen Center is currently operating there temporarily. Staff is currently at Marine Avenue Park at 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. on weekend. On weekdays, staff arrives at 3:30. They also patrol Manhattan Village.

Commissioner Cajka inquired if any parking studies have been done and if there will be a parking problem with the added skateboard park. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that after business hours, the Northrup Grumman parking lot becomes the overflow lot. Currently there is a regular coming and going at Marine Avenue Park. In addition, there is consideration of creating a drop off loading/unloading area on the east side of Marine Avenue Park.

Commissioner Nicholson inquired if there will be an age requirement/restriction to use the skateboard park. Mr. Al-Oboudi stated that although there may not be an age requirement, the challenge level of the park will attract those who can meet those challenges. He does not foresee very young tots in the skateboard park.

Commissioner Rothans proposed an on-site visit to other skateboard parks. Mr. Al-Oboudi recommended for the next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to have an on-site visit to Marine Avenue Park.

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that this location is not a programmable location and therefore programs would not be interrupted during the construction process.

Commission Manna inquired how often the fitness station is being used. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the fitness station is currently being used by two people.

Commissioner Nicholson inquired about the grade level of the location. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the skateboard park would drop down approximately three feet.

The Commission proposed that the next meeting be at a proposed skateboard site to determine the appropriate next steps.

COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Rothans stated that Commissioners Nicholson and Murray will be done with their appointments soon and would like to plan something nice.

The Committee asked to move the next meeting to April 30, 2012.

Commissioner Nicholson gave an update on the renovation progress at Joslyn Center and Heights on behalf of the Senior Advisory Committee (SAC). He reported that the City Engineer informed SAC that completion is expected to be May 15, 2012 and everyone will be moved back in on June 1, 2012. Commissioner Nicholson reported that it has been a challenge to operate programs in substitute locations such as the Masonic Temple. He stated that the Activity Hall in Live Oak Hall does not have great ventilation, and it has been a challenge for the Older Adults to get from parking on street to the Activity Hall.

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that there will be a grand opening when the facilities reopen. Once the date is determined, the Commission will be notified and invited to the grand opening.

Commissioner Nicholson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

STAFF ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned to the next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on Monday, April 30, 2012.