



County of Santa Cruz

PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

BARRY C. SAMUEL, DIRECTOR

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Monday, May 14, 2007

7:15 p.m.

Regular Meeting

Government Center, Board Chambers

701 Ocean St., 5th Floor

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:17 p.m.

Members: Janet Doten, Dave Mercer, Katharine Minott, Michael Rosenberg
Francisco Serna

Present: Dave Mercer, Katharine Minott, Michael Rosenberg, Francisco Serna

Staff: Barry Samuel, Clark Beattie, Gretchen Iliff, Beth Porter

II. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS OR APPROVAL

The agenda was approved as presented (Minott/Serna 4/0).

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of March 12, 2007 were approved as written (Mercer/Minott 4/0)

B. Information and Reports (Accept and File)

- 1) Facilities Division – Status Report
- 2) Maintenance Division – Status Report
- 3) Planning Division – Status Report
- 4) Recreation & Cultural Services Division – Status Report
- 5) Arts Commission Agenda May 14, 2007

The Information and reports were accepted and filed as written (Minott/Mercer 4/0).

IV. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS - None

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Samuel introduced the new Director of Parks, Maria Hurtado. Maria will begin her assignment on June 4. Maria has been the Assistant Director of the Watsonville Parks Department, an Assistant Director of the San Jose City Parks Department, Director of Parks Department in the City of Tracy and is currently acting Assistant City Manager in the City of Tracy. Maria will bring experience, enthusiasm and knowledge of Santa Cruz that will make her an excellent Parks Director.

The second Community Service Officer is currently in training and will be out in the field when training is complete.

VI. REGULAR AGENDA (DISCUSSION ITEMS)

A. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Disc Golf @ Pinto Lake

Tom Schott gave a presentation on the sport of disc golf and the possibilities he envisions for Pinto Lake County Park. He believes that Pinto Lake lends itself to a disc golf course and he proposes the installation of a championship disc golf course. The Disc Golf Association has agreed to provide the necessary baskets, which are made in Watsonville, for the course. The course will begin with nine holes and then in the future, increase to 18. The benefits of disc golf are the joy of nature, exercise, being with friends, achievement, involving all ages and provides escape from the daily routine. It is a low impact activity that requires a low cost to create and maintain. It will be a good project for Watsonville. The budget for the project is \$45,000 with half the money received from the Disc Golf Association and the other half received from the County.

Bob Brox from the Disc Golf Association spoke on behalf of this project. Tom Schott designed a disc golf course at De La Viega that is world class.

Dr. Steve Longhart explained that Pinto Lake is an incredible, underutilized area that would be beautiful for disc golf. The Association would clear the underbrush that is mostly poison oak. Disc golf utilizes mother nature to provide the obstacles on the course. The club members provide maintenance at the De La Viega disc golf course and would do the same at Pinto Lake. Other users can enjoy the area that was previously underused. A championship level course can potentially bring in revenue from visitors and two courses would enable Santa Cruz County to potentially host the world championships. On weekends, 1,500 to 2,000 users participate in disc golf at De La Viega with an average of 200 on a nice week day.

Commissioner Serna asked about outreach toward the community in Watsonville learning and playing disc golf. The disc golf group has plans for educating the community about the sport.

Director Samuel explained the next steps of this project. Funding and possible environmental reviews need to be explored. The fit with the master plan of Pinto Lake and the environmental review will be discussed with Planning Department with a report back to the Commission at the July meeting. The community outreach could be achieved by placing a basket at the school playgrounds and providing a couple of discs and introducing the sport in that way. Maria can report back at the next meeting about the environmental review implications. The initial installation will involve nine holes. The existing entrances to the park will be utilized. None of the holes will be installed in the open field at this time. The restrooms used are by the parking lot and the club has plans to reopen the lower restroom. No new structures, plumbing or electrical are necessary. Tom Schott visited the site and has designed a nine hole course. Paths will be created and cleared out. The Board of Supervisors, probably in September, will need to approve the project. This item will be placed on the next Parks Commission agenda as an action item. A discussion of what type of environmental review is necessary, funding and the next steps necessary will take place.

2. Floral Park Renovation

Paul Rodrigues from Redevelopment presented written information and discussed the history of the project. On Thursday evening, May 10, Parks Department staff and RDA met with members of the neighborhood to discuss the potential renovations for Floral Park. The neighbors were interested in creating an upgraded and a more child friendly park. It is one of very few small neighborhood parks. It was agreed that the renovated park would include a new play structure, dog area, additional picnic tables and BBQ's, a

restroom and a walking path that surrounds the perimeter of the entire park. RDA will be able to fund these improvements in the future. The next steps to take as presented by Director Samuel are hiring a consultant to finalize the design, produce bid specs, and finalize funding with the Redevelopment Agency followed by construction. An amendment to the master plan may be necessary.

3. Prop 50 Report

Director Samuel was pleased to report that the County has received a partial Prop 50 grant. For Parks, this means that we will be able to have one artificial turf field installed at the Polo Grounds at no cost to the County. The final timing is yet to be determined and it is probably 12 months away. It is great news to know that the first artificial field will be installed in the not too distant future. A new restroom will be installed at Polo Grounds as well as the neighbors of the park will be able to hook up to a sewer system. The elimination of septic systems along the Valencia Creek will be a bonus for the health of the creek as well as the homeowners. Soquel Water District will install a small water treatment plant and water use will be at no cost to Parks Department, with a probable 99 year lease entered into between the Parks Department and the Soquel Water District.

4. Liability Issues of Dogs Off Leash

Director Samuel had a discussion with County Counsel about allowing dogs off leash at our parks and the potential increase of County liability. County Counsel determined that if the area is signed noting that dogs are permitted off leash in the area that there should be no increased liability for the County. Possible areas were discussed for dogs off leash. Athletic fields are not to be used for dogs off leash. The County only has authority in County Parks, not State or City. The off leash discussion was prompted by dog owners wanting to use the great meadow at Polo Grounds as an off leash area.

5. Discussion of Hours of Off Leash Usage of a Park or Beach

At the next Parks Commission meeting, more areas of possible off leash dog areas will be discussed. Gretchen Iliff will present the cost of decomposed granite for the Polo Grounds dog park at the next Parks Commission meeting. Dog owners have raised objections to the use of redwood bark in the dog parks. Commissioner Minott pointed out the existing dog parks that the County has provided for off leash use.

6. Elections

Commission Serna suggested that elections be held when all Commissioners are present at the meeting. It was agreed to hold elections for Chair and Vice Chair at the next meeting in July, 2007.

B. ACTION ITEMS - None

VII. AGENDA/MEETING FOR: Parks Commission, Monday, July 9, 2007 at 7:15 p.m. at the Government Center, Board Chambers 5th Floor, 701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

A. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. 2007 – 2008 Budget Overview
2. Cost for Decomposed Granite in Polo Grounds Dog Park (Gretchen)

B. ACTION ITEMS

1. Disc Golf at Pinto Lake
2. Approval of Floral Park Renovations
3. Possible Sites and Hours for use of areas for Dogs off Leash
4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. (Minott/Mercer 4/0)