

**CITY OF COSTA MESA  
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday, February 14, 2018  
MINUTES**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Andy Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.**  
**Members Present:** Chair Anna Vrska, Vice Chair Andy Campbell, Cindy Black, Kim Hendricks, Alex Reich.  
**Members Absent:** Larry Courter, Steve Smith.  
**Alternate Members Present:** Cynthia McDonald; **Absent:** Bill McCarty  
**Parks and Recreation Commission Liaisons Present:** Commissioner Arlis Reynolds  
**Absent:** Vice Chair Liz McNabb  
**Council Liaison Present:** Mayor Sandra Genis

**2. APPROVAL OF January 10, 2018 meeting minutes as Amended:**

- a. Use present tense in old business item 5a instead of past tense.
- b. Add drone information that was briefly discussed.
- c. Public speaker # 2: add "a restoration specialist".

Motion **to approve minutes as amended** made by Alex Reich, 2nd by Andy Campbell: Vote 4-1; Cindy Black voting no.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- a. Hank Castignetti: Experienced 2 off-leash dogs in SE quadrant of park that chased off a Blue Heron. City should incorporate more signage at the park for dogs off leash and park rangers should be more proactive in approach.
- b. Jay Humphrey: Has seen dogs off leash at the park that have no owner in site. Perhaps an increased enforcement period by City Police on a given weekend would be appropriate.
- c. Terry Koken: Providing a Police enforcement push would provide revenue to the City.
- d. Bob Graham: It may be a good idea to post the police phone number at the Canary Drive stairs in the park.
- e. Kent Nerhus: Suggests potentially moving the fly field to the East side of the park, away from biologically sensitive areas. Recommends usage of drone technology to assist with dogs off leash and for patrons in the park after dark.

**4. NEW BUSINESS:**

Before Item 4.a. began, Vice Chair Andy Campbell made a motion to change the order of hearing item 5.a. and 5.b. because Item 5.b is similar to Item 4.b. and it would be appropriate to discuss one after the other. Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alex Reich. Motion unanimously approved. A comment was also made by Chair Anna Vrska regarding the process for deciding to hold the Fish Fry event at Fairview Park this year on a future agenda for discussion.

**a. City Policy 500-11**

- i. Parks & Community Services Director Justin Martin states that the City Council is currently in the process of considering how they will address many outdated policies and that no Council action will take place on Policy 500-11 until there is a set plan for addressing all. Mr. Martin states that an appropriate action for the Committee would be to form a subcommittee to thoroughly

- review the policy and provide suggested edits. Discussion ensues regarding how the Council will consider or not consider submitted update to the policy.
- ii. Chair Anna Vrska makes a motion to form a subcommittee of herself and Vice Chair Andy Campbell to examine Policy 500-11 and bring forward a draft with additions, removals and amendments for the Committee to review at a future meeting. Cindy Black requests an amendment to the original motion to also include herself, and this is agreed upon. The amended motion is 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andy Campbell; Motion approved unanimously.
  - iii. Chair Anna Vrska mentions that she would also like to review the Committee's approved scope because it may be inadequate and that a future agenda should include an item on subcommittee procedures.

**b. North Bluff Trails & Habitat Restoration Grant**

- i. Vice Chair Andy Campbell provides a presentation that reviews the general information specific to this grant and the research that the subcommittee (, Kim Hendricks, Andy Campbell, Larry Courter) has done. Discussion ensues on if the proposed allocation of grant funding can be renegotiated with the granting agency and if/where alternate locations of the proposed decomposed granite trail that is identified for student use, could be located to better accommodate project goals and better preserve the park's canyon. The subcommittee presents four recommendations that are included in the presentation. The recommendations are:
  - Request a Deviation in Scope from the State to better accommodate project goals and better preserve the park's canyon
  - Use DG trail funds to improve a similar length of user-defined trail
  - Conduct coastal sage scrub restoration in the canyon as planned but add removal of exposed concrete trash (> 3-inches) prior to planting
  - Highlight that the requested change:
    - Meets OGALS Vision Goal of being "Sensitive to local concerns"
    - Does not eliminate or reduce recreation use or capacity
    - Is within the ADA limits for maximum slope as originally proposed
    - Provides needed trail from the upper Bird Streets to Estancia HS

The Committee thanked the subcommittee for their work. City Engineer Bart Mejia points out, to consider Measure AA in the decision making process, and that a FVP Master Plan amendment may be needed for these changes. Discussion ensues about why the grant funding has not moved forward.

1. Alex Reich makes a motion to accept the subcommittee recommendations as is; motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anna. Motion passes 4-1; Cindy Black voting no.

Additional discussion ensues on what will trigger Measure AA and what constitutes grading. Cynthia McDonald asks if the subcommittee considered any other areas in the park for the trail besides the area in the recommendations. After this discussion the committee decided to reopen the conversation.

2. A new motion to reopen this item is made by Alex Reich; motion 2<sup>nd</sup> Kim Hendricks. Motion passes 4-1; Cindy Black voting no.

An additional discussion ensues regarding modifications to the recommended bullet points.

3. Alex Reich makes a new motion to accept the subcommittee recommendations with the following edits (**in bold**); motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anna Vrska; motion passes unanimously.
  - **The City and Committee request an additional quarter from the State to reconsider the scope of grant to better accommodate project goals, meet local preference to preserve the park's canyon, and consider changes in both habitat conditions and local citizen engagement since the grants origination date**
  - Use DG trail funds to improve a similar length of user-defined trail **or additional restoration area**
  - **The additional restoration could include** removal of exposed concrete trash (> 3-inches) **prior to** conducting coastal sage scrub restoration in the canyon as planned
  - Highlight that the requested change:
    - meets OGALS Vision Goal of being "Sensitive to local concerns"
    - does not eliminate or reduce recreation use or capacity
    - **any new trail would consider** the ADA limits for maximum slope as originally proposed
    - **meets grant goals** of providing a needed connector trail **servicing** local Estancia **High School** students

Kim Hendricks asks to document that the Committee gets to make final recommendation for the trail alignment in the grant.

Andy Campbell states that the subcommittee will continue to investigate how these changes may impact either amendments needed in the Master Plan or Measure AA requirements.

## 5. OLD BUSSINESS

### a. Vernal Pool Fencing Project Update (taken out of order)

- i. Vice Chair Andy Campbell speaks about the subcommittee role (Cindy Black, Kim Hendricks, Andy Campbell) to develop a protocol to safely and effectively remove the misplaced fencing poles from the area along the fly field perimeter in the park and to use this area as a test site in developing a protocol for future pole removal at other misplaced pole sites. He provided information on the test site and that protocol was modified due to weight of poles/concrete. The poles had to be vertically lifted and wiggled to remove. Staff worked diligently with the contractor for 2 days to remove all of the poles from the test area. Andy believes the approach and protocol was successful and could prove successful for the other areas in the park. He Mentions that he did consider using other soils to backfill the holes but went with a clay mix because there were too many unknowns in the current park soil discussed, and that very little supplemental soil was actually needed because there was still adequate soil in the area from when the poles were installed.

Cindy Black discussed that it was her understanding that the project was on hold and that the role of the subcommittee was to develop a possible protocol. She developed an alternate protocol but it was not incorporated into the report Andy provided to the committee. She believes that the protocol should have been brought back to the Committee. Kim Hendricks

asks why a subcommittee was formed if committee member's suggestions were not expected to be incorporated. She mentions that while she believes the removal of poles may have been premature, she has received confirmation by a vernal pool expert that the protocol was adequate. Group discussion on soil compaction and draining ensued.

- ii. Cindy Black makes a motion for the City to contact 2 or 3 vernal pool experts in restoration and have them be tasked to develop and/or review both protocols. Motion 2nd by Kim Hendricks.
  1. Additional discussion takes place regarding this being a fencing project, not a vernal pool project. The Chair mentions that she is comfortable with the established protocol, particularly because it was created by the Vice Chair, who has experience. Mr. Mejia comments about required qualification from USFW for experts and the needs to comply with all City/State/Federal standards for certification. Cindy Black comments that possession of a 10(a)(1)(A) permit only allows for the collection of endangered species and does not entitle them as expert in vernal pool restoration. Resident Jay Humphrey speaks favorably about the protocol for removal of the test area.
  2. The motion fails 2-3 (Kim and Cindy voting yes).
- iii. Vice Chair makes a motion to continue removal of poles in other areas of the park with the same protocol, to continue to include staff oversight and biological oversight to control the access of necessary construction vehicles. Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alex Reich; motion passes 3-2 (Kim and Cindy voting no).
  1. Alex Reich makes a motion to table the remainder of agenda items and move to staff comments, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kim, passes unanimously.

**b. Placentia Ave Connector Trails (taken out of order)**

- i. Vice Chair Andy Campbell provides update on the subcommittee process (Kim Hendricks, Andy Campbell, Larry Courter) and reviews four-page memo that was submitted with the agenda packet. Andy presents 6 recommendations on behalf of the subcommittee.
  - Negotiate with OCTA for a grant-funded project that includes the three proposed trail improvements intersecting at the triangular junction near the park restrooms, namely 1) the arm leading to Canyon Drive, 2) the arm leading to Placentia Avenue near Estancia High School, and 3) arm leading to the summit of the asphalt hill trail. The negotiated project shall retain existing paved widths and the Placentia Avenue signal crossing. Trail materials other than concrete shall be explored such as boardwalks over vernal pool crossings.
  - Evaluate alternatives to mitigate existing trail slopes with appropriately spaced rest areas.
  - Abandon plans to develop a multi-use trail within the canyon.
  - Consider this evaluation as a "Request for a Change to the Fairview Park Master Plan" (per Policy 500-11) that would identify the canyon as a feature to preserve and restore without a paved trail or vehicular route of travel.
  - Restore and preserve the canyon habitat for the interaction of wildlife and plant life and to protect remaining integrity of the archaeological resources found in OR58, while simultaneously yet secondarily allowing for passive recreation in and around the canyon without construction a paved bike trail within the canyon.
  - Implement removal of construction materials from the canyon, restore native plants, allow for a restored hydrology from the upper park, and prevent vehicular travel through the canyon.

Public Services Director Raja Sethuraman discusses past experience with OCTA and their requirements for certain types of surfacing (concrete/asphalt). Bart Mejia shows an illustration on a map as to where an asphalt trail has been overgrown on the edges by grass, which was originally 8 ft wide. Discussion ensues regarding if a trail is even needed in this location since it is currently overgrown.

(Summary: The subcommittee would like the City to not utilize funding in the canyon, but rather use on upper trails and would like to explore alternate materials like a boardwalk where vernal pools are present). Mr. Robert Graham speaks in dis-agreeance with the Committee not utilizing the canyon area.

- ii. Alex Reich makes a motion to accept the subcommittee recommendations; motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anna Vrska. Motion passes unanimously.
- iii. Alex makes a motion to continue meeting past 8 p.m.; motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anna Vrska. Motion passes unanimously. A 5-minute recess ensues.

## **6. PRESENTATION – MASTER PLAN ‘WORKSHOP’ – Item tabled to next meeting.**

### **7. STAFF COMMENTS**

- a. Cynthia D’Agosta
  - A neighborhood meeting pertaining to mosquitos for residents of Swan Drive is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup> , 2018.
  - The City will be participating in Love Costa Mesa Day on April 28<sup>th</sup>, a volunteerism day that will focus on projects at Fairview and Canyon Parks.
- b. Raja Sethuraman thanks the Committee for their hard work.
- c. Justin Martin reminds to committee to try and read the pertinent agenda information before coming to the meting so members are well prepared and not delaying the meeting and thanks Committee for their hard work.

### **8. COMMITTEE MEMBER / COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

- a. Commissioner Reynolds:
  - Believes the fencing pole work was originally done poorly and was glad to see it being removed efficiently.
  - Mentions need to improve park visitor actions regarding dog waste in all parks.
- b. Mayor Genis:
  - Believes that the fencing project should have been a simple process, and that we should all slow down and be more careful.
  - Believes airplane flyer and drone use in the parks may need to be examined.
  - On a positive note there is a great amount of wildlife at the park and some that is returning that has not been present for some time.

- c. Alex Reich:
  - Questions how much the Committee is actually “steering” given actions by City like the Fish Fry decision, or the fencing and asks’ for an answer to his previous question regarding who approved the sealing coating on the parking lot which triggered ADA requirements at the park.
  - Stated that he really would like the Committee to focus on restoration.
- d. Kim Hendricks:
  - Believes the park needs an overall conceptual design by specialists with a history of success.
  - Requests that monthly and quarterly reports provided to staff from Mr. Nerhus be given to the Committee, asking staff to post them.
  - States that the airplanes need more attentions and that scheduling the Fish Fry was poorly planned.
- e. Cindy Black states that as a Committee we can try to push things but ultimately it is the City Council who decides actions.
- f. Cynthia McDonald:
  - Reports that the City of Laguna Beach has banned drones over parks and beaches.
  - Encourages the Committee not to lose heart in their work as all have something to contribute to the process.
- g. Andy Campbell expresses his concern with running to “the experts” all the time and challenges Committee members to be skeptical of some.
- h. Anna Vrska believes that much of what the group is going through are growing pains, that the Committee and Staff are partners in the process but the Committee must do their work too.

**9. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.**

**Next Regular Meeting: March 14, 2018, 6 p.m. at Costa Mesa City Hall Rm 1A**