

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, March 11, 2020
OFFICIAL MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Andy Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm

2. ROLL CALL:

a. Members Present: Chair Andy Campbell, Vice Chair Evan Rothman, Larry Courter, Dave Erickson, Terri Fuqua (1 seat vacant)

b. Members Absent: Steve Smith

c. Liaisons Present: Parks, Arts and Community Services (PACS) Commissioner Jim Erickson

d. Liaisons Absent: Council Member Liaison Arlis Reynolds, OCME Liaison Hank Castignetti (Attempted to link remotely for listening only)

3. APPROVAL February 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes: Chair Andy Campbell mentioned that on page 2, third sentence wanted to omit the word ONLY. Chair calls for the approval of the February 12, 2020 Minutes as amended; Moved by Larry Courter, seconded by Dave Erickson, motion passed unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER AND LIAISON COMMENTS:

Committee Member Terri Fuqua requested that a couple of items be added to next month's meeting agenda. First, public parking and Waldorf School and parking off of Placentia; explore ideas of how to mitigate over parking so that adequate parking is available for the public again. She would also like to discuss the issue of day camping at Fairview Park to assure that all of the day camping activities are lawful and appropriately permitted.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. FLY FIELD COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW UPDATE

i. STATUS AND PROCESS - Staff Member Cynthia D'Agosta briefly introduced the review of the fly field which evaluated the value of the partnership between HSS and the City, as well as the compatibility of fly field activity at Fairview Park.

Ms. D'Agosta directed interested parties to Page 33 of the document and briefly reviewed information presented within. She touched on the methods for determining the value of the partnership with HSS and the City, which were based on two factors: 1. The interface between and FAA and HSS, and (2) The Interface between HSS and the Costa Mesa community.

The parameters set forth by Measure AA and the Department of Fish and Wildlife were also reviewed. Ms. D'Agosta also briefly mentioned the need to revise the Fairview Park Master Plan to assure that the plan is consistent with these parameters. Ms. D'Agosta also gave a brief history of the fly field, as well as the changes to Fairview Park uses overall.

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, March 11, 2020
OFFICIAL MINUTES

Next, she reviewed the goals of FVP restoration and projected an image of Fairview Park from Winter of 2011. The image depicted where the vernal pools are located in relationship to the fly field, and how the imported fill has impacted the hydrology of the park, including vernal pool loss and bluff erosion. 4 options on the table require an enhanced partnership with HSS and the City of Costa Mesa

Ms. D'Agosta then mentioned that the document will be reviewed at several other meetings, including the PACS Committee and City Council, and asked members of the FVP Steering Committee to mark their calendars appropriately and encouraged the committee and members of the public to attend.

ii. DISCUSSION OF COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

Chair Andy Campbell opened the meeting to public comments: (most speakers did not give their names)

Public Speaker #1 mentioned that Fly Field attendance may be declining because of rumors of fly field closure.

Public Speaker #2 echoed that sentiment and reiterated that flyers are reluctant to attend because they feel that they may not be welcome. He continued by suggesting that the reduced number of fly field permits indicates that there are less flyers than in the past and that areas of disturbance by flyers has also diminished.

Public Speaker #3 asked to see slide #7 and pointed out that the fly field is located in the center of the most sensitive areas of Fairview Park. He reminded the committee that the issue at hand is to review the compatibility of fly field activity at Fairview Park.

Public Speaker #4 asked if the City had any stats on the number of people entering vernal pool areas and if those people were all flyers.

Public Speaker #5 mentioned that he saw someone enter the vernal pool area to take photographs. He added that he had been flying for 5 years and has never seen a flyer enter the vernal pool area

Public Speaker #6 – Henry Smith, HSS President, reported that the HSS agrees that there should be modifications to the current agreement to enhance the relationship between HSS and the City. He believes that the use is compatible, and agreed that pilot retraining would be helpful, and that HSS can assist with this. He suggested that if all permit holders were HSS members, operations of the fly field would be improved. HSS is willing to work with the City to improve areas of concern

Public Speaker #7 – Don Whittenburg, HSS Director, believes that with a few modifications to the permit process, concerns could be addressed. He believes that HSS membership should be a requirement to obtain a permit, HSS should require that all flyers display their membership badge, attend a mandatory training and an annual meeting. He also mentioned that the boundaries should be clearly marked so that violations could be addressed.

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, March 11, 2020
OFFICIAL MINUTES

Dave Erickson asked about the cost of HSS membership. The response was that the cost was \$25 per hour and \$67 per year for AMA membership.

Public Speaker #8 mentioned that his understanding is that the City cannot require HSS membership to obtain a permit, so he suggested that HSS can train, test and certify flyers before they obtain a permit, and that this certification would be required to obtain a permit.

Public Speaker #9 commented that she does not understand how the fly field negatively impacts other park users and asked the committee if removal of the fly field would be a major change to the park that would be prohibited by Measure AA.

Public Speaker #10 commented that she is grateful for the new interest in the birds by flyers, and cautioned people not to chase or harass the birds to obtain photographs.

Public Speaker #11 mentioned that some birders do not understand bird behavior, and some people interacting with birds are not members of bird organizations.

Public Speaker #12 added that nesting season is approaching and that the California Gnat Catchers are already nesting. Burrowing owls are also nesting and more species will be arriving in the next month or so, through September. He also mentioned that rare plants also need to be protected.

Committee Member Dave Erickson asked for clarification of maximum height limits for flyers, and the response was that the FAA sets maximum height limits at 400 feet.

ii. DISCUSSION OF COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION AND APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATION TO ADVANCE TO THE PARKS, ARTS, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION ON NEXT STEPS FOR THE FLY FIELD REVIEW

Discussion ensued about various modifications that may be needed to address concerns brought up at previous meetings, which were flight parameters, level of enforcement, environmental concerns, safety and nuisance concerns.

Committee Member Larry Courter moved that the committee review and discuss each of the **four options**. There was no second to the motion. Committee Member Dave Erickson suggested that option 6B be discussed. There was no second to the motion.

Chair Andy Campbell asked for clarification of the previous motions to discuss items. The City attorney opined that because the motions were not seconded, there was not a motion on the table.

Committee Member Larry Courter suggested that the committee discuss **option 6C: To close the current fly field and relocate it to another area of Fairview Park**. Committee Member Dave Erickson seconded the suggestion. Discussion ensued by the committee including a statement by OCME Liaison Hank Castignetti who was listening to the meeting remotely. The City Attorney opined that relocation of the fly field would most likely require a vote of the people as mandated by Measure AA. Chair Campbell read from the report, identified potential constraints on this option. Ms. D'Agosta explained her review of the park to identify any potential area(s)

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, March 11, 2020
OFFICIAL MINUTES

suitable for the fly field. After further discussion Committee Member Larry Courter withdrew his motion due to the logistical complexity of moving the field.

Committee Member Evan Rothman moved that the committee discuss option 6B: To continue use of the fly field with modifications. Committee Member Dave Erickson seconded the motion. Discussion ensued by the committee. Some committee members expressed concern about the level of commitment from HSS to assist with needed modifications, while other members were interested in receiving a proposal from HSS about how they could assist with the modifications.

Chair Andy Campbell suggested a modification to the motion to close the fly field while HSS is developing modifications which was not accepted by Evan Rothman. Additional discussion ensued.

Committee Member Evan Rothman modified his previous motion to the following: Extend the use of fly field as is, including fly field permitting and HSS agreement until December 31, 2020 - contingent upon a formal proposal for fly field modifications from HSS by September 1, 2020 - with review of the formal proposal by Fairview Park Steering Committee, by December 2020.

The motion was 2nd by Dave Erickson and unanimously approved.

Following approval of the motion, Chair Andy Campbell suggested that an HSS/Fairview Park sub-committee be formulated to work with HSS on Fly field modifications at the next Fairview Park Steering Committee meeting.

7. STAFF COMMENTS:

Ms. D'Agosta mentioned that there is an Audubon bird walk coming up on Saturday.

Chair Andy Campbell announced the City Nature Challenge. Participants can submit photos of nature, as a way of documenting local wildlife.

8. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm