



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: August 27, 2014

TO: Park and Recreation Commission

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Restoration of Saturday Youth Skate Hours at Skaters Point

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive a report on the restoration of Saturday youth skate hours at Skaters Point for youth, 12 years of age and under and a change to the posted youth skate hours from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. to 9 – 11 a.m.

DISCUSSION:

Beginning in 2006, following a successful pilot program, the Commission recommended that staff implement youth only skate hours at Skaters Point for youth, 12 years of age and under. Following the implementation in 2006, the youth only skate time proved challenging due to decreased participation during the unstructured Saturdays. The decreased participation made it difficult to justify having Skaters Point closed for skaters over 12 years of age who were eagerly waiting to use the park. Over time, program funding was reduced and eventually eliminated due to budget reductions in 2009.

During the pilot program, staff observed that the structured clinic time offered on the first Saturday of each month was the most successful component. Attendance for structured Saturdays was almost double when compared to the regular drop-in days. Following the two-day park closure in 2013 for inappropriate behavior, the Department has been working with local skate park stakeholders to identify solutions to avoid future park closures. During these stakeholder meetings there continues to be a lot of discussion and support for the regular summer skate clinics offered by the Youth Activities Section.

When considering additional funding for the 2015 fiscal year budget, staff felt that the most successful way to reintroduce a youth only skate time was to provide more structure and incorporate parts of the skate clinic model offered during the summer months. The summer skate clinics have proven popular with participants and are respected by the skate community as this programming has been offered in the skate park since it was first opened in 2000.

The Sports Section received an additional \$9,000 in hourly expenditures for the 2015 fiscal year budget to restore year-round youth skate hours on Saturdays beginning August 23, 2014. The start date was determined by staff to capture current summer clinic participants while attempting to connect the new Saturday clinic as an extension of the summer skate clinics. Each two-hour

skate clinic will be free to participants 12 years of age and under while providing a combination of supervised instruction, and free skate periods based on the participants abilities.

Clinic participants must comply with laws and ordinances regarding the required safety equipment and there will be no bikes or scooters permitted in the skate park during the clinic times. Skate clinic staff will have an assortment of helmets, knee pads, and elbow pads to avoid turning away participants who did not know the rules, or forgot a piece of their safety equipment. Safety equipment compliance will be emphasized through facility signage, parent interaction, parent education, facebook postings, and e-mail messaging to past skate clinic participants.

Consistent with the Summer Fun drop-in program, parents will be required to complete a one-time activity registration form which will allow participants in the future to be dropped off and be signed in by skate clinic staff. The sign-in sheet will also enable staff to track participation and skater abilities for those using the park during this time period. In the future this information could be used when considering expanding the time frame, or building a new skate park in the community.

The posted Saturday youth skate hours currently reference 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Following the pilot program the youth skate hours were 9 – 11 a.m.; however, the time was modified to accommodate parent requests for a later start. Staff is proposing a return to the 9 – 11 a.m. time period to align with starting times similar to our summer skate clinics and lower activity levels in the park at this time.

A combination of providing structure to the Saturday youth skate hours while demonstrating consistency with our existing and popular summer skate clinic programming will provide an opportunity for the longtime success of this important youth skate time at Skaters Point.

SUBMITTED BY: Rich Hanna, Senior Recreation Supervisor

APPROVED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

