



**City of Santa Barbara
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Monthly Meeting**

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Longstreet called the Park and Recreation Commission to order at 4:02 p.m. at City Council Chambers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chair Longstreet_

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners & Staff Present

Commissioner Beebe Longstreet
Commissioner Ada Conner
Commissioner W. Scott Burns
Commissioner Daniel E. Hochman
Commission Intern Diego Torres-Santos
Parks & Recreation Director Nancy Rapp
Asst. Parks & Recreation Director Jill Zachary
Recreation Programs Manager Sarah Hanna
Recreation Program Manager Judith McCaffrey
Parks Manager Santos Escobar
Creeks Manager Cameron Benson
Parks & Recreation Business Manager Scott McGregor
Urban Forest Superintendent Timothy Downey
Street Tree Inspector Randy Fritz
Landscape Architect Billy Goodnick
Executive Assistant Karla Megill
Finance Director Bob Peirson
Redevelopment Specialist Jeannette Candau
Project Engineer Lisa Arroyo

Commissioners & Staff Absent

Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall

1. Introduction of New Commissioners

Chair Longstreet welcomed Commissioners Burns and Hochman to the Commission.

Ms. Rapp welcomed Commissioners Burns and Hochman and said staff looks

AGENDA ITEM _____

forward to working with them over the next four years. Ms. Rapp expressed that challenging times are ahead for the Department, and staff appreciates their interest and willingness to serve and looks forward to their leadership.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Ms. Rapp recommended Item 11, Tennis Advisory Committee Interview and Appointment, be taken at this time as Mr. Forsell is present for his interview.

Chair Longstreet said the item would be taken after Community Service Recognition.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None _

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No one wished to speak.

COMMUNITY SERVICE RECOGNITION:

2. Recognition of Eric Cardenas for Contributions to the Integrated Pest Management Program

Recommendation: That the Commission recognize Eric Cardenas, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Citizen Advisory Committee member, for his long-time contribution to the community and support of the City and Parks and Recreation Department IPM Program.

Mr. Escobar acknowledged Mr. Cardenas' contributions to the City's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program and service on the IPM Citizen Advisory Committee.

The Commission recognized Mr. Eric Cardenas for his dedication and contributions to the City's Integrated Pest Management Program and the leadership he provided to staff and the IPM Citizen Advisory Committee and presented him with a certificate of appreciation.

Mr. Cardenas gave credit to everyone who supported the IPM program. He encouraged the Commission to continue to support the program and expressed hope that the City continues to push the program forward.

Mayor Blum commented that it is wonderful that we are honoring Eric Cardenas. She said his professionalism is the reason the City moved forward with the program. She thanked him for making the program a good, solid program.

Speaker: Lee Moldavor praised Mr. Cardenas for his efforts.

Ms. Rapp concurred with all the other comments. She expressed appreciation to Mr. Cardenas and said the IPM Program was a priority for the Department to implement, and it could not have been done so smoothly without Mr. Cardenas support and leadership.

3. Recognition of Arnolito Gonzalez, Outgoing Park and Recreation Commissioner

Chair Longstreet presented Mr. Gonzalez with a framed photo award from the Department and thanked him for his dedication and service to the Department, the City, and the community.

Mr. Gonzalez thanked the City Council for providing the opportunity for citizens to participate by serving on the Park and Recreation Commission. He said it was a wonderful experience and he will continue to advocate for the Parks and Recreation Department. He praised Ms. Rapp saying she is an excellent administrator, and staff saying they should be recognized for the wonderful work they do making Santa Barbara a beautiful place to live and work.

Commissioner Conner thanked Mr. Gonzalez for his service and interest in youth and youth at risk.

4. Recognition of Santa Barbara Beautiful

Ms. Rapp explained that the Department has been working to complete the project at Plaza Vera Cruz. She said the ribbon cutting was cancelled due to the TEA Fire, but staff wanted to recognize Santa Barbara Beautiful for their support in the renovations of Plaza Vera Cruz. The Commission presented Santa Barbara Beautiful, Courtney Seepel and Jacqueline Dyson, with certificate of appreciation for their support of the project and thanked them for their continued support.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT REPORTS:

Chair Longstreet reported on the activities of the West Beach Art Subcommittee, Douglas Family Preserve Advisory Committee, and Creeks Advisory Committee.

COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

None

YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT:

Intern Torres-Santos provided this report. He reported that the Youth Speak Out was well-attended with 50 people attended.

Intern Torres-Santos advised that the Youth Council was involved in the Martin Luther King Day march.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

5. Summary of Council Actions

- There were no comments on the summary of Council actions.

6. Approval of Minutes

Recommendation: That the Commission waive the reading and approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 17, 2008.

Action on this item was deferred to the next meeting.

STREET TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ITEMS:

7. Street Tree Advisory Committee Recommendations

Recommendation: That the Commission:

A. Approve the following Street Tree removal requests.

1. 436 Corona del Mar - Charles McClure - (1) *Lagunaria patersonii*, Primrose Tree & (1) *Syagrus romanzoffianum*, Queen Palm
2. 724 Grove Ln. - Andrea Borgioli - *Pyrus kawakamii*, Evergreen Pear

Commissioner Daniel E. Hochman moved, seconded by Commissioner Ada Conner, and passed 4/0 to concur with the recommendations of staff and the Street Tree Advisory Committee regarding items 7A (1) & (2)

B. Deny the following Street Tree removal requests.

1. 403 Alameda Padre Serra - Tom Condon - *Eucalyptus globulus*, Blue Gum

Mr. Downey reviewed the removal request. He said there are no signs to indicate that the tree is a danger. Mr. Downey stated that the Street Tree Advisory Committee and staff recommended the removal request be denied.

Speaker: Sean Mageean spoke in support of retaining the tree.

Commissioner Ada Conner moved, seconded by Commissioner W. Scott Burns, and passed 4/0 to concur with the recommendation of staff and the Street Tree Advisory Committee and deny the removal of the *Eucalyptus globulus*, Blue Gum street tree located at 403 Alameda Padre Serra

2. 715 Roberto Ave. - Jan A. Buur - *Cupaniopsis anacardioides*, Carrotwood

Commissioner Ada Conner moved, seconded by Commissioner W. Scott Burns, and passed 4/0 to concur with the recommendations of staff and the Street Tree Advisory Committee regarding item 7 B(2).

3. 1723 Grand Ave. - Greg Pynn - *Pinus canariensis*, Canary Island Pine

Commissioner W. Scott Burns moved, seconded by Commissioner Ada Conner, and passed 4/0 to concur with the recommendations of staff and the Street Tree Advisory Committee regarding item 7B (3).

C. Deny the following Setback Tree removal request.

1. 616 Calle Rinconada - Joan Meyer - Washingtonia filifera, California Fan Palm

Commissioner Ada Conner moved, seconded by Commissioner Daniel E. Hochman, and passed 4/0 to concur with the recommendations of staff and the Street Tree Advisory Committee regarding item 7C (1).

ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF REPORTS:

8. Creeks Division 2008 Report

Recommendation: That the Commission receive a presentation on the Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Division 2008 Report (2008 Report).

Mr. Benson provided this report.

Commissioner Conner commented that the Arroyo Burro project looks beautiful. She congratulated him on the grants they have procured. Ms. Conner asked who writes the grant. Mr. Benson said that various staff members write the grants for their specific program areas. He further said that has been a model the Creeks Division has used for years, and it has been very effective. Mr. Benson said that part of the reason they have been so successful with obtaining grants is that they have such a highly skilled staff with a great deal of technical knowledge, and they are able to communicate with the granting agencies in a way that they can be understood. He said another reason for the success is that the early grants the programs received turned out projects like these.

Commissioner Burns commented that it is amazing on how well the Creeks Division does with the grants they obtain.

Commissioner Burns asked the age group for the Creeks Kids Program. Mr. Benson said the Creeks Kids Program is geared towards elementary school-aged children, and there is age-appropriate education for different grade levels.

Chair Longstreet said she has learned a great deal by serving as the liaison to the Creeks Advisory Committee. She said it is amazing to see all that has happened in such a brief period of time since the program began. Ms. Longstreet commented that so many projects are on the ground and so much scientific work is being done. She said it is a model for other cities and gave kudos to City voters for having the foresight to have a Creeks Division. Ms. Longstreet praised staff for their efforts and work.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

9. City Fiscal Condition and Preparation of FY 2010 Budget

Recommendation: That the Commission:

- A. Receive a Presentation on the City Fiscal Condition from Finance Director Bob Peirson;
- B. Receive a Staff Presentation on Impacts to the Fiscal Year 2009 and Fiscal Year 2010 Budgets;
- C. Establish a Park and Recreation Commission Budget Sub-Committee; and
- D. Set a Date for a Commission Budget Work Session.

Mr. Bob Peirson, Finance Director, provided a presentation on the City fiscal condition. He provided an overview of the economic environment and a historical perspective of City finances. He briefly talked about the Enterprise Funds, discussed impacts on key General Fund revenues, and the scope of the problem. Mr. Peirson then reviewed the proposed strategy, potential opportunities to reduce impacts, and next steps.

Chair Longstreet asked what the "CVB" is. Mr. Peirson responded saying that the CVB is the Conference and Visitor's Bureau. He indicated that the City contributes approximately \$1.5 million a year for their efforts in promoting Santa Barbara as a tourist destination. Mr. Peirson said that in many regards, it is as much an investment as it is an expense. He stated that times are tough, and if we are going to be cutting police and fire, everything is on the table.

Chair Longstreet commented that it is an investment in times when people have money to spend, but allot of our tourist base in Europe are in the same position we are. Mr. Peirson stated that many people would argue that now is the most important time to invest in advertising to fight for your market share to minimize losses. He said he thinks that is a reasonable argument, but again, if you are cutting police and fire, it is difficult not to look at everything else.

Commissioner Hochman commented that if you cut CVB funding what you are really doing is cutting potential income that could fund the kinds of programs this Commission is interested in. He said that if you want to preserve City programs, you should not cut advertising.

Commissioner Hochman asked for clarification regarding the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget Reduction Allocation Pro-rata by Budget, and how the 14.6% allocated to Parks and Recreation translates to \$921,047. Mr. Peirson said that it does not. He said that it reflects that Parks and Recreation is 14.6% of the General Fund. Mr. Peirson said if you look on the box on the right "1/3 Public Safety & 2/3 Non-Public Safety" you will see the percentage of the budget each department must reduce. He said, for example if you look in the section that reflects a reduction of \$4.2 million for

non-public safety departments, it is allocated equally across the board for each non-safety department for a reduction of 8.4%.

Commissioner Hochman asked whether scenarios other than straight across the board were considered. Mr. Peirson said no. He said they did look at different weightings between public safety and non-public safety, but they did not look to differentiate either between the two public safety departments or between any of the non-public safety departments.

Commissioner Hochman asked whether anyone would be considering that. Mr. Peirson said, at the staff level, no, but when it gets to the City Council, they will decide based on program and service impacts. Mr. Peirson said that he anticipates by the time the budget is adopted in late June, the percentages will not be the same as they are now.

Ms. Rapp interjected that when Mr. Peirson uses the term "we", he is referring to the Budget Policy Steering Committee, which typically consists of certain General Fund Department Heads and Key City Administration and Finance staff. She said that this year, because of the severity of the budget situation, the Committee has been expanded to include *all* Department Heads, whether they are General Fund or Enterprise Fund Department Heads. Ms. Rapp said that ultimately the City Administrator has the final decision, but the Committee meets every week on a regular basis for a couple hours.

Commissioner Hochman asked, regarding the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget Reduction Allocation Pro-rata by Budget, where the \$921,047 comes from.

Mr. Peirson said that number is a representation of the \$6.3 million reduction based on the Departments percentage of the budget; it is 14.6% of the \$6.3 million dollar reduction.

Speaker: Mr. Michael Jordan commented that the Commission needs to continue to advocate and proactively move forward and ensure that we continue to maintain parks and recreation services and maintain the level of community that parks and recreation brings. He said it trickles down to everything from enjoyment to youth violence to what is seen or not seen on State Street. Mr. Jordan echoed Commissioner Hochman's comments saying it is important to recognize and not give up on expenses that generate revenue, and to search those out and put greater emphasis on those functions and operations that can generate more revenue, because not doing so, further worsens the problem. Mr. Jordan asked whether it is fair to allocate cuts based on budget percentage, based on the importance of this department to the community. He said that perhaps a question to be asked is whether it is fair to distribute retirement costs and liabilities in a department across departments. Mr. Jordan suggested that the department that is costing more for retirement should bear a bigger allocation of the expense than other departments.

Mr. Peirson commented that retirement costs are projected individually and allocated to their program; he said there is no spreading of costs on an organization wide basis.

Chair Longstreet said the Commission's charge is to put the most reasonable budget together with cuts in places that do the least damage, and it will be City Council's charge to make the final decisions. She said that in the past, the numbers and programs have changed as the budget moved forward. Ms. Longstreet said that this year, as opposed to other years, because of the economic environment, everyone needs to be realistic. Ms. Longstreet commented that with the Advisory Committees, staff is really in touch with the needs of the community, so she feels the Commission will be making informed decisions.

Chair Longstreet expressed surprise that approximately 50% of the budget is for public safety.

Ms. Rapp interjected that approximately 75% of the budget is salaries and benefits, which is why when the City is talking this level of reductions it is difficult to discuss without realizing that we are talking positions and people.

Intern Torres-Santos asked regarding parking citation revenue if it is the same amount for next year. Mr. Peirson said He anticipates it will be about the same amount next year.

Commissioner Burns commented that he served on the Infrastructure Financing Taskforce and realized that the City spends \$1.4 million on the maintenance of existing facilities. He said the Taskforce realized the City needs to spend another \$700,000 just to be even, because it is always behind in deferred maintenance. Mr. Burns commented that there will probably never be anyone advocating spending money on maintaining the buildings, but the City can not let that drop. Chair Longstreet concurred.

Commissioner Hochman asked whether when the economy recovers, possibly in the middle of Fiscal Year 2010 or in the near future, is there a mechanism in place to restore some of the programs that have been cut, if it looks like it might be appropriate.

Mr. Peirson said there is no mechanism in place, but he assured the Commission that Finance staff watch the revenues very closely every month and send out a revenue news email. He said that once the economy starts turning around, they would be happy to look at that.

Ms. Rapp provided a presentation on impacts to the Fiscal Year 2009 and talked about the Departments mission. She highlighted the Department's strategy in preparing the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget.

Regarding vegetative fuels management, Chair Longstreet commented that the Riviera Association has a Special Assessment District and clarified that the budget changes will not impact anything that happens there. Ms. Rapp said Chair Longstreet was correct; it is completely separate funding.

Chair Longstreet said she is comforted knowing that a large area of concern is still covered, we are not cutting back too much.

Ms. Rapp said no funds generated through the Wildfire Assessment District are used to do vegetative fuels clearance on City parkland or open space.

Chair Longstreet asked who the money passes through. Ms. Rapp said it passes through the Fire Department.

Ms. Rapp said staff recommends the Commission establish an ad hoc budget subcommittee to provide input to staff and plan the public review process. She further suggested the Commission set the first Commission budget work session for Monday, February 23rd. The Commission agreed to 5:00 p.m. on that date.

Chair Longstreet stated that she and Commissioner Larimore-Hall expressed interest in serving on the Budget Subcommittee. Commission Conner said she would serve as the alternate.

Commissioner Hochman thanked staff for the presentation and said he is looking forward to learning more in-depth about the Department's budget future.

Commissioner Burns said he would like input and advice from the Advisory Committees regarding the recommended reductions. He suggested things such as cameras on the Tennis courts or using other people to drop in and check the courts out periodically.

Ms. Rapp concurred and said it is one of the topics that will be on the agenda for the Ad-Hoc Committee. She said the suggestions are good ones and said cameras might be a cost savings in the long-term. Ms. Rapp further said that this is the time to look to the community and encourage people to step forward to see how they can be a part of helping keep the parks safe, clean, and green, and offering good programs, especially for those people in the community who are more economically challenged than others.

Chair Longstreet encouraged all Advisory Committees to watch or attend and be aware of what is happening with the budget. She said the one constraint the Commission has is that the budget is introduced to City Council first.

Intern Torres-Santos asked whether the Teen Center hours will be cut. Ms. Rapp said that all programs are being looked at. She said there could possibly be reductions in Teen Programs, and their staff has input into how those reductions will be prioritized.

Intern Torres-Santos asked how Youth Sports will be cut. Ms. Rapp said that often times for the Youth Sports Program part-time staff are used for coaches and referees, and umpires. She said the Department would look to use more community volunteers in that area.

Ms. Rapp expressed how difficult it has been for the Department at this time. She said staff have worked so hard and the Department is operating at such a high level. She said the parks are beautiful and the Integrated Pest Management Program is going well, and it is so hard to have to cut back on all the progress that has been made. Ms. Rapp said, however, that it is important to recognize that the Department is strong, has a good team of people and strong support from the community. She further stated that the Department has been through tough times in the past and is still providing necessary services to the community. Ms. Rapp said painful decisions will have to be made, but we will get through it.

Chair Longstreet expressed that the Parks and Recreation Department provides a wonderful service to the community and it is very important; she said she believes it is a public safety service.

10. Update on the West Downtown Improvement Project

Recommendation: That the Commission receive a staff presentation summarizing the status of the West Downtown Improvement Project.

Ms. Rapp introduced this item. She said staff will provide a presentation on the full scope of the project. She further stated that when the item was before the Commission previously, the request to approve the tree removals was granted, but there was concern expressed about some of the trees. Ms. Rapp said that since that time, staff has spent more time on that project with more public meetings, and have come to a recommendation that they will not be doing some of the tree removals.

Ms. Candau provided an overview of the West Downtown Improvement project. She discussed the street tree plan. She said that on October 22, 2008, the Park and Recreation Commission approved the staff recommendation to remove up to 18 street trees, and the project proposed to plant approximately 87 new street trees with a net gain of 69 new trees. Ms. Candau indicated that the Architectural Board of Review reviewed the project and expressed concerns with the tree removals and intersection plantings, and encouraged staff to conduct a public meeting. She said neighborhood meetings were held, but public participation was low. Ms. Candau said that staff is now recommending the removal of up to 15 street trees and staff proposes delaying the removal of 3 of the Tipuana trees on the 200 block of Ortega Street.

Chair Longstreet commented that although the Commission did approve the removals in October, they did make a recommendation that they be revisited.

Mr. Downey spoke more specifically about the tree removals that will be a part of the project. He said the new proposal is to remove 15 trees; the number is not set in stone, as the project develops all of those trees may not be removed. Mr. Downey highlighted the proposed trees.

Chair Longstreet asked the replacement species for the Tipuana. Mr. Downey said the replacement species for the Tipuana is the Chinese Pistache.

Commissioner Conner asked how a tree gets planted if it isn't planned for it to be planted. Mr. Downey said he does not really know, a bird may have dropped a seed, or a citizen could have planted the tree.

Chair Longstreet asked regarding the Ortega Street block, what the affect of root pruning will be on the mature trees. Mr. Downey said it is anticipated that any root pruning that is done will not have a permanent affect on the trees.

Commissioner Burns commented that he assumes the project is coming from a different pocket of money than the General Fund. Ms. Candau said the project is funded entirely by Redevelopment Agency Funds, a separate allocation of money that comes through bonding and tax increment in the redevelopment area. She said it is not drawn from the General Fund, which is why staff can move forward with these infrastructure improvement projects without a negative impact to the City budget.

Ms. Rapp interjected that Redevelopment Agency Funds cannot, by law, be used for maintenance and operations.

Intern Torres-Santos asked how long the tree on the corner of Castillo has been there. Mr. Downey said approximately 60 years.

Chair Longstreet thanked staff for the presentation. She said that corridor needs work; there is no street scape, and it will be a great improvement.

11. Tennis Advisory Committee Interview and Appointment

Recommendation: That the Commission consider the application of Steve Forsell and appoint him to the Tennis Advisory Committee.

Chair Longstreet asked Mr. Forsell why he answered no to the question of whether he has served on this or any other committee in the past.

Mr. Forsell said he served seven years on the Park & Recreation Commission. He served as a liaison to the Tennis Advisory Committee, but was not a member of the Committee.

Commissioner Ada Conner moved, seconded by Commissioner W. Scott Burns, and passed 4/0 to appoint Steve Forsell, representing the community at

large, to the Tennis Advisory Committee, for a term ending December 31, 2010.

12. Suspension of Franceschi Park Advisory Committee

Recommendation: That the Commission indefinitely suspend the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee.

Mr. Goodnick provided a brief history on the formation of the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee. He said there are no major changes to the park on the horizon that would need steering from the Advisory Committee. He further stated that there are no imminent changes to the use policy to the park because the Pearl Chase Society is still fundraising for their project. Mr. Goodnick said that staff recommend the Advisory Committee be suspended until such time as there is a need to meet.

Ms. Rapp said the Committee has been a hard-working Committee, and the Committee members have put together grant proposals, but have not been successful.

Chair Longstreet stated that if citizens have any issues about the Park, they can bring those issues to the Park and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Daniel E. Hochman moved, seconded by Commissioner Ada Conner, and passed 4/0 to indefinitely suspend the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee.

13. Advisory Committee Liaison Appointments

Recommendation: That the Commission discuss current advisory committee liaison assignments and consider who will fill vacant advisory committee liaison positions.

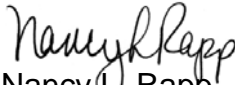
The Commission addressed advisory committee liaison appointments. The listing which contains updates made during this meeting is attached.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Commission, at 7:24 p.m.,

Commissioner Daniel E. Hochman moved, seconded by Commissioner Ada Conner, and passed 4/0 to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,


Nancy L. Rapp

Parks and Recreation Director