



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: January 27, 2010

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Commission Youth Member

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission approve and recommend to City Council the draft ordinance establishing procedures for the appointment and service of a youth member on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

DISCUSSION:

On November 3, 2009, voters of the City of Santa Barbara overwhelmingly approved Measure C. The ballot measure amends language in the City Charter in order to form a new combined City "Parks and Recreation Commission" with seven members. The powers and duties of the new Commission will be the same as that of the former separate Park Commission and Recreation Commission, except that the amendment grants the new Commission authority to advise the City Council on matters concerning creeks within the City, since the Department has oversight and responsibility for the Creeks Division.

The measure also authorizes, but does not require, the City Council to appoint a youth member, 16 years of age or older, who resides within the City, to serve on the Parks and Recreation Commission. The manner of appointing the youth member and the term of office for the youth member will be established by an Ordinance of the City Council. A Sub-Committee of two Commissioners and two Youth Council members was formed at the November 18, 2009, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to determine the appointment process and term.

On January 11, 2010, the Sub-Committee met to review the current guidelines for all City advisory committees including recruitment, eligibility, appointment process, and term. The "Guidelines for the City of Santa Barbara Advisory Groups" and a draft ordinance provided by the City Attorney were shared with the Sub-Committee. It was determined that manner of appointment and service of a youth member shall follow the process of appointment and service of other members of the Parks and Recreation Commission with a few additional provisions that addressed the Sub-Committee's concerns. Responses to the concerns are as follows:

- If a four-year term was decided upon, would youth be dissuaded from applying knowing they may not be able to fulfill the full term? – Ideas were discussed on ways

to encourage applicants including recruitment through Youth Council and other community leadership programs. The Guidelines for City Advisory Groups, including service and term, could be shared with interested applicants. The Parks and Recreation Director also explained that she meets with each applicant to explain the role of commissioners and to understand their personal interests in the position. These talks are a good opportunity to answer questions that a youth applicant may have including ability to fulfill a four-year term.

- What criteria would be used to select a youth member if there were several youth applicants? - Commissioners are interviewed and appointed by City Council, and though decisions may be difficult, it is their responsibility to select the best candidate. The Council utilizes a list of questions (which are also supplied to the applicant) for the interview process. The Sub-Committee recommends that a youth issues interview question be added to the suggested questions that Council may use when interviewing all potential Parks and Recreation Commissioner applicants. This would assist Council in making their determination.
- Using the term “youth member” implies a commission member category or designation – was that the intended manner of how the youth would serve? Should another term be used? - The Sub-Committee did not recommend a specific category of “youth member”. Staff returned to the City Attorney with the Sub-Committee’s concern on the terminology. The draft ordinance was changed from “youth member” to “applicants under age eighteen”, so as not to “designate” a “youth position” per se.
- What happens when the youth turns 18 years old? Are they then disqualified from service? Would the “youth” commissioner have to register to vote at age 18 to fulfill the “qualified elector” requirement? - The City Attorney changed the draft ordinance by adding provisions that succinctly reflect what happens when a youth reaches 18 years of age including that “reaching the age of eighteen (18) should not disqualify a youth applicant who is appointed to the Parks and Recreation commission from continuing to serve the balance of his or her term of office”. Reasons for disqualification would not deviate from the current guidelines for advisory group members

At the January 19, 2010, meeting of the Youth Council, the draft ordinance was approved with a recommendation to forward to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Staff supports approval of the draft ordinance and recommends the ordinance be forwarded with a resolution to City Council for adoption.

ATTACHMENT: Draft Ordinance Of The Council Of The City Of Santa Barbara Amending Section 2.08.020 Of The Santa Barbara Municipal Code And Establishing Procedures For The

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Appointment And Service Of A Youth Member To The
Parks And Recreation Commission.

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