
THE COSTA MESA PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION

JANUARY 8, 2026
6:00 P.M. – OFFICIAL MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER by Chair Brown at 6:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE by Commissioner Komala.

ROLL CALL

☒ = Present ☐ = Absent

Commissioners	City Staff
☒ Cristian Garcia Arcos	☒ Brian Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director
☒ Jake Husen	☒ Monique Villasenor, Recreation Manager
☒ Jason Komala	☒ Robert Ryan, Maintenance Services Manager
☒ Brandine Leger	☒ Laura Fautua, Executive Assistant
☒ Elizabeth Dorn Parker	☒ Kathia Vitier, Recreation Specialist
☐ Shyanne Wright, Vice Chair	
☒ Kelly Brown, Chair	

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Commissioner Dorn Parker: Emphasized the once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine Fairview Development Center and adjacent golf courses to balance housing, open space, accessible nine-hole public golf, and youth/adult sports fields. She urged the Commission to request data and open discussion rather than foreclose exploration, stressing equity, community quality of life, and the growing demand for recreational space.

Commissioner Komala: Shared personal resonance youth sports, noting his child's enrollment in flag football. Expressed excitement about the upcoming Brentwood Park groundbreaking and thanked staff for their work.

Commissioner Leger: Expressed agreement with Commissioner Dorn Parker's comments and supported continuing the discussion at a future meeting.

Commissioner Husen: Reflected on his first year as a commissioner, expressing gratitude for the learning experience and appreciation for fellow commissioners and staff who share a strong commitment to the city.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos: Voiced strong support for opening discussions about golf, youth access, and open space, noting golf is not widely accessible to youth he knows. He highlighted extensive community engagement efforts, partnerships, and outreach in his community.

Chair Brown: Acknowledged current national and local challenges affecting residents and praised staff for the growth and success of Snoopy House. She outlined pathways for advancing Commissioner Dorn Parker's ideas through memos and staff coordination, encouraged preparation for upcoming CIP discussions rooted in Commission values, and shared inspiration from community gardening and placemaking efforts that could inform local priorities.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1. Minutes – November 13, 2025 PACS Draft Minutes**
- 2. Department Report – November and December 2025**

Public Comment: None.

MOTION: To approve consent calendar items

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Dorn Parker / Commissioner Leger

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Commissioner Dorn Parker, Commissioner Husen, Commissioner Garcia Arcos, Commissioner Komala, Commissioner Leger, Chair Brown

Nays: None

Absent: Vice Chair Wright,

Motion Carried: 6 – 0

MONTHLY REPORTS

- 1. PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

Mr. Brian Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director presented.

Commissioner Dorn-Parker commended City staff and leadership for coordinating expanded swim lessons that provide critical water safety access to children who otherwise lack opportunities. She emphasized the long-term equity and safety benefits, encouraged continued regional collaboration, and suggested expanding programs to include adult swim instruction.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos agreed on the importance of being mindful of staff capacity when proposing agenda items and supported creating opportunities for adults to learn basic skills like swimming or biking. He also inquired about the availability and duration of senior center mental health services.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. DONATION OF A MEMORIAL BENCH AND PLAQUE AT FAIRVIEW PARK**

Mr. Robert Ryan, Maintenance Services Manager presented.

Chair Brown thanked the Finley family for their bench donation and expressed appreciation for creating a meaningful memorial space. She also requested a summary of the Fairview Park Steering Committee's discussion to better understand their procedural questions or concerns regarding the bench approval process.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos asked for comparative cost information on different bench materials and requested staff provide a future analysis of wooden benches probability. He also advocated for postponing the vote to allow for additional information, alignment with Commission values, sustainability considerations, and community input before making a decision.

Chair Brown clarified that the request to postpone was about bench materials, not the family's donation, and expressed sensitivity to the family's long wait. She explored procedural options to support the donation while allowing time to resolve material details and invited commissioner input.

Commissioner Leger expressed appreciation for values-based discussion but opposed delaying the item, emphasizing that the family has already waited too long and deserves a decision to honor their loved one without further delay.

Commissioner Komala agreed the bench should be approved tonight given timing and process, while supporting future exploration of healthier or alternative materials for the bench.

Commissioner Dorn Parker supported approving the bench now, stating that broader discussions about materials, sustainability, and standardization should occur separately and not at the expense of this family. She emphasized maintenance realities and felt delaying approval would be dishonoring the family's request.

Commissioner Husen also supported voting on the item tonight, while mentioning alternative materials are worth exploring, practical maintenance and cost considerations warrant addressing the issue at a later time.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos appreciated the discussion and agreed the bench should be approved now, while stressing the importance of formally following up on alternative materials. He asked staff how the Commission could continue the conversation and bring the topic back at a future meeting.

Commissioner Leger suggested setting a specific future month for the item to be added to the agenda, acknowledging staff workload while ensuring the topic is formally reviewed within a defined timeframe.

Commissioner Komala recognized staff capacity constraints and proposed that commissioners independently research the topic and share findings, including peer-reviewed studies, to inform future discussion without adding immediate burden to staff.

Chair Brown expressed appreciation for the discussion and for Commissioner Garcia Arcos raising the issue, emphasizing the importance of public engagement and thoughtful dialogue before deciding on direction. She suggested clarifying what specific information the Commission wants from staff and noted that, due to a full agenda through spring, the topic may be more appropriate for consideration in the summer.

Public Comment: None.

MOTION: To accept the donation and plaque to be installed in Fairview Park in memory of Ryan Fenley.

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Komala/ Commissioner Leger

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Commissioner Dorn Parker, Commissioner Husen, Commissioner Garcia Arcos, Commissioner Komala, Commissioner Leger, Chair Brown

Nays: None

Absent: Vice Chair Wright

Motion Carried: 6 – 0

ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER MEMBER & STAFF COMMENTS

Commissioner Husen asked for general cost ranges for playground equipment and sand replacement based on past projects, noting his heightened awareness as a parent and in light of upcoming CIP discussions. He emphasized wanting a rough understanding of budget implications rather than precise figures.

Commissioner Leger reflected that the bench discussion highlighted the value of having diverse perspectives on the Commission. She expressed appreciation for hearing different viewpoints and priorities.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos shared information about an upcoming International Society of Arboriculture conference in Yosemite and encouraged City staff participation to gain regional connections.

ADJOURNMENT by Chair Brown at 7:10 PM.