
THE COSTA MESA PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION

FEBRUARY 12, 2026
6:00 P.M. – OFFICIAL MINUTES

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE by Vice Chair Wright.

ROLL CALL

☒ = Present ☐ = Absent

Commissioners

- ☒ Cristian Garcia Arcos
- ☐ Jake Husen
- ☒ Jason Komala
- ☒ Brandine Leger
- ☒ Elizabeth Dorn Parker
- ☒ Shyanne Wright, Vice Chair
- ☒ Kelly Brown, Chair

City Staff

- ☒ Brian Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director
- ☒ Monique Villasenor, Recreation Manager
- ☒ Robert Ryan, Maintenance Services Manager
- ☒ Laura Fautua, Executive Assistant
- ☒ Kathia Vitier, Recreation Specialist

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Colleen Piltz: Costa Mesa resident, spoke in support of adding gym equipment at the Costa Mesa Senior Center, stating that active seniors would benefit from accessible fitness facilities and a social gathering space similar to nearby senior centers.

Ramon: State Streets resident, expressed concerns about safety, outdated equipment, and lack of accessibility at Moon Park, and urged the City to invest in park improvements to better serve neighborhood families.

Jason child: State Streets resident, advocated for Moon Park to be included in the Capital Improvement Program, citing aging infrastructure, unsafe conditions, and growing demand from young families in the neighborhood.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Commissioner Dorn Parker: Thanked those who provided public comments and stated she would share additional remarks during the CIP and other agenda discussions.

Commissioner Komala: Thanked State Streets residents for attending and providing feedback, expressed appreciation to City staff, and shared enthusiasm for the Ketchum Libolt Park groundbreaking and the park's future development.

Commissioner Leger: Encouraged community members to engage in community service and civic involvement, noting its importance in strengthening neighborhoods and building a connected community.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos: Invited the community to attend the *Día de los Niños* celebration on April 18 and shared concerns about off-leash dogs at Fairview Park, suggesting the exploration of a volunteer reserve watch-style program to encourage compliance.

Vice Chair Wright: Expressed excitement about the partnership with Neat Coffee to operate

the café at Lions Park, highlighted the potential of multi-use recreational spaces, and noted progress on Brentwood Park and Ketchum Libolt Park.

Chair Brown: Shared updates from recent community meetings, suggested establishing a PACS liaison to Costa Mesa United, acknowledged recent park project milestones, expressed support for the Poetry in Parks initiative, requested regular park ranger data reports, and noted community correspondence regarding the Tennis Center and upcoming CIP discussions.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Minutes – January 8, 2026 PACS Draft Minutes

2. Department Report – January 2026

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 Garcia Arcos, Commissioner Komala, Commissioner Leger, Vice Chair Wright, Chair Brown

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Husen

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 inquired whether a pump track would be included in the skate park plans and commended City staff for maintaining seamless operations at the Tennis Center following the operator's abrupt departure.

Commissioner Leger commended staff for maintaining uninterrupted Tennis Center operations, asked about the timing of notification for the Ketchum Libolt Park groundbreaking, and suggested partnering with the school district to include bilingual student poetry in the Poetry in the Parks program.

Chair Brown emphasized the importance of including both English and Spanish in the Poetry in the Parks initiative and expressed support for exploring opportunities to feature poetry written by local students in future park installations.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos expressed support for involving local youth in the Poetry in the Parks program and requested an update on the timeline for implementing Spanish language access on the City's 311 app. Highlighted the usefulness of the app for reporting maintenance/graffiti issues. Encouraged exploration of potential locations for community gardens.

Commissioner Dorn-Parker noted that she had identified potential small community garden locations along Victoria Street and asked how residents or commissioners

could submit information about possible green space opportunities.

Vice Chair Wright requested estimated completion dates for Brentwood Park and Ketchum Libolt Park, expressed support for transparency regarding Tennis Center fees, suggested exploring youth incentives for golf participation, and supported increased coordination and liaison efforts with local school and community partners.

Chair Brown expressed enthusiasm about the upcoming café at Lions Park, requested notification of the Ketchum Libolt Park opening date once available, and encouraged continued educational programs and public engagement opportunities at Fairview Park.

Commissioner Dorn Parker expressed support for educational programs such as the vernal pools walk at Fairview Park and shared that similar outreach and themed activities had successfully improved community stewardship and responsible use at the Back Bay.

Chair Brown suggested exploring astronomy-related programming at Fairview Park and emphasized the importance of community engagement activities to encourage appropriate park use while addressing concerns about potential park access limitations.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

1. SENIOR TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Mr. Brian Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director, and Mr. Kevin Stoddart, Sr. Recreation Supervisor presented.

Commissioners inquired clarifying data questions from the presentations. And then just want to clarify the like top variables that we're assessing would be cost to the rider, location of rides, amount of times to ride, per month, any other large buckets. And just, could you also share, for anyone who doesn't experience this program, top reasons why seniors are using this program. But I remember even one of I think it was commissioner Dorn Parker talking about, even if you can drive, sometimes the hospital parking lot is is a very long walk away from your appointment. And so even if you can drive, it can be really difficult to go to appointments like that. Anyways, I know we're going to hear people's experiences of the program, so I just wanted to thank you. I like the data, clarifying questions.

Chair Brown explained that the item was for discussion and questions only, encouraged commissioners to attend upcoming community outreach sessions, and invited additional public input by email before the Commission develops recommendations at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Wright asked staff for clarification on the total number of unique riders using the Senior Taxi Program.

Commissioner Dorn-Parker discussed the importance of understanding program usage data and suggested exploring options such as ride limits, co-pays, and a

centralized phone dispatch system to help sustain the program while maintaining accessibility for seniors.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos thanked staff for the presentation and emphasized the importance of informing seniors about alternative transportation services during outreach efforts to help offset program demand.

Chair Brown asked staff to clarify the overarching purpose and philosophy of the City's Senior Taxi Program and inquired about appropriate trial periods other cities may have used when implementing changes to similar programs.

Public Comment:

Patrick Fogarty , a long-time Costa Mesa resident, spoke in support of the Senior Taxi Program, stating that it was essential for attending medical appointments and encouraged the City to maintain the program with improved funding.

Commenter 2: shared a program experience assisting a disabled individual under age 60 who was unable to access similar services for medical appointments and the age-restricted program.

Gene: Costa Mesa resident, shared that the Senior Taxi Program had been vital for medical transportation following health challenges and the loss of her spouse, and asked how frequently the service was used for trips to the Senior Center.

Thomas Bogdan: Costa Mesa resident, noted that while he had used the Senior Taxi Program, its limited service hours made it difficult for him to return home from evening dialysis appointments.

Caller: Shared personal health challenges and expressed gratitude for the Senior Taxi Program, stating that the service had been critical for transportation to cancer treatments and medical appointments.

Commissioner Leger expressed concern that seniors may not be able to rely on bus routes without shade structures at bus stops, opposed a prepaid ride card model, and suggested limiting rides, prioritizing medical trips, and exploring a shuttle option for Senior Center lunch services.

Commissioner Komala emphasized the importance of gathering additional community feedback before forming recommendations on the Senior Transportation Program, noting the personal impact of the service and expressing interest in attending upcoming outreach sessions.

Vice Chair Wright acknowledged the financial constraints affecting the Senior Taxi Program, expressed empathy for program users, and suggested exploring options such as prioritizing medical trips, implementing a small co-pay, and establishing limits on ride usage to help sustain the program.

Chair Brown asked whether community outreach could include gathering feedback on potential co-pay amounts to better understand what program users might find reasonable.

Commissioner Dorn Parker expressed interest in attending community outreach meetings to better understand how residents use the program and emphasized the importance of developing recommendations that balance sustainability, equity, and community-centered planning.

Chair Brown asked staff to explore potential grant opportunities for senior transportation, requested an overview of the planned community outreach meetings, and noted concerns about program efficiency while emphasizing the importance of equitable and responsible use of City resources.

Commissioner Leger suggested providing a QR code survey option for residents unable to attend community meetings and commented on concerns regarding potential misuse of the program by some users.

Commissioner Dorn-Parker recommended that outreach meetings collect information about participants' transportation needs, current travel patterns, vehicle access, and how they might adjust if the service were limited to better inform future program recommendations.

No action, item was received and filed.

Chair Brown called for a 10-minute recess to begin at 8:23 PM. Commissioner Leger made the motion and seconded by Commissioner Dorn Parker. Meeting was called back to order at 8:35 PM.

2. REVIEW OF FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

Mr. Robert Ryan, Maintenance Services Manager presented.

Public Comment: None.

Commissioner Leger asked how staff identifies parks that require improvements beyond resident complaints and whether safety conditions, crime data, or park ranger observations are considered in determining park upgrades.

Commissioner Komala asked whether the cost estimate listed for Moon Park in the CIP was a placeholder or based on a formal assessment, noting that the amount appeared low compared to similar park improvements.

Commissioner Dorn-Parker asked whether the City could establish a method within the CIP process to set aside funds annually toward long-term park projects and suggested creating dedicated funding for initiatives such as arts in parks.

Chair Brown noted that the Commission would discuss how to incorporate recommendations and language into the CIP process at the next meeting.

Commissioner Dorn-Parker discussed the importance of coordinating CIP planning with other local agencies and asked how developer park impact funds could be applied to both new park facilities and improvements to existing parks.

Chair Brown noted that the current five-year CIP was developed prior to the Commission's values document and encouraged commissioners to use those adopted values to guide future recommendations to City Council, including potential projects such as community gardens.

Commissioner Leger suggested applying the Commission's values framework when evaluating park projects, using Moon Park as an example to assess factors such as equity, access, safety, and maintenance.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos asked for clarification on the scope of the City's tree maintenance funding and contract, including whether it covered planting, maintenance, pruning, and emergency work, and inquired about the funding assumptions for Westside Park development.

Vice Chair Wright discussed the importance of transparency in the CIP process, suggested cross-referencing park investments with identified park opportunity areas from the Open Space Master Plan and asked how projects are selected and categorized within the CIP framework.

Commissioner Leger asked how the City typically secures grant funding from state or federal representatives and whether the City proactively requests funding opportunities for park projects.

Chair Brown emphasized the continued need for additional park space on parts of the west side of the city, highlighted equity concerns related to park access, and encouraged commissioners to prepare recommendations for the CIP aligned with the Commission's adopted values.

No action, item was received and filed.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

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

Public Comment: None.

MOTION: To accept the same leadership as Chair and Vice Chair.

Chair Brown and Vice Chair Wright accepted.

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Dorn Parker/Commissioner Leger

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Husen

Motion Carried: 6 – 0

ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER MEMBER & STAFF COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT by Chair Brown at 9:29 PM.