

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024
6:00 P.M. – UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER by Vice Chair Dorn Parker at 6:00pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE by Commissioner Leger.

ROLL CALL

= Present = Absent

Commissioners

- Cristian Garcia Arcos
- Scott Glabb
- Brandine Ledger
- Terry Wall
- Shayanne Wright
- Kelly Brown, Vice Chair
- Elizabeth Dorn Parker, Chair

City Staff

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lynn Redman: Raised concerns about weed control, particularly black mustard, in Fairview Park. Also shared his experience from farming, noting that most herbicides are ineffective against black mustard and broad-spectrum herbicides could harm native plants. He and others have been manually removing the mustard, but the plant grows year-round and is difficult to control. Mr. Redman fears that delays in the approved weed control plans will result in a full year of lost mustard removal efforts, leading to further complications with other invasive plants like thistles and horehound.

Eric Jimenez: Co-founder of Bright Youth, a community-led organization, spoke about their mission to provide resources that inspire growth and hope for youth and has organized multiple events over the past three (3) years, with their largest being the "Back to School Fresh" event. They have donated over 500 backpacks, meals, haircuts, hygiene products, and more. Collaborating with local officials and the city of Costa Mesa, they unite nonprofits, businesses, and community leaders to support at-risk and gang-affiliated youth. Invited those interested in their mission to contact him for involvement.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Commissioner Wall: Expressed appreciation for the LED lighting upgrades at Bark Park, noting how enhanced lighting improves safety. Also mentioned a beetle infestation at the park and were curious about its resolution. Another topic raised was the long waitlist for community gardens, with 162 people waiting between Del Mar and Hamilton gardens. The speaker suggested utilizing space at Fairview Developmental Center for a new community garden to accommodate the demand, particularly for non-homeowners or renters who lack gardening space. This idea was proposed as a potential solution to meet the growing interest in community gardening.

Commissioner Ledger: Noted mustard has health benefits and inquired if the mustard in Fairview is edible and opportunity for the community to harvest be a way to help control the overgrowth.

Commissioner Glabb: Invited commissioners and staff to attend the Costa Mesa High School football game against Savannah High School at 7 p.m. He offered to add them and a guest to the VIP list if they email him.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos: Shared his recent experience in the Sequoias, where he completed research and reconnected with nature, noting it helped him de-stress. He mentioned working with world-leading scientists and encouraged others to check out the nonprofit Ancient Forest Society. He also expressed appreciation for Eric Jimenez and his team's efforts supporting youth, emphasizing their shared background. Lastly, announced his new role as co-chair of Arbolero and discussed plans to promote tree safety education, highlighting the tragic fatalities in the tree industry, including two (2) local incidents.

Vice Chair Brown: Shared her experience attending a Fairview Park public input session as the commission's liaison. She praised the session's format, which allowed attendees to move between stations for recommendations and input. However, she noted that input recording varied between stations. As a mother of a teen, Brown highlighted the lack of resources for teenagers, despite the city's recent efforts to offer free activities and field trips for teens. She emphasized the need for greater youth engagement in public spaces like Fairview Park and suggested exploring ways to involve teens in civic processes, perhaps through public engagement or activities like those offered by ACMA, which provides curatorial experiences for older teens. Lastly, she voiced support for expanding community gardening plots, especially for residents in high-density housing.

Chair Dorn Parker: Praised staff for their responsiveness to community input regarding park planning, especially on issues like adding shade, drinking fountains, dog spaces, and gender-neutral restrooms. She emphasized the need for more resources, particularly in response to the growing popularity of pickleball and its impact on park planning. Chair Dorn Parker also highlighted the cooperation between Newport Mesa Unified School District and the City with Harper Park, balancing neighborhood and school use. She commended improvements at Kaiser for increasing bike and walkability, enhancing safety, especially for school children. Additionally, she mentioned progress on Brentwood Park and the Costa Mesa Tennis Center's efforts to integrate pickleball, appreciating the staff's community-driven approach and commitment to making changes based on feedback.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1. Minutes – 08/08/2024 PACS Draft Minutes**
- 2. Department Report – August 2024**

MOTION: to approve Consent Calendar

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Wall/ Vice Chair Brown.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Commissioner Garcia Arcos, Commissioner Glabb, Commissioner Ledger, Commissioner Wall, Vice Chair Brown, Chair Dorn Parker

Nays: none

Absent: Commissioner Wright

Motion Carried: 6 – 0

MONTHLY REPORTS

1. PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Mr. Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director presented.

Public Comment:

David Martinez: Planning Commission member, mentioned that the Planning Commission will review the Fairview Developmental Center's Open Space Plans during their study session. He invited feedback on the size and use of open space, with current concepts ranging from 8 to 18 acres, mostly for park areas and sports fields. He plans to raise the idea of community gardens. Mr. Martinez also emphasized the importance of access to the site and surrounding spaces like Fairview Park. He requested input from the Commission on oversubscription of facilities like soccer fields and basketball courts to prioritize them in the new space.

Commissioner Glabb inquired about the organization that provides mental health services at the Senior Center.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos invited others to visit Shalimar Park for an introduction, expressing appreciation for their work and the positive impact it has.

Vice Chair Brown reflected on her three-year experience with the commission, noting the significant increase in pickleball courts. She raised questions about the new teen center, specifically its opening timeline, opportunities for tours, and how teen input was gathered for its design. Additionally, she expressed concern about outreach strategies to engage a broader teen population beyond those who typically participate, suggesting that teens should help craft plans for outreach. Vice Chair Brown shared her experience of finding information in school communications, highlighting the need for better visibility in promoting teen center activities.

Commissioner Leger echoed support for teen involvement in volunteering at Fairview Park and reminded the public to pre-register for the free ARTventure awards event. She also shared her teen center experience, highlighting how the dances felt more like adult events, offering a more elevated experience for teens.

Chair Dorn Parker inquired about the expected attendance numbers for the newly opened teen center, emphasizing its role as a safe space for pre-teens and teens to engage with one another away from their phones and computers.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

1. REPLACEMENT OF THE EXERCISE EQUIPMENT AT WIMBLEDON PARK

Mr. Rob Ryan, Public Works Maintenance Services Manager presented.

Vice Chair Brown asked for information regarding the number of people using the teen center and if there is any data available on its usage.

Chair Dorn Parker shared that friends living near a park with outdoor exercise equipment love it and frequently use it, describing it as a centerpiece for their community. He noted that while his observations are anecdotal, residents appreciate the outdoor gym, especially with the recent recognition of the need for ADA-compliant equipment to accommodate aging users and those with physical limitations. He expressed gratitude for this consideration in the park's development.

Commissioner Leger expressed enthusiasm for the upcoming pickleball lessons, as he feels left out of the sport. He also noted his appreciation for the exercise equipment, highlighting its 16-year lifespan as a sign of good value, considering the longevity it provided.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos inquired about the presence of shade and whether there are plans to plant trees that could provide shade in the future, as he was uncertain about the surrounding environment.

Item received and filed.

ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER MEMBER & STAFF COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT by Chair Dorn Parker at 7:08 P.M.