

FEBRUARY 13, 2025
6:00 P.M. – UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE by Commissioner Wall.

ADMINISTRATION OF OARTH OF OFFICE

The following Commissioners were sworn in: Elizabeth Dorn Parker, Brandice Leger, Shayanne Wright, Jason Komala, and Jake Husen.

ROLL CALL

= Present = Absent

Commissioners

- Cristian Garcia Arcos
- Jake Husen
- Jason Komala
- Brandine Ledger
- Shayanne Wright
- Kelly Brown, Vice Chair
- Elizabeth Dorn Parker, Chair

City Staff

- Brian Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director
- Monique Villasenor, Recreation Manager
- Seung Yang, City Engineer
- Laura Fautua, Executive Assistant
- Kathia Viteri, Office Specialist II

PRESENTATION:

1. STAFF LEADERSHIP TRAINING RECAP

Monique Villasenor, Recreation Manager, and Brian Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Correspondence received.

Ralph Taboada: Long-time resident, urged improvements to the capital project planning process for parks. Advocated for a bottom-up process where the Commission actively contributes to project selection based on park needs, public input, and capital improvement plans. Called for greater collaboration between Commission and staff to create a more effective and inclusive planning system for Costa Mesa’s parks.

Jenn Tanaka: Welcomed returning and new commissioners and raised concerns about transparency and process issues. Noted commission official minutes need uploading. Tanaka urged the commission to review the master fee schedule, as some fees were previously exempt from inflation adjustments. Highlighted delays in several grant-funded capital projects and emphasized the need for timely bidding and design to meet funding deadlines. She stressed that City Council should be made aware of potential budget impacts and delays.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Vice Chair Brown: Welcomed the new commissioners and acknowledged the contributions of former members. Highlighted the recent City Council meeting on Fairview Park, noting the

strong public turnout and engagement in discussions about its future projects. Emphasized the importance of educating new commissioners on the five-year capital improvement program. Supported Ralph Taboada's comment for a more collaborative process, viewing it as an opportunity for meaningful public engagement and informed decision-making. Urged commissioners to take early steps in understanding project funding to be better prepared for budget discussions.

Commissioner Leger: Welcomed new commissioners and shared observations from a recent visit to Fairview Park. Noted various concerns, including homeless individuals using drinking fountains for washing, encampments, off-leash dogs, and unauthorized vehicles. Questioned the frequency of park patrols and weekend patrolling activity. Leger acknowledged that a park ranger report might address concerns.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos: Thanked staff for their collaboration in Spanish-language arboriculture safety event in Costa Mesa on February 21. Expressed gratitude for immediate action taken by Robert Ryan to prevent harmful practices at Fairview Park that could damage tree roots. Shared insight of a recent OC Resilience event that provided information to undocumented immigrants about their rights and shared information of an upcoming session at the Women's Club on April 4. Emphasized the importance of youth participation in advocating for park access, referencing their involvement in a recent Fairview Park presentation at a City Council meeting and encouraged commissioners to watch the meeting.

Commissioner Komala: Expressed gratitude to fellow commissioners and city staff for their warm welcome during onboarding. Voiced support for Ralph Taboada's advocacy for a bottom-up decision-making approach and looks forward to gathering community feedback to better serve Costa Mesa. Komala shared that his two sons are excited about his role, as they have been exploring parks in District Six. While he resides in District One and has extensive experience with its parks, including serving on the Fairview Park Alliance board, he emphasized his enthusiasm for all city parks. He looks forward to contributing to park discussions and initiatives throughout Costa Mesa.

Commissioner Husen: Thanked everyone for the warm welcome. Looks forward to getting up to speed on things.

Commissioner Wright: Welcomed new commissioners and reflected on her commission experience, emphasizing the evolving role of the commission. She highlighted the unprecedented amount of grant funding the department has received, which has supported both infrastructure projects and park improvements. Discussed the budget process and shared park projects sometime shift without clear explanations, raising concerns about transparency. She emphasized the department's role beyond large-scale projects. Encouraged commissioners to stay informed by reviewing the Open Space Master Plan and understanding park accessibility discussions and advised them to engage with their appointed City Council members to maximize their impact.

Chair Dorn Parker: Emphasized key priorities such as addressing off-leash dogs, e-bikes, and pickleball. She praised city staff for their responsiveness, particularly in adapting during COVID-19 and meeting increased demand for after-school programs. She highlighted the city's support for Save Our Youth (SOY), noting the critical role of transportation in ensuring

safety for children for working families. Parker also commended the effectiveness of the 311 app for rapid city maintenance responses, sharing a personal anecdote about a successful park restroom cleanup. Expressed appreciation for community events like Snoopy House and the city's dedication to residents with different abilities.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1. Minutes – November 14, 2024 PACS Draft Minutes**
- 2. Department Report – November 2024, December 2024, and January 2025**

MOTION: to approve Consent Calendar items

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Leger / Commissioner Wright.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: none

Absent:

Motion Carried: 7 – 0

MONTHLY REPORTS

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

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

Commissioners inquired on the spelling of endangered species *Crotch's bumblebee*, upcoming bike safety event, bike safety resources, firework impacts to Fairview Park and the nesting season environment, skate park outreach, Harper Park ranger status, CIP grants, and provided suggestions about programming.

Vice Chair Brown commended the free swim lessons and highlighted the Poet Laureate processed and thanked staff for their efforts.

Mr. Seung Yang provided updates about Ketchum-Libolt Park and Shalimar Park projects. Provided information of TeWinkle Park lakes project.

Public Comment: None.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. PARK RANGER REPORT UPDATE**

Lieutenant Carlos Diaz presented.

Commissioners inquired on patrol shifts, homelessness resources, drone use, call peak times, wildlife enforcement, data needed to help enforce, what PD staff deem as appropriate coverage for park size.

Commissioner Brown requested Lieutenant Diaz's option on what type of data would be useful to inform the public of resources and priorities for park rangers. Suggested a 3-month report.

Commissioner Wright prefers receiving a monthly Park Ranger report over an infrequent but more detailed one. She emphasized the importance of distinguishing between reported and patrol-discovered violations to improve prevention efforts and ranger efficiency. Collecting demographic data on violators could help tailor solutions. Also highlighted the need to assess park accessibility and safety, referencing past improvements like the Hamilton crosswalk signal. Advocated for data-driven insights to support city council budgeting and proactive park management.

Chair Dorn Parker encouraged all commissioners to participate in a Park Ranger ride-along, emphasizing how it provides valuable insight into the workload and challenges faced in park management. Expressed that reports should focus on essential information rather than distracting details on a *need-to-know* basis. Recognized the importance of identifying patterns and acknowledged the evolving nature of park-related concerns, including transportation accessibility, and commended law enforcement and city officials for their responsiveness in addressing safety issues. Stressed the importance of using data-driven insights to advocate for necessary resources, such as drones or e-bikes, to support park management and ensure safe, well-maintained public spaces.

Commissioner Leger: Liked the ride along opportunity. Supports a patterned driven report every three months, in efforts to reduce PD workload.

Commissioner Husen: Requested information of internal process to generating report and questioned how much staff time it requires.

Commissioner Komala: Suggested reports include an educational component to be used as a resource for the public. Questioned if he could generate his own report by requesting 2 variables in order to evaluate and access his own correlations.

Public Comment:

Jenn Tanaka: Shared to new commissioners the style of previous reports and explained that previous ranger reports were difficult to interpret as they referenced municipal codes rather than clearly stating specific violations. Also disagreed that the Costa Mesa Police Department should be responsible for trend analysis, instead advocated for more detailed public reporting to help residents and commissioners identify important issues. Emphasized the need for more frequent reporting, which has likely affected law enforcement at Fairview Park.

Ralph Taboada: Thanked staff for Lieutenant's presentation; highlighting officer's openness, transparency, and knowledge.

David Martinez (Zoom): Emphasized the importance of monthly ranger reports, noting that past reports, though limited, helped identify disproportionate bicycle license ticketing in Costa Mesa's west side. He opposed the shift to biannual reports, urging the commission to prioritize regular reporting with detailed trend and demographic analysis to better understand community policing patterns.

Flo Martin (Zoom): Supports Vice Chair Brown's emphasis on public engagement and Director Gruner's focus on customer service. Agrees with Jenn Tanaka and David Martinez on the necessity of monthly park ranger reports, recalling Mr. Martinez's past

observations of enforcement patterns as a member of the Active Transportation Committee. Martin urged the commission to request that Lieutenant Diaz continue providing monthly reports, allowing citizens to analyze trends independently rather than relying solely on police interpretations.

Vice Chair Brown expressed raw data and periodic high-level analysis were valuable. Acknowledged the need for monthly reporting with raw data to allow independent trend analysis while suggesting that broader analysis from those on the ground should occur every three to six months for meaningful engagement. Emphasized that the approach did not have to be an either-or decision.

Chair Dorn Parker agreed, asserting both summary reports and supporting data could coexist effectively. Noted that previous reports were difficult to interpret due to their format, containing only codes and numbers. Advocated for a summarized version supplemented with data to provide meaningful insights for both the public and commissioners.

2. **ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS**

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

Public Comment:

Jenn Tanaka: Highlighted the Parks and Community Commission municipal code regarding their role as a commissioner and encouraged proactiveness.

Ralph Taboada: Echoed Ms. Tanaka's comments and shared support to nominate Kelly Brown as a Chair.

David Martinez (Zoom): Highlighted commission authority to set its own agenda, hold study sessions, and organize meetings on issues of interest. Encouraged the next chair and vice chair to use power to expand beyond past practices. Highlighting the numerous parks projects in progress and the uncertain status of the open space master plan, they urged leadership to push these initiatives forward. Advocated for Commissioner Brown to become Chair and Commissioner Wright for Vice Chair.

MOTION: to elect Vice Chair Brown as Parks and Community Services Commission Chair.

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Wright / Commissioner Garcia Arcos

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Commissioner Garcia Arcos, Commissioner Husen, Commissioner Komala, Commissioner Ledger, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Dorn Parker

Nays: none

Absent: none

Motion Carried: 7 – 0

MOTION: to elect Commissioner Wright as Parks and Community Services Commission Vice Chair.

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Dorn Parker / Commissioner Brown.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Commissioner Garcia Arcos, Commissioner Husen, Commissioner Komala, Commissioner Ledger, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Dorn Parker

Nays: none

Absent: none

Motion Carried: 7 – 0

MOTION: to elect Commissioner Komala as Fairview Park Steering Committee Liaison and Commissioner Leger as the Senior Liaison.

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Brown / Commissioner Husen.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Commissioner Garcia Arcos, Commissioner Husen, Commissioner Komala, Commissioner Ledger, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Dorn Parker

Nays: none

Absent: none

Motion Carried: 7 – 0

ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER MEMBER & STAFF COMMENTS

Commissioner Leger thanked everyone for their involvement in the meeting.

Commissioner Brown thanked staff, public commenters, and Commissioner Dorn Parker's chair term.

ADJOURNMENT by Chair Dorn Parker at 8:32 PM.