

AUGUST 14, 2025
6:00 P.M. – UNOFFICIAL 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, Public Works Maintenance Manager
- ☒ Kathia Viteri, Recreation Specialist

PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Commissioner Dorn Parker: Expressed gratitude to City staff for organizing enjoyable community events, including the Fourth of July celebration, and concluded her comments with appreciation and enthusiasm for the UCLA Bruins at Jack Hammett Sports Complex.

Commissioner Komala: Thanked City staff for the successful Concerts in the Park, shared his enjoyment of the events with his family, expressed appreciation for the Audubon presentation at the Fairview Park Steering Committee, and noted the upcoming California Biodiversity Day partnership on September 13.

Commissioner Leger: Asked the City to look into the possibility of installing bat boxes and expressed her appreciation for the Concerts in the Park and the July 3rd event.

Vice Chair Wright: Shared that a friend was unable to present at the City Council meeting and instead read a heartfelt letter from the friend and her family, highlighting the struggles and fears faced by immigrant families in Costa Mesa and urging the City to strengthen protections and support for the immigrant community.

Chair Brown: Emphasized the importance of diverse voices and outreach, thanked staff and commissioners for successful Fairview Park engagement efforts, and highlighted the value of involving youth in community outreach.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1. Minutes – June 12, 2025 PACS Draft Minutes**
- 2. Department Report – May 2025**

Public Comment: None.

MOTION: To approve Consent Calendar items

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Leger / Commissioner Komala

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: none

Absent: none

Motion Carried: 7 – 0

MONTHLY REPORTS

1. PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

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

Commissioner Leger raised concerns about budget cuts affecting the Senior Center and R.O.C.K.S program, stressed the importance of keeping tennis costs affordable for youth and low-income residents, and suggested incorporating multilingual poetry in the Poetry in the Parks program.

Commissioner Dorn Parker highlighted the interactive approach at Concerts in the Park for engaging children and gathering feedback. Encouraged keeping tennis center fees lower for residents compared to non-residents to reflect local investment.

Vice Chair Wright praised the affordability of summer and L.E.A.P. programs, raised concerns about ICE raid impacts and suggested outreach. Asked about the Fairview Park Master Plan timeline, review process, and release date.

Commission discussion ensued regarding the next steps of the Fairview Park Master plan and request for joint study session with City Council.

Chair Brown requested staff to provide commissioners notice when the Lions Park Café Request for Proposal (RFP) is released.

Public Comment: None.

2. PUBLIC WORKS, MAINTENANCE, SUPERVISED SERVICES

Mr. Rober Ryan, Public Works Maintenance Manager presented.

Public Comment: None.

Commissioner Leger inquired about tree removals and what's considered illegal removals.

Commissioner Komala inquired if concerns about overhanging trees at Brentwood raised during outreach would be addressed through the canopy assessment or trimming.

Commissioner Husen shared that he enjoyed the maintenance update and photos, especially the before-and-after comparisons.

Commissioner Dorn Parker confirmed the playground assessment was underway, suggested distinguishing between quick repairs and major capital improvements, encouraged promoting the 311 app, and requested tree-related data to better understand staff workload and resident misconceptions.

Vice Chair Wright praised the department's work, highlighted the popularity of the Lions Park bucket swing, asked about crosswalk installations, raised concerns about the 311 app's performance, inquired about park enhancements tied to housing developments, and suggested integrating tree canopy planning with pedestrian and traffic-calming projects.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos expressed concern about unwatered crape myrtle trees, asked about planting costs, irrigation responsibilities, tree survival rates, watering frequency, and follow-up on 311 app watering requests.

Chair Brown thanked staff for their report, praised the before-and-after photos.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. PARK CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PRINCIPLE AND VALUES WORKSHOP

Ad Hoc committee provided updates.

Commissioner Leger reported the committee is making progress by researching cultural engagement, district demographics, and comparable cities' values, and is now drafting a final document to ensure equitable, inclusive, and district-responsive park improvements, with two more meetings planned before presentation.

Public Comment:

Ralph Taboada: Thanked the commission, Chair Brown, Vice Chair Wright, and Director Gruner for their leadership in the capital appropriation process, encouraged continuing this work in the upcoming budget cycle, and urged the commission to actively review the Fairview Park Master Plan—preferably in a joint study session with City Council—while ensuring commissioners' voices are fully heard.

Jasmine M. (Zoom): *Technical difficulties, did not speak.*

Commissioner Dorn Parker thanked the ad hoc for taking the time.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos expressed 70% of District 4 residents speak primarily Spanish at home and suggested signage that reflects the majority language to ensure inclusivity.

Vice Chair Wright supported expanding Spanish-language access and highlighted the ad hoc committee's work was meant to improve the commission's ability to provide feedback before plans go to City Council, enhancing its impact.

Chair Brown confirmed the draft principles and values document would be ready for review by the next meeting, requested greater use of social media like Instagram to share accessible updates with the public, and emphasized the ad hoc committee's commitment to presenting a draft for commission approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. PARK RANGER BIENNIAL REPORT

Lieutenant Carlos Diaz from the Police Department presented.

Public Comment: None.

Commissioner Husen expressed interest in future ride-alongs, asked about leadership and coordination at the Randall Preserve, and thanked staff for their work.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos raised concerns about broken park cameras, recent violent incidents near Shalimar Park, and encouraged support for the victim's family through donations.

Dorn Parker asked about the number of park rangers, recruitment, drone use, vehicle suitability, privacy concerns, and the need for technology to enhance safety and education in parks.

Commissioner Komala inquired about the timeline for filling vacancies, the impact of seasonal daylight changes on coverage, and confirmed reasons for departures.

Commissioner Leger asked if park rangers are trained on park-specific rules, requested a Talbert Park walk-along, inquired about arson in fire incidents, and asked about increased patrols at Shalimar Park.

Vice Chair Wright praised park ranger relationships with unhoused residents, expressed gratitude for safety, and requested the reinstatement of regular park ranger data reports.

Chair Brown commended the comprehensive park ranger report, raised concerns about limited park ranger staffing, asked about real-time operations technology, and supported bringing back data reports for better transparency.

Commissioner Dorn Parker added that data on park incidents can help justify the need for more rangers, highlighted dog off-leash issues near playgrounds, and emphasized using data to guide advocacy and solutions.

Commissioner Komala asked if the city's online police incident viewer is accurate and suggested it could be a useful tool for monitoring park activity between formal reports.

2. DONATION OF A MEMORIAL TREE AND PLAQUE AT TEWINKLE PARK

Mr. Rober Ryan, Public Works Maintenance Manager presented.

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Garcia Arcos reflected on the inspiration of working with Jim, highlighted his passion for planting and caring for trees, and shared Arbor Day Foundation materials from a planting event.

MOTION: Approve staff recommendation to accept the donation of a memorial tree and plaque to be installed in TeWinkle Park in memory of Jim Ortiz.

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Garcia Arcos / Commissioner Leger

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: none

Absent: none

Motion Carried: 7 – 0

ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER MEMBER & STAFF COMMENTS

Commissioner Leger emphasized the need to coordinate on issues such as housing developments that impact parks.

Chair Brown informed chairs meet quarterly with the Mayor.

Commissioner Garcia Arcos promoted the Bright Youth nonprofit's back-to-school event at Shalimar Park, providing free backpacks, haircuts, food, and community activities.

Chair Brown requested City Council agenda items being scheduled with limited notice and during summer months, recommending earlier public notice and scheduling outside of peak vacation times to allow for fuller engagement.

ADJOURNMENT by Chair Brown at 8:40 PM.