

OCTOBER 9, 2025
6:00 P.M. – UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER by Chair Brown at 6:02 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
- ☒ Shayanne Wright, Vice Chair
- ☒ Kelly Brown, Chair

City Staff

- ☒ Brian Gruner, Parks and Community Services Director
- ☒ Anna McGill, Planning and Sustainable Development Manager
- ☒ Laura Fautua, Executive Assistant
- ☒ Kathia Viteri, Recreation Specialist

PUBLIC COMMENTS

[Correspondence was received.](#)

Mat Garcia: Costa Mesa resident and Harbor Soaring Society president, thanked the Commission and invited members to visit the Fairview Park flying field during upcoming flight days, noting they could also view Harbor Soaring Society (HSS) activities on the group's YouTube channel.

Charlene Ashendorf: Experienced technical difficulties, spoke after commissioner comments.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Commissioner Dorn Parker: appreciated the work of the Harbor Soaring Society and Coastal Corridor Alliance after visiting Fairview Park, noting the impressive native plant restoration progress, thanked staff and Park Rangers for supporting Walk to School Day near Kaiser School Elementary.

Commissioner Komala: Thanked those involved in drafting the Fairview Park Master Plan Update, encouraged review of the detailed appendices and Measure AA information on the city website, and invited the public to the upcoming Fairview Park restoration events and the October 15th Fairview Park Steering Committee meeting.

Commissioner Leger: Praised the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration at Lions Park, highlighting the connection between Hispanic heritage and California's mission history.

Vice Chair Wright: Expressed enthusiasm for the meeting and noted that attending ARTventure was a highlight of the month.

Chair Brown: Announced an upcoming city Town Hall meeting on homelessness solutions, encouraged commissioners to attend, and promoted weekend community events including the Scarecrow Festival and Earth Rise Climate Action Festival at Harbor Christian Church.

Charlene Ashendorf: Costa Mesa resident and former Parks Commissioner, invited the community to participate in the “Poetry in the Parks”, encouraging visits to park kiosks with QR codes linking to poems by Poet Laureate Danielle Hanson and opportunities to win prizes.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1. Department Report – September 2025**
- 2. Minutes – August 14, 2025 PACS Draft Minutes
September 11, 2025 PACS Draft Minutes**

Chair Brown thanked city staff making updates to the minutes.

Public Comment: None.

MOTION: To approve consent calendar items

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Dorn Parker / Commissioner Komala

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Garcia Arcos,

Motion Carried: 6 – 0

MONTHLY REPORTS

1. PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR’S UPDATE

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

Commissioner Leger supported the idea of a *Youth Bill of Rights* and suggested creating a high school contest where students submit their own versions, with prizes such as fair tickets to encourage civic engagement.

Vice Chair Wright praised recent community outreach efforts at local businesses and improvements to the City’s Instagram presence, commending the focus on communication and public engagement. She also emphasized the importance of the City serving as a central hub for community information, including updates from schools and special districts.

Chair Brown expressed enthusiasm for the *Youth Bill of Rights* idea and suggested connecting with Council Member Reynolds regarding the Youth Advisory Council plan. She raised concerns about the accessibility of the Fairview Park Master Plan Update, recommending simplified summaries and translations to improve public engagement, and asked for clarification on which aspects of the plan are open for community input versus already determined.

2. PUBLIC WORKS MAINTENANCE SERVICES UPDATE

No monthly report for October.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. FAIRVIEW DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN STATUS UPDATE**
2. Planning and Sustainable Development Manager, Anna McGill, presented.

Chair Brown thanked staff for the presentation and invited public comment before opening the floor for commissioner questions and discussion.

Public Comment:

Anne M.: Urged the Commission to expand access to city-controlled athletic fields for youth and adults, noting that Newport-Mesa Unified School District's extended school programs and earlier field closures have created a shortage of available space for community sports.

Cynthia McDonald: Advocated for preserving more open space at the Fairview Developmental Center site, emphasizing that the current plan's 12 acres fall short of the General Plan and Quimby Act standards, and urged the Commission to support a vision that prioritizes parks, transparency, and public input.

Natalie King: Echoed concerns about insufficient open space and parking at city fields like Jack Hammett, describing growing crowds from youth sports and added permit costs for parking, and encouraged the Commission to visit the sites and consider a sports complex as part of future planning.

Commissioner Komala thanked public speakers for their input, agreed that open space should be prioritized at the Fairview Developmental Center site, and raised questions about developer flexibility, off-site investments, and costs related to secondary access roads.

Commissioner Leger asked about potential traffic impacts on Harbor Village residents, suggested adding a running track and safe pedestrian trails, and inquired whether the city was coordinating with the school district and Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) to accommodate future residents.

Commissioner Dorn Parker expressed concern about parking, lighting, and the adequacy of planned open space relative to population growth, emphasizing the need for clear formulas, realistic planning for active fields, and inclusion of diverse recreational uses such as pickleball and basketball.

Chair Brown confirmed that commissioners would have an opportunity in the spring to provide formal recommendations regarding open space and land use for the project.

Commissioner Husen sought clarification on the difference between the selected plan and the master developer's plan, asking how unit limits and development parameters would be set and whether the current phase was defining maximum thresholds for future approvals.

Vice Chair Wright thanked staff for the comprehensive overview, supported using the Commission's new evaluation matrix to guide future recommendations, and emphasized the need for accessible, community-centered, and innovative open space planning. She expressed concern that the proposed layout felt isolated, suggested exploring conversion of nearby golf course land into public space, and encouraged the Commission to advocate boldly for equitable and creative open space solutions.

Chair Brown thanked staff and commissioners for their discussion, encouraging them to think creatively and apply Commission values when considering the Fairview Developmental Center project. She emphasized focusing on both the quality and use of open space, integrating sustainability and habitat considerations, and exploring the possibility of forming a subcommittee to apply Commission values to this and future projects.

Commissioner Leger asked whether results from community engagement and study sessions are shared with the Planning Commission or City Council to help clarify when public feedback influences decisions or when certain ideas are determined unfeasible.

Commissioner Dorn Parker sought clarification on whether the financial responsibility for site redesign and improvements—such as modifications to the golf course—would fall on the master developer rather than taxpayers, emphasizing the importance of balancing development feasibility with minimizing public financial burden.

3. PARK CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PARK VALUE GUIDELINES

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

Public Comment: None

Vice Chair Wright supported the values matrix as a solid starting point, noting she would adjust weight multipliers based on each project's nature and saw value in testing the rubric through real applications to refine her approach.

Commissioner Dorn Parker commended staff for their thorough work developing clear definitions and examples within the rubric, calling it a strong foundation that would evolve and improve through practical use.

Commissioner Leger inquired about park scoring.

Chair Brown expressed concern that the proposed evaluation matrix risked oversimplifying the Commission's core values by reducing them to numeric scores, emphasizing that foundational principles like community-centered planning and equity should be treated as non-negotiable rather than weighted criteria. She supported refining the document to better reflect those priorities and was open to testing it after adjustments.

Commissioner Komala initially felt the matrix lacked objectivity but later appreciated how it aligned commissioners around shared priorities while allowing flexibility by project. He supported treating it as a living, evolving tool to guide discussions, acknowledging the need to balance ideal goals such as open space with practical housing and development requirements.

Chair Brown asked how the Commission planned to use the new values document, suggesting they consider applying it to current projects or revisit it with the upcoming Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) process to strengthen preparedness for next year.

Commissioner Leger recommended testing the document for a year to see how well it works before formally adopting it as a permanent evaluation tool.

Commissioner Dorn Parker supported using the document as a practical framework to guide discussion and evaluation of upcoming projects, particularly during the CIP process, viewing the next year as an opportunity to practice and refine the tool's effectiveness.

Chair Brown suggested the Commission begin applying the values document to evaluate park assessments and review the previous five-year CIP list ahead of staff presentations. She emphasized the importance of seeing a broader range of projects to better understand budget impacts and to practice applying the Commission's values in real decision-making contexts.

MOTION: To accept Commission values and rubric.

MOVED/SECOND: Commissioner Dorn Parker / Commissioner Leger

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

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

Nays: none

Absent: Commissioner Garcia Arcos

Motion Carried: 6 – 0

ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER MEMBER & STAFF COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT by Chair Brown at 7:57 PM.