

Excerpt of April 12, 2023 Unofficial Fairview Park Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

NEW BUSINESS:

1. MODEL AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY AT FAIRVIEW PARK

Mr. Minter presented.

Committee member D'Agosta questioned why item is considered new business.

Mr. Minter clarified it was to ensure committee would like to reinforce current position regarding aircraft activity and whether focus has changed amongst the committee.

Councilmember Reynolds encouraged recommendation from committee to present to council.

Committee member Garcia questioned what new information was provided in report.

Mr. Minter explained report was to provide further interpretation of intentions of documents received from regulatory agencies.

Committee member D'Agosta supported staff position and report. Requested that staff compile a report of previous committee decisions to provide awareness to new members of committee history.

Mr. Minter asked if Committee member Garcia would like to recuse himself from discussion.

Committee member Garcia announced he would be staying on discussion as a patron.

Vice Chair Roberts expressed support to Committee member Garcia's involvement.

Councilmember Reynolds agreed with Committee member Garcia participating as a voting member.

Committee member D'Agosta advocated that committee members must learn about past voting decisions made regarding the fly field.

Supplemental item received by Chair Campbell is hyperlinked on the agenda item #2A.

Committee takes a 5-minute break commencing at 7:01pm and concluding at 7:06pm.

Chair Campbell presented past committee decisions regarding the outline history of model aircraft activity from July 2019 to August 2022. Expressed the intention was to recall the 3-year discussion and motions.

Councilmember Reynolds enters at 7:11pm.

Committee member Garcia pointed out flying areas within vernal pools.

Committee member D'Agosta questioned intention of committee and whether intentions are to restore and respect nature. Brought fourth that in the past, other activities and events have been removed from the park due to incompatibility evaluations such as the civil war, cattle ranch, races, etc. Mentions that the City has committed themselves to restoring the park.

Committee member Garcia questioned what the park is restoring back to and why are train activities allowed.

Committee member D'Agosta responded that the intent is to restore areas with endangered animals and plants.

Committee member Baume expressed support for recommendation. Mentioned no other park in Costa Mesa allows for aircraft activity.

Chair Campbell stated Fairview Park should be exceptional and not the exception.

Committee member Garcia quoted Municipal Code regarding flying aircrafts in Fairview Park.

Mr. Minter reminded the committee that a motion would be needed.

Councilmember Chavez enters at 7:20pm.

Committee member McClain reiterated that a vote would be needed and agreed with staff report. Declares that aircraft activity is not compatible with restoration plans. Proposes to move forward with current recommendation.

Vice Chair Roberts: Advocated that committee utilize staff recommendation from March 21, 2023 City Council report as a motion.

Councilmember Chavez exits at 7:23pm.

Chair Campbell presents including additional objectives to support staff recommendation.

Committee member D'Agosta agrees with staff recommendation and adds that

recommendation is made on the basis of previous committee history and decisions.

Mr. Minter questioned whether the committee would include East side evaluation.

Committee member Garcia expressed there is a serious issue on the East side of the park.

Chair Campbell suggested that HSS return with more information regarding claim.

Committee member Garcia shared history of HSS utilizing Fairview Park as the home of flying fields but acknowledges this area may not always be available. Said they would hope to use zone until another location is found.

Committee member D'Agosta suggests the East side be evaluated during the master plan updates. Expressed her disbelief of HSS relocation efforts and does not support flying due to environmental issues. States that in a 3-year period, the habitat has changed and needs to be reassessed and reevaluated.

Committee member Garcia expresses the committee may risk their image if they ban aircraft activity.

Public Comment:

Wendy Leece: Stated that the fly field intrudes into the vernal pools. Expressed that the public trusts the committee to protect Fairview Park and it is the responsibility of the committee to protect the habitat.

Henry Smith: As a member of the Harbor Soaring Society, banning the fly field would not be serving the people of Costa Mesa. Claimed most of the damage at the park has been done by the city. Stated that Fish and Wild life knew of active flying activity before shrimp were found.

Chair Campbell begins to address the verbiage of the motion.

Committee members talked amongst themselves to clarify verbiage and sentence structure of the motion.

Vice Chair Roberts shares respect and wants HSS in another area within the county and suggests the committee will be receptive to providing support.

MOTION/SECOND: Vice Chair Roberts made a motion:

Fairview Park is a unique and valuable natural resource. Based on the three-year history of evaluation and decisions made by staff and this committee, this committee supports the staff recommendation to City Council on March 21, 2023 that “recommends that City Council permanently close the Fairview Park model aircraft flying field and terminate the model aircraft individual flyer permit system

due to outstanding environmental constraints, safety issues, and infeasibility with required resource protection measures at the site.” The Fairview Park Steering Committee is in support of restoration goals and opportunities for science and education.

Seconded by Committee member McClain.

The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Committee member Baume, Committee Member D’Agosta, Committee member Fuqua, Committee member McClain, Chair Campbell

Nays: Committee member Garcia

Absent: Committee member Crecelius and Committee member Glover

Motion Carried: 6 – 1