

**PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**September 5, 2013**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Commissioner Jimenez called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

a. Present: Commissioner Jimenez; Commissioner Birk; Commissioner Gouveia; Commissioner Jayne; Commission Saltzman; Commissioner Holguin; Commissioner Ettinger

b. Absent:

c. Staff Present: David Ferguson, Public Works Director, Don Scholl, Parks Maintenance Superintendent, Kim Scarlata, Recreation Services Program Manager; Vanessa Carrera, Management Analyst II; Laura Johnston, Recreation Coordinator I

d. Recorded By: Stephanie Garcia, Executive Assistant

3. **ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE:** Bob Otani, 1626 Kagehiro Drive, inquired about the Kagehiro Phase III project for park improvements, specifically the five-acre vacant lot at Gretchen Talley Park. Mr. Otani stated from his understanding that the park wouldn't be built for another five years, and is interested in viewing the park plans. Mr. Otani added that the new phase of the park, which is planned to include two baseball fields, could potentially bring 640 cars to the neighboring area. This is a concern to the residents, as congestion already exists from traffic at Wanda Hirsch School. Mr. Otani also provided a list of alternative park amenities that the City could consider rather than sports fields, they include: a combined walking, running, & biking pathway, stretching equipment, horseshoe pits, a community Rose Garden, and picnic tables.

Joann Otani, 1626 Kagehiro Drive, stated that Gretchen Talley Park is a beautiful park, and should sports fields be added, there will be an issue with parking and traffic in the neighborhood and Kagehiro Phase III. Mrs. Otani added that there are 250 homes going up behind her neighborhood, plus 69 homes going up on Starflower, and adding sports fields will impact access to their driveways.

Gerald Tanty, 1721 Schantz Way, stated that he moved to Tracy two years ago and lives in the same area as Mr. and Mrs. Otani, and would like to find out more information about the next phase of the park and if it can include a walking path.

Mr. Otani thanked staff for keeping the park clean and clear of garbage. He thanked the Parks Maintenance crews and said they are doing a great job by coming out on the weekend to keep it clean.

Don Scholl provided clarification on the empty piece of land next to Gretchen Talley Park: 1) currently the lot does not belong to the City, but rather the developer 2) staff has sent a request to the Fire Department to address the weed abatement problem with the developer and has a copy of the park conceptual plan from years back.

Robert Tanner, 1371 Rusher Street, thanked the Commission and stated the homeless activity at Dr. Powers Park has been reduced in the last three weeks. Mr. Tanner also inquired about the September Parks Commission agenda not being posted to the City website.

Commissioner Jimenez introduced David Ferguson as the new Director of Public Works and welcomed David to the Parks Commission on behalf of the Parks Commissioners.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING ON AUGUST 1, 2013:**

- a. Motion: Commissioner Gouveia
- b. Second: Commissioner Birk
- c. Abstain: Commissioner Jayne
- d. Vote: Passed

**CORRESPONDENCE:** A neighboring resident of Dr. Powers Park approached staff at City Hall regarding homeless activity at Dr. Powers Park. The resident stated that a homeless individual began acting inappropriate near the playground area while she was visiting with her grandchildren. She wanted staff to be aware of the situation and know that she, and other neighboring residents, are becoming hesitant to take their children to the park. Commissioner Jimenez asked if staff was working with the President of the Homeless Coalition to address this issue. Staff stated that a meeting will be organized with the Homeless Coalition and San Joaquin County to strategize a response.

A resident contacted staff after attending the National Night Out Neighborhood Watch meeting, and was told by a member of Tracy Crime Stoppers that the City would place a camera at Don Cose Park. Staff provided the resident with information on the City's Park Camera Program, and clarified that the placement of cameras in parks is based on park call-for-service data taken from Tracy PD. Don Cose Park is not on the top list of high-crime parks in Tracy, but will be considered as cameras are rotated.

**5. OLD BUSINESS:**

a. **Update Commission Goals for Fiscal Year 12/13 & 13/14**

1.1.A.4. Prepare Draft Field Rental Policies – The draft is near completion and will be circulated for review to staff. Two user group meetings have been scheduled on September 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> to review the draft Field Reservation Handbook and obtain input. The process for the Field Rental Handbook is near completion and will be brought back to the Commission in October for a full review. Thereafter, it will be brought to the City Council for final approval.

Commissioner Holguin stated that he will not be able to continue his role as a member of the subcommittee to review the Handbook and attend user group meetings, and asked that the Commission appoint a new subcommittee member. Due to short notice, there was no interest amongst the remaining Commissioners to fill the subcommittee roll. Commissioner Jimenez, who already serves on the subcommittee, confirmed her attendance for the user group meetings and encouraged any Commissioners to attend should their schedules become available.

3.1.B.2. Identify Final Program Elements for Program Development – Staff has scheduled, in the upcoming weeks, an Adopt-a-Park subcommittee meeting. The members of the Council's Safety Strategy Team will be joining the meeting to collectively discuss guidelines and criteria that the group would like to recommend for the Adopt-a-Park Program. The completion date will be adjusted slightly for this program due to the research that is being carried out of neighboring cities that have completed or attempted similar programs.

2.1.A.2. Commission Requests Partnership with YAC to Develop Tobacco Free Park Initiative – Staff asked if the Commission would like to pursue this item since it was a request from a former Commissioner. This item has not been presented to YAC. The item has not gone any further than the initial discussion at the Parks Commission. Commissioner Holguin asked why the no smoking sign at Gretchen Talley Park was not posted. Staff stated according to State Law, it states that there is no smoking within 150 feet from a playground. Staff stated the City Attorney advised them at that time not to post the sign due to budget and the inability to enforce it with limited resources. The full Commission approved that 2.1.A.2 Commission requests Partnership with YAC to Develop Tobacco Free be removed from the Parks Commission Goals – Fiscal Year 2012/2013 & 2013/2014.

**6. NEW BUSINESS:**

a. **Appoint a Parks Commissioner to the Senior Steering Committee**

Staff provided an overview of the staff report. Commissioner Gouveia volunteered to serve on the Senior Steering Committee and Commissioner Ettinger volunteered as an alternate. The full Commission appointed Commissioner Gouveia and Commissioner Ettinger as an alternate.

b. **Receive Update Regarding Year-End Review of Financial Assistance Program for Fiscal Year 2012/2013** – Staff provided an overview of the staff report.

Commissioner Saltzman asked what happens to the unused financial assistance money and staff stated that it goes into the general fund.

Commissioner Jayne requested clarification as to when the financial aid participant amount was lowered. Staff stated that the amount was lowered in March 2010 following new policy implementation.

Commissioner Gouveia stated how great it is to see so many seniors involved in the programs and the availability of services to the community.

**7. ITEMS FROM STAFF:**

a. **Recreation Division Report:** Staff reported that this year was a successful summer. Some highlights are as follow:

- Teen program at Williams middle school was completely full on the first day of school
- The Youth Hoops program will be starting up with the YMCA with various schools throughout Tracy
- Over 650 community members came to each Movie's on the Plaza event this summer
- Totally Awesome 80's ended the Block Party Serious and was a huge success
- Senior fitness program had 707 repeat participants, the Senior Center served 335 hot lunches. In addition, Meals on Wheels delivered 840 meals.

i. **Upcoming Events and Programs**

- Girls Night Out! Witches and Broomsticks: Friday, October 25, 2013, 6:00pm – 10:00pm, Downtown Plaza

b. **Public Works Parks Maintenance Division Report:**

i. **Project Updates:**

The new Landscape Maintenance District (LMD) contract has been implemented. LMD crews will be trimming trees in a number of areas for tree clearance.

Larsen Park, Tracy's Child statue – Staff met with the artist of the statue and with the contractor assigned to make the repairs. Staff stated that the price of the statue when it was first installed was approximately \$12,000. Staff is estimating roughly \$12,000 in repairs. The statue may take 2-3 months to repair.

Lammersville School House has had vandalism and staff is working with Tracy PD to have a camera installed to help remedy the problems. Staff is actively addressing those issues to get them corrected.

The Lolly Hansen Senior Center project is inching closer. The contractors have made some progress and will open soon. Staff has to schedule a final walk-through with the contractor and the Development Services Department.

Legacy Fields – the landscape walkthrough has been completed, and the irrigation walk-through will follow soon. There is a delay from the contractor on punch-list items; they will be addressed prior to the 45-day maintenance period. Afterwards the project will be taken to Council for acceptance and turned over to the sports league's for ownership of the leased properties.

Commissioner Jayne asked at what point the City will redo the area from Lowell to Grant Line on Bessie Avenue behind Tracy Ball Park. He added that it is a dangerous area and people aren't paying attention while dropping off their kids at the park. Don stated that the Bessie Avenue project is still on the CIP list and he will get an update from Development Services.

Commissioner Saltzman stated that she has been walking at Lincoln Park and finds it so delightful. She has been encouraging other people to walk at the park, as well. She added that the sidewalk is safe and particularly the one that borders the street. She expressed her concern about the number of unleashed dogs at the park, and how it affects the safety and tidiness of the park. Don stated that he will verify that park policy signs are on the south side of the facility as well as the playground and the library. Don will report the activity to Animal Control and asked that the Commission call Tracy PD if they see dogs off of their leashes.

Commissioner Holquin expressed similar frustrations with off-leashed animals and dog feces at the Tracy Sports Complex. He said that the Neighborhood Watch Groups can help with the problem.

- c. Community Facilities Report – Staff gave an update on the following:  
Park Camera at Jim Raymond Park – staff collected imagery from last month and things are looking good at Jim Raymond Park. The camera installation was February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013, and per the Pilot Park Camera Program Guidelines, the camera shall be rotated after a nine month period. Come October 12<sup>th</sup>, staff is planning to move the camera to another park site; the location will be based on the PD call-for-service data from 2012. Staff will consider the feedback received from the community, i.e., Clyde Bland Park and the vandalism at the Lammersville School House. The Commission will be advised of the location of the cameras. Ultimately, the placement of the park cameras is at the discretion of the Public Works Director.

Recently a camera was installed at El Pescadero Park facing the skate park area. The imagery will be checked later this month.

Staff has recommended that a park camera be placed at Dr. Powers Park to deter inappropriate activity taking place near the restrooms and playground areas.

Vanessa provided clarification on a community inquiry regarding City outreach efforts to local organizations regarding capital improvement projects. She stated that staff is requested on frequent basis to outreach to different community groups regarding City projects. Staff received a call from a representative of the Southside Community Group, requesting an update on the renovation of MacDonald Park. Staff offered to attend a Southside Community Group meeting to share information on the project and gather input. Typically the Parks Commission would be aware of such outreach ahead of time, but due to the frequency of outreach requests, it becomes a challenge to notify the Commission of each request. If the outreach topic was policy driven, staff would notify the Parks Commission and request their participation during outreach.

Commissioner Jimenez stated that she welcomes any City department reaching out to the community, as it assists with obtaining feedback to the Parks Commission. She added that because some of the commissioners serve on different organizations, it would be helpful to advise the Commission of outreach efforts a head of time, that way Commissioners are informed.

The Facility Use Report is included in the packet.

Commissioner Holguin asked if the city could provide a community barbeque to promote community involvement. Vanessa will look into the budget and report back to the Commission.

d. Director Report – None

#### **8. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION:**

- Commissioner Ettinger commented that there are homes in her neighborhood that are not up to par and are eye sores. She asked if there is anything that can be done about it. Don suggested that she call City Code Enforcement.
- Commissioner Holguin stated that he wasn't aware of the security camera demonstration scheduled for tonight at Jim Raymond Park. He would have liked to have the neighborhood witness the demonstration, as well. Staff said due to the fact that this gathering was not noticed it will be postponed.
- Commissioner Jayne stated that there is a lot of activity going on at Dr. Powers Park, starting with the Homeless Coalition offering frequent meal service. He questioned if the Lutheran Church near the park could begin hosting the meals. He added that during CIP planning, it is important to list Dr. Powers Park and Tracy Ball Park as priorities since they both need work. He also asked if the containers facing Tracy Boulevard can be moved behind the American Legion Hall.
- Commissioner Saltzman expressed her concern over the Aquatics programs ending on August 5<sup>th</sup> due to Tracy Unified School District being in session. She asked if it possible to use the three high school pools during the weekend or after school hours

- in August as it still is hot. Commissioner Jimenez said that this would be an issue that would have to be taken up with the School District and the City.
- Commissioner Gouveia stated the City has worked with Tracy Unified School District regarding the pool facilities for a very long time. Commissioner Gouveia attended the Southside Community Organization meeting and staff gave a presentation on the MacDonald Park renovation project. The preliminary plans call for ADA restrooms and unisex stalls as well as updating the basketball court and handball court to name a few. Mexican Independence Day, September 16<sup>th</sup> celebration will take place at MacDonald Park on September 14, 2013, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. All are welcome to join the celebration.
  - Commissioner Jimenez attended the Parks Foundation meeting on August 19<sup>th</sup>. The Foundation is submitting grants to improve the El Pescadero dog park and the goal by the end of the year is to complete the addition of a small dog park to the existing dog park. The Foundation does have fencing materials but they need posts to set the perimeter of the small dog park. They do have a \$5,000 donor, metal benches and trash receptacles have been donated. At this time, they are researching the cost of doggie drinking fountains and scoop stations. The Foundation is up to date with their filing and received \$1,582.92 donation from the Tracy City Center Association. They do have a website that needs maintaining and asked if anyone was willing to help with the website. They've submitted grants to Lawrence Livermore Lab and the Central Valley Association Realtors. The next possible fund raiser in conjunction with the Halloween Parade would be a dog costume parade.

**9. ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE:** None

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

- a. Motion: Commissioner Gouveia
- b. Second: Commissioner Jayne
- c. Vote: Unanimous
- d. Time: 8:39 p.m.