

**THE CITY OF COSTA MESA
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

AUGUST 27, 2015

The Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of Costa Mesa, California met in regular session at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2015 in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California.

- 1. Call to Order: Chair Pederson**
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioner de Arakal**
- 3. Roll Call**

Commissioners Present: Chair: Pederson
 Vice Chair: Eckles
 Commissioner de Arakal
 Commissioner Harper (arrived at 6:15 p.m.)
 Commissioner Graham

Staff Present: Travis Karlen, Recreation Manager
 Bruce A. Hartley, Maintenance Services Manager
 Bartazar Mejia, Parks Project Manager
 Lieutenant Everett, Police Department
 Matt Pallo, Police Department Park Ranger
 Kristina Roche, PRC Secretary

- 4. Approval of the Minutes of the July 23, 2015 Meeting of the PRC.**
MOTION made by Commissioner de Arakal to approve the July 23 minutes, seconded by Vice Chair Eckles; MOTION carried 4-0 with Commissioner Harper being absent.

5. Public Comments

1. Tamar Goldmann – Costa Mesa Resident

Spoke about the homeless at Wilson Park. She would like to see improvements made to the park so the residents of Costa Mesa can have a safe park again.

2. Cindy Black- Costa Mesa Resident

Spoke about the Fairview Park Preservation Alliance group that want to preserve the park as it is. She encouraged the public to view their Facebook page and join the group.

3. Kim Hendricks – Costa Mesa Resident

Spoke about an email she sent to the commissioners in regards to restoring Fairview Park to its original state. She asked the commissioners why there has not been any grants by the Public Services Department to restore Fairview Park. Chair Pederson said he will look more into the issue.

4. #47 – Costa Mesa Resident

She spoke about a letter sent to the commissioners from Vanessa Handy (Costa Mesa resident) in regards to pesticides being sprayed at Woodland School. Newport Mesa Unified School District is going to spray the areas on Aug 28-29, 2015. She asked the commissioners if there is any way they can stop the spraying from happening.

She thanked Commissioner Graham for listening to the residents. She is concerned that Heller Park will have similar issues as Wilson Park.

5. Rocky Evans – Costa Mesa Resident

He asked the commissioners to consider opening the Volcom Skate Park earlier. He stated that extra hours in the morning will help the overcrowding at the park. Commissioner de Arakal stated that the Council will be doing a study on opening a second skate park. He also said that he spoke to numerous residents and there was not enough support in having the park opened for more hours. He asked Mr. Evans to reconsider having a second skate park.

6. David Snyder – Costa Mesa Resident

He spoke about the conditions of Wilson Park and how the city should not allow the homeless to reside at the park. He also mentioned that officers should not be friendly with the homeless.

7. Rev. Sian Wiltshire – Costa Mesa Resident

Spoke about the article in the OC Register about Wilson Park. She said that the city must provide more resources to the homeless in order for the issue at Wilson Park to stop.

8. Amy Phee – Costa Mesa Resident

Spoke about the issues at Wilson Park and how it is not safe for residents and her family. She thanked the commissioners and the Police Department for all their hard work, but she also said that there is much to be done to fix the issue.

9. Patrick Erickson – Costa Mesa Resident

Spoke about the restoration of Fairview Park and how it is a part of Costa Mesa. He believes that the park should stay as it is. He asked the commissioners to consider preserving the park.

6. Presentation – Wilson Park Police Department Update

Chair Pederson stated that Wilson Park is not an item on the agenda, but it can be added to the agenda.

Lt. Ed Everette –Spoke about the dramatic increase of usage at Wilson Park. Reasons of increase in users is due to Assembly Bill 109 and prop 47, prisons and county jails are no longer housing prisoners like they used to. Prisoners are now being cited and released back into the public. Officers have patrolled the park and cited many individuals that were doing activity against the municipal code.

Commissioner de Arakal asked Lt. Everette if any of the citations given out were actual arrest and what were they for.

Lt. Ed Everette said that there is no actual break down of the arrest. Due to prop 47, an arrest can consist of a citation and let go. Unless it is a felony, individuals are taken to jail, processed and released within an hour.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if there has been any changes in drug users or homeless since the closure of the restrooms at Wilson Park.

Lt. Ed Everette said that there has been an increase of calls in the surrounding shopping areas. Users are a more aggressive, younger crowd.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if those users are homeless or just drug users.

Lt. Ed Everette said that they are drug users in the park as well.

Commissioner de Arakal asked staff if any of the groups feeding the homeless are aware or been informed of the permitting process.

Lt. Ed Everette said they there has been no action taken in informing the groups. He said that there are multiple groups feeding the homeless at the park. The officers do ask the groups to stop feeding the homeless.

Commissioner de Arakal said the permitting process should be enforced to the groups using Wilson Park. He stated that the closure of the restrooms at Wilson Park will continue until they see progress. He admires the church groups work with the homeless but ask them to do it at the church site, not at the park. He wants to see vigorous enforcing of the permitting process at Wilson Park.

Vice Chair Eckles asked Lt. Ed Everette if there has been an increase of crime in the residential neighborhood.

Lt. Ed Everette said that most individuals are coming in on bike/foot and will commit a crime if made possible.

Vice Chair Eckles encourages and thanks the Police Department for continuing to enforce and patrol Wilson Park.

Commissioner Graham asked Lt. Ed Everette if there is anything they can do to make it uncomfortable for drug users at the park.

Lt. Ed Everette said specific areas can be fenced off. The back end of the park is now being patrolled more.

Commissioner Graham said that Heller Park has had recent incidents as well and he recommended that limited access to the park might help make it uncomfortable for the homeless to use.

Lt. Ed Everette said that the Homeless Task Force talk about ideas on how to limit the park space to certain users.

Commissioner Harper asked why the Police are being friendly with the homeless using the park.

Lt. Ed Everette said that Park Rangers are the ones who are friendly with these individuals, not officers. Park Rangers are civilians and they do not carry weapons. It is easier for Park Rangers to deal with unstable individuals in a friendlier manner instead of being confrontational.

Commissioner Harper asked what will happen to the homeless that leave Wilson Park. Will they just migrate to another park or location.

Lt. Ed Everette said that the Police Department is doing everything they can to make it uncomfortable for the homeless at Wilson Park. The Police Department is waiting for the results of the closure of the restrooms as well as the increase of patrolling.

Commissioner Harper asked if officers are informing the homeless of places they can go to get resources.

Lt. Ed Everette said yes, social workers are working with those individuals who are actually trying to better themselves and be off the streets.

Commissioner Harper said if there are any statistics of the number of homeless in Costa Mesa and if the numbers have increased or decreased within the past years.

Lt. Ed Everette said that there is no count yet, but one will be conducted in October with Vanguard University.

Commissioner Harper asked if there has been any word with council on where they are going to send the homeless. He does not want the homeless to be pushed to another park.

Lt. Ed Everette said the Homeless Task Force spoke about Anaheim opening a shelter with Fullerton that can house a lot of homeless people. Unfortunately that might not work due to the distance. The Police Department is working to provide better resources to the homeless.

Commissioner Harper said that the Police Department should look into getting a total of number of homeless in Costa Mesa and start to provide and find resources for them. Commissioner de Arakal thanked the Police Department for all the work done and asked how many Park Rangers we have and how many are we budgeted for.

Lt. Ed Everette that there are three and a half Park Rangers. Council approved an

additional one and that they are budgeted for five in total.

Commissioner de Arakal stated that he would love to have a total of eight Park Rangers. He asked Park Ranger Mr. Pallo how many times he had to call an officer for back up and how often was he there.

Park Ranger Mr. Pallo stated that twenty five percent of the time at Wilson Park. He said one out of four is out of the ordinary.

Commissioner de Arakal said that churches should help the homeless in their property, not at the parks. He stated that for churches to go and help the homeless at the park is unfair to the residents. Neighborhood parks are for families and not for homeless and Police should not stop enforcing the permitting process to the groups.

Chair Pederson asked if other neighborhood cities have the same homeless problem as Costa Mesa.

Lt. Ed Everette have asked more regionalized cities like San Bernardino or Santa Monica. They are asking cities who are doing the same process as Costa Mesa.

Chair Pederson said that Costa Mesa has made it comfortable for the homeless and that it should not continue. He also said that the homeless are being brought from different cities and left here in Costa Mesa. He thanked the Police Department for all the work that has been done.

Commissioner Harper commended the Police and asked them to look at the numbers of homeless. He said that there should be a program to help the homeless get off the streets.

Commissioner de Arakal thanked Lt. Ed Everette for all the work that has been done.

Commissioner Graham thanked the Police Department as well.

7a. Instructional Class Proposal

MOTION: MOTION made by Commissioner de Arakal to approve consent calendar. Seconded by Commissioner Harper. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

9. New Business

a. Tree Removal Request – 3085 Fernheath Lane

Mr. Bruce Hartley presents report.

Commissioner Graham asked about the fruit on the sidewalk and who is responsible for litter pick up.

Mr. Hartley said that the homeowners are responsible for landscape and maintenance on the property.

Commissioner Graham asked Mr. Hartley if someone fell due to the fruit, who would get sued.

Mr. Hartley responded that the sidewalk is public property and that the city would be sued.

Chair Pederson asked Mr. Hartley if maintenance was last done to the tree in 2011.

Mr. Hartley responded yes to Chair Pederson.

Chair Pederson asked Mr. Hartley to briefly explain the process for approving tree removals.

Mr. Hartley responded with that old guidelines are followed but will be updated within the next six to eight months.

Chair Pederson stated that the residents need to be informed about the guidelines for tree removals.

Chair Pederson opens up public comment.

Harold Weitzberg states that those type of trees cause problems with the residents. He said that the seeds of the peppertrees makes it difficult on his daily routine.

Vice Chair Eckles ask Mr. Hartley if the seeds and fruit are the only type of complains given about those trees.

Mr. Hartley replies yes.

MOTION: MOTION made by Commissioner de Arakal to deny the removal of the tree. Seconded for discussion by Chair Pederson.

Chair Pederson explains that the guidelines for tree removals need to be updated to better guide residents requesting tree removals. Vice Chair Eckles asked Mr. Hartley if commissioners do anything if the tree is categorized at level 2 or 3. Mr. Hartley responded that if request is denied by commissioners, the applicant must pay for the removal of the tree as a category level 2. Commissioner Graham stated that those type of trees are a burden to the residents and should be removed. Commissioner Graham stated that trees must be left unremoved and maintained by homeowners.

MOTION CARRIES 4-1 with Commissioner Harper voting no.

b. Tree Removal Request – 2065 Flamingo Road

Bruce Hartley presents report.

Vice Chair Eckles asked Mr. Hartley what was the risk of root trimming.

Mr. Hartley explained the process and said that there is no risk, just the risk of the overall health of the tree.

Commissioner de Arakal asked Mr. Hartley if he saw the damage done to the fence by the tree.

Mr. Hartley said yes, he did see the damage that was on the other side of the sidewalk and that if tree is not removed, the issue will still be present.

Commissioner de Arakal said if there was any visible cracking. Mr. Hartley responded no.

Commissioner Harper asked Mr. Hartley what are the causes of cracking. Mr. Hartley said he is unable to say due to it not being evident.

Chair Pederson asked applicant to speak on item. Harold Weitzberg said that the root is lifting the concrete, going towards his driveway, and cracking on the sidewalk. He said that it is the responsibility of the city to remove the tree.

Vice Chair Eckles ask the applicant if he will pursue to remove the tree no matter what happens at the meeting. Applicant responded yes.

Commissioner Graham stated that the homeowner can go and trim the roots of the tree and he asked Mr. Hartley if that is correct. Mr. Hartley said yes.

Vice Chair Eckles states that he saw the property and that root trimming will not solve the issue.

MOTION: MOTION made by Vice Chair Eckles to remove the tree as category 1. Seconded for discussion by Commissioner de Arakal.

Commissioner de Arakal stated that he agrees with Vice Chair Eckles on the motion made. Commissioner Harper stated that he loves trees and approves the motion made by Vice Chair Eckles. Commissioner Graham stated that the removal of the tree has an effect on the landscape. Chair Pederson stated that he wants to review guidelines and refresh the city landscape so he can support motion made by Vice Chair Eckles.

MOTION CARRIES 4-1 with Commissioner Graham voting no.

c. Public Information on City Parkway Trees

Mr. Hartley presented report.

Commissioner Harper asked Mr. Hartley if presentation was for staff or public. Mr. Hartley said it was for commissioners. Staff are looking for direction from commissioners.

Commissioner Graham stated his concerns about the drought effecting the trees. Chair Pederson stated that staff should look into different ways to get information out to the public.

Commissioner de Arakal stated that many people do not understand the protocol to follow in regards to parkway trees. He asked Commissioner Graham and Mr. Hartley to group together and find ways to better distribute information to public.

Commissioner Harper stated that he would love to join the group as well. Chair Pederson wanted them to add new guidelines as well as maybe advertising the

information on Costa Mesa TV or the Parks and Recreation Guide. Commissioner de Arakal asked Commissioner Graham, Commissioner Harper, and Mr. Hartley to bring more information about group to the next commission meeting.

Commissioner Harper asked Mr. Hartley if he knew anything about the watering rules during the drought. Mr. Hartley responded that it can vary depending on past watering schedules and soil. Chair Pederson asked that irrigation and soil information be included with information gathered about City Parkway Trees.

d. Donation of Tree at Estancia Park

Mr. Hartley said there was a request from Jack Canno to donate a memorial tree and plaque for his wife that passed away earlier this year.

Chair Pederson opened up for public comment. No public comment.

MOTION: MOTION made by Commissioner de Arakal to approve donation of tree in memory of Marte Ganoung. Seconded by Chair Pederson. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

e. Replacement of the Existing Water Tower Enclosure at the Orange County Model Engineers Site

Bart Mejia presents report.

Chair Pederson asked if a member of the Orange County Model Engineers (OCME) will like to speak about request.

Bob Brooks, president of OCME, said that they are not changing the water tower, just putting a new shed over tower. The tower keeps getting vandalized and he said that the shed will protect it.

Vice Chair Eckles asked Mr. Brooks what the gauge of the metal.

Mr. Brooks said it was about two hundred pounds and an 8 inch gauge.

Commissioner Graham asked if the tower still be named after Dr. Mehren.

Mr. Brooks said yes.

Chair Pederson opens public comment.

1. Richard Mehren – Costa Mesa Resident

Stated that he was in the original Parks and Recreation Commission for seven years. He believes that the request for a new shed will protect the water tower.

2. Kim Hendricks – Costa Mesa Resident

Stated that she has emailed staff to correct the Fairview Master Plan online. She also said that the Orange County Model Engineers are an important part of Costa Mesa and the request should get approved.

Chair Pederson closes public comment.

Chair Pederson asked staff if the shed will cover the roof of tower.

Mr. Mejia said that the shed will cover the outside of tank as well as the roof.

Chair Pederson wants to see the shed painted if approved, to replicate the existing water tower.

Commissioner Graham stated that the request will be in line with the steamed railroad and would also like to see the shed painted. Maybe even a logo on the shed.

MOTION: MOTION made by Commissioner de Arakal to approve request because the upgrade is consistent with the Fairview Park Master Plan and he approves on how the request was presented. His preference is to see the tower matching the Placentia Bridge. Seconded by Vice Chair Eckles.

Commissioner Harper said that he trust and believes that the Orange County Model Engineers will do a great job with water tower.

MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

f. Fairview Park North Bluff Trail Realignment

Mr. Mejia presents report.

Vice Chair Eckles asked about the rehabilitation of existing trail at Fairview Park.

Mr. Mejia said that work is needed to reconstruct the multipurpose trail. They are still working on the environmental reports for the project. The realignment of the trail accomplishes many of the goals like creating a more ADA friendly environment. The realignment of the trail will avoid cultural and biological resources and will not disrupt green space. Mr. Mejia asked if the commission review report and see if trail is consistent with the Fairview Park Master Plan.

Vice Chair Eckles asked if the current trail is a type A and will it remain the same.

Mr. Mejia responded by saying that yes it is a type A, multipurpose trail.

Vice Chair Eckles asked if the trail is not realigned, the existing trail would not be ADA accessible.

Mr. Mejia said that the slope on the existing trail will not make it accessible.

Vice Chair Eckles asked if the trail does not get realigned then the problems will be severe in the future.

Chair Pederson asked if the existing path has severe damage to it.

Mr. Mejia said yes; Bruce Hartley has done a great job in repairing the cracks in the trail so far, but the trail will get worse over time.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if the map provided on the report is with the existing

slope condition.

Mr. Mejia said yes it is with the existing slope condition.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if there will be any modifications done to existing slope to realign trail.

Mr. Mejia said that has not been defined yet.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if the realignment does not get approved, can the existing trail be damaged more to the point where it becomes dangerous to the public and be closed.

Mr. Mejia said that if the trail deteriorates more that it will be closed or repaired.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if the existing trail were to be repaired, it will encroach with ORA-58?

Mr. Mejia said yes.

Commissioner Harper asked if there will be closing of any trails.

Mr. Mejia said no; the trail will give pedestrians access to the upper and lower portion of the park.

Commissioner Harper asked staff to clarify if it is redefining or adding a trail.

Mr. Mejia said that they are relocating an existing trail.

Commissioner Harper asked if the existing trail will stay open.

Mr. Mejia said that if realignment were to get approved, existing trail can be restored and replanted so it will no longer be usable.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if the existing trail be rehabilitated to existing life.

Mr. Mejia said yes, that would be an option.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if there are any grants for revegetation or if there are any seed banks at site.

Mr. Mejia said the restored areas that have been done can become seed banks. He also said that they are always looking into finding grants that pertain to the Fairview Park Master Plan.

Chair Pederson asked if the pools at Fairview were done with grants.

Mr. Mejia said they were done with grants, donations, and funding by agencies.

Chair Pederson said that projects are to capture money and do some necessary upgrades to park.

Mr. Mejia agreed with Chair Pederson. He stated that the bike trails were done by a federal grant.

Chair Pederson asked if they were putting non-native plants.

Mr. Mejia said that plants are being placed that are local to the region. Stated that the plants in the wetlands are developing well.

Chair Pederson asked if the existing trail was breaking up.

Mr. Mejia said yes.

Chair Pederson said as an example if his mother would to walk down the existing path, would it be safe.

Mr. Mejia said yes due to the repairs Bruce Hartley has done.

Chair Pederson said if the trail would be safe for future use.

Mr. Mejia said it will not be safe to walk down the trail in the future.

Chair Pederson said that the realignment of the path is to make it accessible so that everybody can enjoy the park and trails.

Chair Pederson opens up public comment.

1. Richard Mehren – Costa Mesa Resident

He said nothing can be done to improve the trails. He mentioned that the commissioners did not speak about a concrete roadway being constructed. The results of the concrete trail will lead to native habitat and rare plants will be disrupted.

2. Kim Hendricks – Costa Mesa Resident

She brought maps and documents about the Fairview Park Master Plan so commissioners can review. She mentioned that there used to be a canyon at Fairview Park and that staff removed canyon. She believed that the canyon was perfect for the natural habitat.

3. Devin Bradley – Costa Mesa Resident

She said that there are biological resources that are rare and well established. Creating and paving through that will disrupt the habitat. She recommended that staff find grants to restore the value of the natural area.

4. Jay Humphrey – Costa Mesa Resident

He asked if the existing trail were to be abandon, will it mature over time.

Mr. Mejia said that staff would have to see how it can be restored. Existing asphalt will need to be removed and the trail reconfigured.

Commissioner de Arakal clarified that the asphalt will be removed, trail be reconfigured and that the slope will be re-established.

Mr. Humphrey said that concrete is much more permanent and that will have a greater effect on the area. He also asked why staff were not doing any environmental reviews of the land before realigning the trail.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if there will be more reviews done before anything gets done.

Mr. Mejia said that the reviews already done and amendment will be processed if re-alignment approved. A full environmental analysis will be done if approved.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if there will be any assessments done with the new realignment.

Mr. Mejia said that there has been areas already restored and replanted. Alignment will minimize impact to resources.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if existing trail will encroach on ORA-58.

Mr. Mejia said yes.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if CSS will be lost if renovations were to be done on existing trail.

Mr. Mejia said no, it will not affect it.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if at this time, was there any reason to consult with official wild services.

Mr. Mejia said not that specific area.

Commissioner de Arakal asked if proposed trail is type A.

Mr. Mejia said yes, it is an eight foot wide concrete multipurpose trail.

Commissioner Harper is not clear if trail follows Fairview Park Master Plan.

Commissioner de Arakal stated that the staff recommendation was not clear to commissioners.

Commissioner Harper said that it does not say if it should be called to a vote.

Chair Pederson stated that Commissioner Harper should ask staff to clarify staff report.

Commissioner Harper asked if the item was supposed to be called for a vote.
Chair Pederson said yes.

Commissioner Graham said that the existing trail will be expensive to fit and that the proposed trail will provide the same access as the existing trail. The only aspect changing will be location of trail.

Vice Chair Eckles stated that he is familiar with the Fairview Park Master Plan and that he understands the community. He agreed with Commissioner Graham about repairing existing trail will cause more harm to area. He said that creating a new trail will be less of an impact.

Chair Pederson stated that the word moving is not the correct term to use. He said that the commissioners should say the trail is consistent or not consistent with the master plan.

Vice Chair Eckles said that there are no new trails being created. He said that the proposed trail is consistent with the master plan.

Commissioner de Arakal said that existing trail is not safe and in order to correct problem, there needs to be done a realignment of trail. He believes that the proposed trail will improve the safety and access level for everyone. The proposed trail is a type A trail and is consistent with the master plan.

Vice Chair Eckles agreed that the proposed trail is consistent with master plan.

Chair Pederson said that the commission had to vote if trail is consistent with master plan. He also said that lots of money will be needed to keep everything native.

Commissioner Graham said there needs to be things done in order to keep moving forward.

MOTION: MOTION made by Chair Pederson that Fairview Park North Bluff Trail Realignment is consistent with the Fairview Park Master Plan. Seconded by Commissioner Graham. MOTION carries 5-0.

Commissioner Graham thanked the audience and asked them to join the next Parks and Recreation Meeting.

10. Parks Project Manager's Report

Mr. Mejia presents report.

Chair Pederson asked what the timeline was for the plan.

Mr. Mejia said that the target is to complete the project in early 2016. Will keep it updated once every ten years. Mr. Mejia will keep commissioners updated on the schedule.

11. Recreation Manager's Report

Mr. Karlen presents report.

Commissioner de Arakal thanked Mr. Karlen and is pleased to see the recreation staff being active on social media. He also said that the movies in the park is such a great idea for the community.

Chair Pederson thanked Mr. Karlen for the inviting the commissioners to the field user group meetings.

12. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner de Arakal reminded that the park reports were due soon and for everyone to enjoy the rest of their summer.

Vice Chair Eckles thanked staff on all the work that has been done. He also thanked Commissioner Graham for his communication with the public. He is proud to be a commissioner and wants to see positive change.

Commissioner Harper apologized for being late to the meeting. Thanked Mr. Mejia and Mr. Karlen for all the work that has been done.

Commissioner Graham said that this meeting had some good discussions and he is happy to be a part of the commission. He also thanked the Administrative Secretary for all her work with the Parks and Recreation meeting.

Chair Pederson also thanked the Administrative Secretary. Chair Pederson thanked Mr. West for being present in this meeting and is looking forward to reading his blog. He asked Mr. Karlen if he can have some information in regards to user groups in the next meeting.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Pederson. The next regular scheduled agenda review on Thursday, September 24, 2015 at 5:15 p.m. in Conference Room 3A of City Hall, followed by the Commission meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.



Prepared by Sanjuana Pacheco
PRC Secretary



Submitted by Travis Karlen
Recreation Manager