

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, January 8, 2020
APPROVED MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Chair Andy Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL**
 - a. **Members Present:** Chair Andy Campbell, Vice Chair Evan Rothman, Larry Courter, Steve Smith, Dave Erickson, Terri Fuqua
 - b. **Members Absent:** Bill McCarty
 - c. **Liaisons Present:** Councilmember Liaison Arlis Reynolds, Parks, Arts, and Community Services (PACS) Commissioner Jim Erickson, OCME Liaison Hank Castignetti
3. **APPROVAL December 11, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes** – Chair Andy Campbell calls for the approval of the December 2019 minutes; passed unanimously.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Wendy Leece asks if drones will be a part of the discussion for airspace within the Park.
5. **COMMITTEE MEMBER and LIAISON COMMENTS**

Chair Andy Campbell asks that the discussion of changing the Park’s name be put onto the agenda at a later date.
6. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **REUQUEST TO FORM AN “ENFORCEMENT EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE” ON PARK USE ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES**

Chair Andy Campbell motions to form an enforcement evaluation subcommittee to review the level of enforcement of the Park’s regulations, 2nd by Steve Smith. Discussion of subcommittee’s duties ensued. Members were asked to volunteer to be on the subcommittee. Chair Andy Campbell motions to form a subcommittee proposed of Steve Smith, Larry Courter, and Chair Andy Campbell; motion unanimously approved.
 - B. **FLY FIELD COMPATIBILITY COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW**
 - I. **STATUS AND PROCESS**

Chair Andy Campbell provides background on Measure AA, the Fairview Park Steering Committee, and the review of fly field use.
 - II. **STATEMENTS FROM INTERESTED ORGANIZATIONS**

HARBOR SOARING SOCIETY (HSS) – Henry Smith, HSS President, reviewed a brief history of HSS. He mentioned the 1995 Brandman Report, Page 2, item B2 and a 2017 Riparian Mitigation Report, Page 8; indicating that these documents did not conclude that HSS activity has been harmful to the environment at Fairview Park.

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, January 8, 2020
APPROVED MINUTES

ACADEMY OF MODEL AERONAUTICS (AMA) – Dave Meriwether, AMA Associate Vice President of District 10, provided the Fairview Park Steering Committee members with several articles that discuss the benefits of the modeling hobby. He mentioned that the AMA has a great deal of experience in resolving compatibility issues and may have some expertise to offer the City of Costa Mesa.

SEA & SAGE AUDUBON SOCIETY – Scott Thomas, Sea & Sage Conservation Committee Co-Chair, mentioned that there are 3,500 Audubon members in Orange County who are committed to protection and preservation of bird species. He noted that there has been a 25% reduction in birds in North America, and Fairview park needs to be a safe haven for birds. He briefly discussed the Endangered Species Act, and explained that a “take” (harassing) of birds is harmful to their productivity and that if not careful, Fairview Park could become a “sink” (a place where birds gather but are not productive). He showed photos of a model aircraft interacting with a bird at Fairview Park, and commented that this is illegal behavior as specified in the Endangered Species Act.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jack Cannon, Huntington Beach resident and flyer, states that he is in favor of flying because the hobby is healthy for individuals and for the community, and states he would like to see evidence to the contrary before a decision is made to eliminate the activity.

Debby Koken, Fairview Park Alliance member, believes that FVP is a nature preserve, and that flying activity should be carefully monitored; suggests solutions, such as all flyers should be HSS members and that Harbor Soaring Society could assist with the monitoring.

Bettina Eastman, Sea & Sage Audubon member, took photos of a bird/plane interaction; confirmed that the interaction was not accidental, the plane was harassing the bird, and that this was a “take” which is prohibited per the Endangered Species Act; states there is incompatibility with the model airplanes and the birds’ ability to survive at the Park.

Wendy Leece, FVP Alliance member, believes the Park should be a nature park with a compromise allowing flying activity; noted that there is a lack of monitoring at the park, and suggested that HSS could

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, January 8, 2020
APPROVED MINUTES

be helpful in that task; she would like to see closer monitoring of airspace or fly space to assure that flyers are staying within appropriate boundaries.

Ralph Siegfrein, HSS member and Costa Mesa resident, stated he has not witnessed flyers chasing birds; explains he has seen birders enter protected areas to photograph birds; suggests that all groups should be able to self-police.

Arman Rezaei, high school student, states that he follows the rules; mentions other flyers need to know and understand the rules so that they can follow them; interested in seeing more monitoring and enforcement.

Catherine Steinberg, Sea & Sage Audubon member and Costa Mesa resident, states she has observed planes flying outside of the zone; expresses that the noise is very loud and that she cannot walk her dog when loud flyers are out.

Stephanie Bonin, Irvine resident, states she can assist with evidence based ways to collect data and can evaluate impacts of activity and noise on wildlife.

William Vincent, Newport Beach resident, states he would like to see a longer runway so that larger planes can take off and fly.

John Anderson, HSS member, states he participates in Imagineology, supporting aerospace education including flying; believes that pilots are becoming an endangered species, and more pilots are needed; claims he would like to see a compromise.

Jay Humphrey, FVP Alliance member, states that compatibility is the issue, and that the question at hand is what is best for the park; asks rhetorically what Measure AA's vision is for the park; states gliders could disrupt the bird behavior at the Park because of their appearances [size].

Mike Costello, HSS member, expresses that the biggest threat to airports across the country is birds and that birds are not scared of planes.

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, January 8, 2020
APPROVED MINUTES

Mike Bigelow, United Airlines pilot and Costa Mesa resident, states that birds have lots of places to fly; believes that the park is large and the flyers are not affecting the birds.

Ron Jongeling, HSS member and veteran, states numerous veterans utilize the fly field and for some it is the sole reason they leave the house; adds he respects the wildlife at the Park as do many of the other flyers.

Chris Adamczyk, HSS member, recommends HSS and Sea & Sage Audubon work together to educate one another on the birds and migration patterns at the Park.

Cindy Ficken, Costa Mesa resident, expresses her appreciation for the field in providing activities for the youth.

Mike Theile, HSS member and Huntington Beach resident, mentions he has observed birds at the field every day; states HSS would address rules at the field.

IV. DISCUSSION

Chair Andy Campbell states he voted to pass Measure AA because he did not want the park to be closed; says he has seen RC drones and helicopters chase birds and large planes buzzing park patrons; encourages solutions to be brought forward by HSS.

Vice Chair Evan Rothman reminds the attendees that the Steering Committee will make a recommendation to Parks, Arts, and Community Services Commission, but that no decision has been made as of yet.

Steve Smith reminded the attendees that we should be considering the “spirit of the law” and not just the “letter of the law”; believes that there can be some compromise.

Terri Fuqua comments that she does not believe that HSS is the problem, but there are some issues with non-HSS flyers; observes birds on the runway and that those birds seem comfortable with the flying; mentions that she would like to see limits on the types of planes that are flown and would like to have the remote controlled jets prohibited; believes having flyers at Park every day is a benefit.

CITY OF COSTA MESA
FAIRVIEW PARK STEERING SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, January 8, 2020
APPROVED MINUTES

Councilmember Arlis Reynolds thanks everyone for attending and clarified the purpose of the meeting; reminds the group that the City Council requested the evaluation and that perhaps clarification about the rules are in order; explains the fly field is just one of the uses under review within all of the activities occurring at the Park.

Larry Courter states he respects what HSS does; expresses that the Park is a preserve; believes a compromise must be made.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2020 REGULAR / SPECIAL MEETING TASKS AND SCHEDULE

Cynthia D'Agosta presents on the HSS contract renewal and evaluation timeline. The committee discusses holding a special meeting in March. Chair Andy Campbell motions to hold a special meeting on March 11th, 2nd by Vice Chair Evan Rothman; unanimously approved.

8. STAFF COMMENTS

Cynthia D'Agosta talks about all upcoming events at the Park; describes the City Nature Challenge to be held in April.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting: February 12, 2020 at Costa Mesa City Hall Rm 1A.