

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
October 4, 2011 – 6pm

Convened 6:01pm

ROLL CALL

Present: Phil Lugar, Chair
Tom Anderson
Ron Cole
Roy Englebrecht
Kathy Hamilton
Jack Tingley

Absent: Marie Marston

Staff: Laura Detweiler, Recreation & Senior Services Director
Mark Harmon, Municipal Operations Director
Sean Levin, Recreation Superintendent
Teri Craig, Admin Assistant

DIRECTORS COMMENTS

- Director Detweiler – None
- Director Harmon stated that he would provide an oral report with no action necessary on the removal of the trees on Irvine Blvd later in the meeting.
- City Council Actions – None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jayne Starr inquired about the Park Patrol program and role at Big Corona and a decreased presence since the program began many years ago.

Director Detweiler stated that when the Park Patrol program originated it was to be the ambassador to the City's sports fields and did not include the beach front; but as time went on it became apparent that the program would be beneficial to expand their presence to Corona del Mar State Beach. Over the last two summers the City has had dedicated staff on the beach from Friday through Monday and has actually increased its presence at CDM State Beach. The Activity report included in tonight's agenda provides information related to the number of public contacts Park Patrol made over the summer.

Commissioner Englebrecht commented that Park Patrol is not there for crime prevention but rather make sure that the public using the fields for games are properly permitted. He went on to say that the Park Patrol is a tremendous addition to our City and that we are lucky to have them.

Commissioner Hamilton commented that maybe the reason the Park Patrol is not quite as visible on the bluff top is because they are actually out on the beach.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Minutes of August 2, 2011 regular meeting.

Recommendation: Waive reading of subject minutes, approve and order filed.

2. Pulled by a member of the audience.

3. Recreation & Senior Services Activity Report.

Recommendation: Receive/file monthly Activity Report for activities and upcoming projects.

4. Pulled by Commissioner Tingley

5. Pulled by Director Harmon

Motion by Chair Lugar to accept items 1 and 3 of the Consent Calendar. Motion carried by acclamation.

2. **Park & Operations Division Activity Report.** Dan Purcell asked three questions – (1) the cost of graffiti removal and how the new contractor is working out; (2) clarification on beach area refuse versus the debris and why it was so much more this year than last year; and finally (3) why is the gutter mile numbers swept so much less this year than last. He commented that the City is doing an excellent job of taking care of the graffiti and commended Jim Auger for his work and that contractor is good at removing without damaging but noted that he was concerned that in the long term if the contractor needs a little extra money; what steps are taken to prevent an interest of confluence. Mr Purcell stated that he lives on Ocean Blvd and that most on his block are very clean and take care of their streets and for a couple of months he even picked up trash and disposed of it and took note of the type or trash and stated sweeping once a week is just not enough and requested additional street sweeping specifically during the summer and on the weekends.

Director Harmon thanked Mr. Purcell for his complements of Mr. Auger and agreed that he does do a great job. Regarding street sweeping he reported that every single residential street is swept once per week and noted that might not be enough in some very conjested areas like Ocean Blvd and would be glad to look at it but commented that any additional sweeping would require additional funding. In regards to beach area refuse he stated that that there are two different categories – one is for beach trash which are from the containers on the beach and included the piers and the trash containers on the boardwalk and agrees that there has been significant increase in trash. He stated that the other type of beach debris is seaweed and driftwood that are picked up from the scrapers. Director Harmon stated that the street sweeping was contracted out about a year ago and staff has received many great comments from residents. The reason for the reduction of curb mileage is that when the contractor came on board the routes were adjusted, i.e. PCH used to be swept five days a week and now has been cut down to one time a week and no complaints have been received. He went on to say in years past staff tracked curb miles by looking at the odometer when they left the yard and when they returned. He agreed that it was not the most accurate method but we we did not have GPS systems. This contractor has a very sophisticated GPS system and their curb mile swept begins when that gutter broom hits the ground and stops when the block ends and so the number that is seen here is an accurate count of curb miles swept. Staff is actually able to confirm to the public what time the street sweeper actually hit their street. He noted that there are two approaches for graffiti – when there is offensive or vulgar language and the contractor cannot get to it immediately then staff is used but that the contractor is used more because of the reduction of staff. Director Harmon commented that the graffiti contractor is required to take a picture of the graffiti at the sight before cleaning; the real reason for the picture is not to really track his costs but rather provide the pictures to the Police Department for their data base and if the graffiti artist is caught then the City can take them to court.

Commissioner Hamilton asked how successful the graffiti program is with the Police and the recoup of costs.

Director Harmon stated that he would have to attain that information from the PD.

Chair Lugar opened the public discussion; hearing none the public discussion was closed.

4. **Dog Nuisance Dispense Donation.** Commissioner Tingley asked whether dogs were allowed on the bay side since that is where the donation will be located. He asked if the purpose was for clean-up.

Director Harmon stated yes. He stated that the dispensers are used for clean up and that the HOA is donating for the future Marina Park area as well. Director Harmon stated that the doggie bag stations really do help with clean-up.

Chair Lugar opened the public discussion; hearing none the public discussion was closed.

5. **Reforestation Request.** Director Harmon stated that he wanted to be clear on exactly what the Harbor View Hills South Homeowners Association is doing. He stated that there are a total of 11 trees that they have applied for removal and replaced; two of those trees are Carrotwoods on Keel and Outrigger Drive and those two trees will be replaced with Magnolia trees at those sites. There are also

nine Brazilian Pepper trees that are in a general shared area and those nine will be removed because of view issues and will be replanted within the Association. Staff recommends approval.

Chair Lugar opened the public discussion; hearing none the public discussion was closed.

Motion by Commissioner Marston to approve items 2, 4 and 5 of the Consent Calendar. Motion carried by acclamation.

NEW / CONTINUED BUSINESS

6. **Reforestation Request.** Director Harmon stated that staff has received a request for reforestation of one City street tree from Tiffany Klarin at 1500 Sylvia Lane. He stated that all requirements have been met but staff is requesting that this item be tabled until staff is able to discuss the issue further with the homeowner and contractor to see if something can be worked out in order to save the tree.

Chair Lugar opened the public discussion

Michael Klarin stated that the roots from this tree have caused three fences to deteriorate. He noted that their contractor believes that just moving the fence will not solve the situation and that the tree should be removed.

Director Harmon asked the homeowner to give staff just a little more time to see if they can save this 30-40 year old tree possibly by root pruning or a root barrier and would defer to the arborist regarding the recommendation and that this item would be brought back to the Commission.

Chair Lugar closed the public discussion

Motion by Chair Lugar to table the Reforestation Request of Tiffany & Michael Klarin at 1500 Sylvia Lane until November to provide staff additional time to work out an acceptable agreement with the homeowner. Motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Cole, Englebrecht, Lugar, Hamilton, Tingley
Abstain: Anderson
Absent: Marston

7. **Appointment of Beach Fire Rings Sub-Committee.** Director Detweiler stated that the City Council has requested the Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission review issues related to the City's beach fire rings and examine options to remedy these concerns. Fire rings are located on the beach in two areas including Corona del Mar (27 fire rings) and the Balboa Pier area (33 fire rings). She stated that issues are related but not limited to health hazards and safety in regards to the hot ash that remains in the fire rings as well as curfew issues. She asked that the Commission designate three members to the sub-committee. The sub-committee will meet at a later date and would be publicly noticed and open to the public to attend and make comment. Following those meetings the sub-committee will bring back a recommendation to the full Commission on how to remedy those issues.

Commissioner Lugar appointed Vice Chair Hamilton as the Chair and Commissioners Anderson and Marston.

Chair Lugar opened the public discussion

Barb Peters stated that she lives on Breakers Drive and that she believed the posted signs that stated that the beach would be closed after 10pm when they moved in about 14 years ago. She noted that over the years she has seen and heard everything from church events to stabbings to people leaping over the fires during the Persian New Year. She stated that she personally has called the police literally hundreds of times after 10pm as late night fire ring fans arrive or return after the gate has been closed.

Chair Lugar stopped Ms. Peters and noted that the Commission really wants to hear her comments and concerns but that review of the Fire Rings is not before them at this time and that these comments should be made to the sub-committee when they meet.

Ms Peters stated ok and confirmed there would be additional opportunity for public comment.

Chair Lugar asked Ms. Peters to work with Commissioner Hamilton and to get her comments to her.

Commissioner Englebrecht asked if there was a deadline for this committee to return to the Commission with their report.

Chair Lugar stated that there is not a specific date from the Council. He commented that possibly there could be progress report at the November meeting.

Commissioner Englebrecht stated that the Council is asking for some pretty drastic recommendations and are asking for options to remedy the concerns listed in the staff report. He noted that these fire rings are an icon of the City and is one of the reasons that many people come to this City and that this should not be taken lightly and believes that this issue could be one of the most important issues that this Sub-Committee and Commission has ever had to deal with.

Chair Lugar closed the public discussion

Motion by Chair Lugar to appoint Commissioner Hamilton as Chair and Commissioners Anderson and Marston to the Beach Fire Rings Sub-Committee. Motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Anderson, Cole, Englebrecht, Hamilton, Lugar,
Noes: Tingley
Absent: Marston

Director Harmon stated that he wanted to provide information to the Commission regarding the Irvine Avenue tree removal. He began by saying that he is aware that the Commissioner's received a letter from City Manager Kiff on the details of why the decision was made to remove the trees. He stated that there are two projects that staff is actively engaged in.

The first project is the Irvine Avenue medians and noted that there are seven medians between West Cliff and 17th and Dover where the Blue Gum Eucalyptus trees were located and there were approximately 104 trees. He stated that those trees were planted as a hedgerow to block the wind for agricultural fields which a long time ago protected fields. These trees were planted because they are an incredibly fast growing species and were planted right next to each other. He noted that the problem was that these 104 trees had basically grown together. He stated that on September 20th the decision was made to remove the all the trees and on September 21st, WCA was given the go ahead and the trees were removed on Wednesday. WCA did an incredible job with minimal interruption to Irvine Blvd. He went on to say that staff is now challenged with landscaping those medians and have committed to working with Newport Beach residents and the City of Costa Mesa. He stated that the property line between Costa Mesa and Newport Beach is right down the middle of the median. He noted that there is an agreement with the City of Costa Mesa and Newport Beach that puts the responsibility for maintenance to Newport Beach. So staff now has the job of re-landscaping those seven medians and possibly enhancing them. He stated that the first step is for staff to meet with Costa Mesa and that they will come back with options and different designs to the Commission. He stated again that this will be a very public project.

The second project is the review of the other 250+ Blue Gum Eucalyptus trees that remain in the City. He stated that the City has contracted with a private party arborist to work with the two City arborists to evaluate every one of those trees.

Commissioner Tingley stated that it looks like there is one stump left and will it go away.

Director Harmon stated that he will look into it and will talk to staff about it.

Commissioner Tingley stated that the Mariners School staff asked the Commissioner to say that the safety efforts that were taken to take down those trees to make sure that those kids were safe brought tears to their eyes and that it was amazing to see and were quite complimentary and now the kids can cross the street with full view access.

Chair Lugar thanked Director Harmon and his staff for their response. He noted that he totally understood why the trees needed to come down and was it more structural then disease and asked if that was the right road in his assumption. And if it was diseased did the arborist do anything or was there a pathology report done.

Director Harmon stated that the tree that failed on September 15 and that stump was removed and locked away at the GS yard so that testing could be done by a third party. He stated that staff sent a sample to a soil and root lab and they also visited the GS yard the next day and took their own sample. He commented that they are scheduled to have that report next week.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he wanted to go on record and that he has lived in that neighborhood near Irvine Avenue since 1988 and has raised his children on Priscilla, and the reaction that he received from his neighbors was far different than those of Commissioner Tingley. He received lots of anger, questioning Monday morning quarterbacking and that his only response to these people is that he did not have any information. He asked if Costa Mesa was even notified before the trees came down and wonders who will cover the cost for the replenishment of the trees. He stated that he looks forward to planning something that looks nice for those entering Newport Beach off Irvine Avenue. Commissioner Anderson stated that maybe this is an opportunity to put our best foot forward.

COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Parks – Nothing to report. Commissioner Anderson asked about Coastal Commission regarding Sunset Ridge. Director Detweiler stated that the application to develop Sunset Ridge Park is with the Coastal Commission and their staff just recently issued a recommendation to deny the application. She went on to say that the City has asked that hearing on this issue be delayed until November. She stated that the public has an opportunity to comment during public comments at the Coastal Commission meeting that will be held in Huntington Beach on October 5-7. She stated that when the actual item has been agendaized staff will inform the Commission of the date and location. She also noted that there will be City representation at the Huntington Beach meeting as well.

Commissioner Anderson asked about the repaving of the bike paths at Castaways.

Director Harmon stated that there were some complaints about the striping and would need to talk to Public Works regarding the outcome.

Chair Lugar stated that he has received some concerns from people about the 10 speed racers on the bike paths and that the signs are too small for them to see.

Director Harmon stated that he could invite Public Works to discuss this issue at a future meeting.

RSS – Nothing to report.

Budget – Nothing to report.

Community Service Award – Nothing to report. Superintendent Levin stated that he would send the application and information to the committee.

Youth Sports – Nothing to report.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Castaways Park striping.

Commissioner Englebrecht stated that he still wants to see the park bench design.

Director Detweiler stated that staff does keep a running tally of items requested.

Director Harmon stated that this item has not been forgotten but asked that the Commission remember that this last month has not been normal and that a bench donation request will not be brought forward until a Bench Design report has been provided to the Commission.

ADJOURNED @ 7:22pm

Submitted by: _____
Teri Craig, Admin Assistant