

**Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
May 1, 2012 – 6pm**

1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER 6:07pm

2) ROLL CALL

Present: Phil Lugar, Chair
Kathy Hamilton, Vice Chair
Ron Cole
Roy Englebrecht
Marie Marston

Absent: Tom Anderson
Jack Tingley

Staff: Mark Harmon, Municipal Operations Director
Sean Levin, Recreation Superintendent
Sonia Villalvazo, Department Assistant

3) NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Director Harmon announced an Arbor Day event at Eastbluff Elementary School on Thursday, May 24, 2012, 9:30am. He requested that the Chair and or a Commissioner attend.

Superintendent Levin reported that Director Detweiler was out sick and introduced Department Assistant Sonia Villalvazo who would be taking minutes this evening.

In addition, Superintendent Levin distributed an invitation to Commission Members celebrating the opening of Buck Gully. He reported that the bridges were flown in by helicopter last week and that the event will be held May 30, 2012 at noon, followed by a docent led hike.

4) CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Pulled by a member of the public.

B. Pulled by a member of the public.

C. Recreation & Seniors Services Activity Report.

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

D. Reforestation Request

Recommendation: Approve Reforestation Request by Harbor View Hills South HOA on behalf of homeowner at 1227 Sand Key.

E. Reforestation Request

Recommendation: Approve Reforestation Request by Newport Hills Community Association to remove 22 Carrotwood trees and replant 21 Camphor trees as replacements within the public right-of-way on Newport Hills Drive East, from Port Edwards Circle to Port Dunleigh Circle.

A. Minutes of the April 3, 2012 regular meeting - Jim Mosher stated that the correct spelling of the President of ExplorOcean is Rita Stenlund.

Motion by Commissioner Marston to approve item 4A as amended and accept items 4C through 4E.
Motion carried by acclamation

- B. Parks & Operations Division Activity Report** - Jim Mosher commented on the Parks & Trees Maintenance Operation Report noting the numbers of tree replacements, Council action on parkway and median improvements, Irvine Avenue and West Cliff to Dover Eucalyptus tree removals and their replacements, and referenced the removal of fire rings in Corona del Mar and Balboa not being included on the CIP the list.

Chair Lugar reported that the matter of the fire rings must go before the Coastal Commission.

Director Harmon reminded the commissioners that the removal and re-landscaping of the Eucalyptus trees had been discussed at the Joint Meeting with the Costa Mesa Commission and that staff is moving forward with the project. He added the project is in the planning phase and that staff is working to finalize the project before forwarding to Council for their approval. He stated that recommended funding for the project would be included in that report and noted that not everything is listed in the CIP.

Motion by Commissioner Marston to approve item 4B. Motion carried by acclamation.

5) CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. City Street Tree Designation – Quite Cove** - Director Harmon presented details of the report noting this request has been made through the HOA Board of Directors. He stated that no trees will be removed due to this action, but as they become eligible for removal in the future, they will be replaced with the Australian Willow.

Discussion followed regarding removing the Hong Kong Orchid from the list and replacing it with the Australian Willow and whether this is a common practice.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that the tree referenced under the Consent Calendar Item 4C as 1227 Sand Key should be 1223 Sand Key. Director Harmon stated that he would verify the correct address.

Chair Lugar opened the public discussion

Robert Shelton, Chairman of the City Tree Committee of the Harbor View Hills South HOA stated that there is only one Hong Kong Orchid tree on Quiet Cove, which has not been well-received and presents homeowners with a number of challenges. He added there are five Brisbane Box trees on Quiet Cove and a number of vacant sites. He hoped the Brisbane Boxes would be replaced with the Australian Willow and that all the vacant sites would plant Australian Willows as well.

Jim Mosher wondered if it would be better to have a variety of trees rather than one species.

Chair Lugar stated that it would need to be approved by the HOA.

Chair Lugar closed the public discussion

Director Harmon thanked Mr. Shelton for his comments noting he has been a leader in support of reforestation for a number of years. Director Harmon noted the current item is a street tree change on Quiet Cove to the Australian Willow. He added that the Brisbane Box is not the designated tree for Quiet Cove and that this discussion relates to the approval of the Australian Willow to replace the Hong Kong Orchid. Once the City Council designates the Australian Willow as the designated street tree for Quiet Cove the HOA can request reforestation to remove trees, and then replace them with the Australian Willow.

Motion by Commissioner Marston to recommend that City Council changed the designated street tree on Quiet Cove from the Hong Kong Orchid to the Australian Willow. Motion carried by acclamation.

- B. Bench Donation Policy – Council Policy B-17** - Director Harmon addressed a previous Commission meeting where the aforementioned issue was discussed relative to the longevity of donated benches and whether there is a designated lifespan. He reported that the Commission formed a Committee to discuss the issue which met and formed the listed recommendations. He stated that if the recommendations are approved, they will be presented to Council to consider. Director Harmon reported that one of the issues that had been discussed was whether a donated bench will exist in perpetuity and the issue of maintenance costs. He stated that the Committee assigned a five year life to donated benches. He addressed reasons for donating benches and the fact that donors may distance themselves from benches. Director Harmon presented recommendations regarding contacting a donor after five years to renew their donation and adding a \$200 maintenance fee for an additional five year donation.

Director Harmon noted that if an original donor could be found, the bench would be open for new donations allowing more people the opportunity to donate a bench to the City. Director Harmon reported that the recommended program would allow staff to maintain funding and maintenance issues to benches. He noted that additional benches would not be added to those areas that are already at full capacity.

Director Harmon presented options available for the Commission in consideration of this item. He added the program would apply to donated benches from this point forward.

Discussion followed regarding applicability of the policy considering the City is "benched out".

Director Harmon referenced Council Policy B-17 Item D, relative to the City reserving the right to remove or relocate a donated item.

Ensuing discussion followed regarding a new donor having to pay the costs of donating a bench, types and designs of benches, the proposed maintenance fee, clarification of recommendations, benches without plaques, records of ownership/donations for existing benches, and the possibility of contacting donors of existing benches to provide the opportunity for them to renew their donation by paying the maintenance fee.

Director Harmon reported that staff reserves the right to remove that bench without contacting the donor. He stated if that is what the Commission desires, a report can be presented to bring the item forward to the Commission. City Council would ultimately be responsible for approving be changes regarding the policy.

Discussion continued regarding the disposition of replaced benches. Director Harmon reported that benches are repaired and placed in locations were benches are needed. Those benches that are not repairable are disposed of and not replaced.

Commissioners discussed the possibility of starting the five year clock on the day Council approves the recommendation for all existing benches. It was suggested that those benches that have plaques but are not renewed that an offer to return the plaque is made, if possible. Another suggestion was made relative to not assigning a fixed maintenance fee, but rather assign some type of an index to allow for inflation.

Director Harmon agreed with the possibility of starting the five (5) year clock on existing benches on the day Council approves the recommendation. He also stated that an agreement with plaques to original donors or saving them in case a donor could not be reached. Director Harmon indicated a fixed fee could be adjusted in the future as with other City fees. He added that when a bench has exceeded its useful life, the bench and related plaque would be removed.

Chair Lugar opened the public discussion

Jim Mosher addressed the various styles of and related costs for benches. He suggested the list of styles and costs include a maintenance fee, proportional to the cost, which would apply with the donation.

Chair Lugar closed the public discussion

Director Harmon suggested that staff incorporate the Commission's comments and return next month for consideration. He stated that staff could develop a sliding scale for the maintenance fee depending on the type of bench and costs.

Chair Lugar agreed that this item should be continued.

6) PARKS, BEACHES & RECREATION COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS, UPDATES OR MATTERS WHICH MEMBERS WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ACTION OR REPORT (NON-DISCUSSION ITEM)

None.

7) PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Jim Mosher expressed concerns with disconnect between various Commissions and Council. He referenced a recent renewal by City Council of a contract with the Aquatic Swim Center at Corona del Mar High School and indicated he was surprised that this item was not heard by the Commission as well as the Banning Ranch project.

Chair Lugar reported issues that are brought before the Commission are presented by staff and he suggested Mr. Mosher present the matter to Council.

8) ADJOURNMENT - 7:13 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Sonia Villalvazo, Department Assistant

Approved by: _____
Phil Lugar, Chair