

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

**Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
Council Chambers- 100 Civic Center Drive
June 1, 2021 – 5:00 PM**

I. CONVENE MEETING OF THE PARKS BEACHES & RECREATION COMMISSION TO ORDER – 5:01 PM

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Heather Ignatin, Chair
Diane Daruty, Vice Chair
Hassan Archer, Commissioner
David Granoff, Commissioner
Laird Hayes, Commissioner
Walt Howald, Commissioner
Kate Malouf, Commissioner

Staff: Laura Detweiler, Recreation & Senior Services Director
Sean Levin, Recreation & Senior Deputy Director
Micah Martin, Deputy Public Works Director
Kevin Pekar, Parks and Trees Superintendent
John Nelson, City Arborist
Mariah Stinson, Administrative Support Specialist

III. PRESENTATION

A. Community Service Award - OASIS COVID-19 Community Response Team

For extraordinary outreach efforts to help seniors with essential needs throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Deputy Director Levin presented an award to the OASIS COVID-19 Community Response Team who were nominated by Chair Ignatin.

Chair Ignatin summarized the work that the COVID-19 Community Response Team did for the seniors in the community.

Mike Zimmerman appreciated Commissioner Howald's commitment to OASIS and the Commission. He announced September is senior citizen month, OASIS will be hosting a pancake breakfast on Grandparent's Day, and the OASIS Cars and Coffee Car Show will be held on June 19, 2021.

Several Commissioners said words of appreciation for the OASIS COVID-19 Community Response Team.

B. Presentation to Outgoing Commissioner Walt Howald

Recognizing outgoing Commissioner Walt Howald for his eight years of service on the Parks, Beaches and Recreation (PB&R) Commission.

Director Detweiler presented an award to Commissioner Howald for his 8-years of service on the Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission.

The Commissioners and staff spoke of Commissioner Howald's wisdom and his dedicated commitment to the Commission and community.

C. Presentation to Park Maintenance Supervisor Anthony Petrarca

The Parks, Beaches and Recreation (PB&R) Commission recognizes Anthony Petrarca for his 33 years of dedicated service in maintaining safe and beautifully landscaped public spaces throughout the City of Newport Beach.

Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar recognized Mr. Petrarca for his 33-years of service to the City of Newport Beach.

The Commissioners and staff expressed their gratitude to Mr. Petrarca for his hard work in the City's parks and recreational areas.

Mr. Petrarca gave a summary of his time with the City and shared his gratitude for working with staff members and the Commission.

IV. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CONSENT CALENDAR-None.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Minutes of the May 4, 2021 PB&R Commission Meeting.

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

B. PW Activity Report

Recommendation: Receive/file Activity Report.

C. RSS Activity Report

Recommendation: Receive/file Activity Report of past and upcoming projects and events.

D. Bench Donation at Harbor View Nature Park

Staff recommends that the Parks, Beaches and Recreation (PB&R) Commission approve a Santa Monica bench donation requested by the Lynne Valentine family at Harbor View Nature Park.

Motion by Commissioner Howald; second by Commissioner Archer, to approve VI CONSENT CALENDAR. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

VII. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Condition and Maintenance of Special Neighborhood Canary Island Date Palms on Marguerite Avenue.

Presented by Parks and Trees Superintendent Kevin Pekar and Consulting Arborist Ryan Allen, with Dudek, Inc. Receive and file.

Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar introduced Ryan Allen with Dudek who presented the item to the Commission. He disclosed that the canary island date palms have been located in the neighborhood since the 1930s. In the 1980s the palms contracted an incurable fungal disease called Fusarium Wilt. Several trees were lost and the City replaced them with king palms. Staff requested an analysis of the existing canary island date palms be conducted due to citizen's concerns regarding the declining health of the trees and safety. Four trees were inspected and two had to be removed immediately to protect the safety of the public.

Ryan Allen, consulting Arborist with Dudek, Inc., explained that he performed a Level Two Tree Risk Assessment on four trees. He gave a summary of his analysis and the main concern was the top of the tree and the decay from the Fusarium Wilt disease. The trees were given a tree risk rating of low. Fusarium Wilt spreads through soil and contaminated pruning tools. There is a high probability that the other palms on the street will contract the disease. Dudek's general recommendations were to remove the diseased palms, fertilizing the soil, provide irrigation, and add mulch. They also recommended sanitizing all pruning tools thoroughly and limit aggressive boot cleaning.

In answer to Commissioner Granoff's questions, Mr. Allen could not give a specific timeline on when the other trees would become infected with the disease. He noted that fungal rot diseases are difficult to stop once the decay starts. Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar confirmed that staff has been using hand saws on the palm trees for years and a new hand saw is used on each tree to limit the spread of disease and fungus.

In answer to Commissioner Howald's questions, Mr. Allen could not answer how the City can prevent the Fusarium Wilt from getting into the soil. He confirmed that not all of the canary island Date Palms have the disease. Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar confirmed that the disease is a species-specific disease.

Commissioner Archer asked if the entire row of palms would eventually catch the disease. Mr. Allen confirmed that assumption. Commissioner Archer asked if it would be better to have different types of palm trees on the street instead of all one species to create biodiversity. Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar indicated that per the G-6 Policy, the designated street tree is the King Palm, but he suggested the Commission introduce a second palm tree to the policy.

In answer to Commissioner Hayes's question, Mr. Allen agreed that without the disease, the trees may be able to live another 20- to 30-years. Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar answered that the new King Palms installed to replace several date palms have a brown trunk height of 10-feet. He shared that King Palms can grow to a height of 60-

feet, the City installs only single trunk King Palms, and King Palms have a quicker growth rate than Date Palms.

Chair Ignatin opened public comment.

Jim Mosher noted that the consultant's replacement plan indicated that the replacement tree should be something other than a Palm Tree to reduce the spread of Fusarium Wilt, since the report stated that Palms were susceptible to the fungal disease.

Chair Ignatin closed public comment.

Mr. Allen clarified that the recommendation recommends the City not install another Date Palm. Dudek encouraged the replacement tree to be a shade tree, but the City can decide what type of tree should be used.

Deputy Public Works Director Martin acknowledged that this will be a continuous issue and the goal of the item is to make the public aware of the issue. Staff will continue to monitor the trees, provide updates and make recommendations to the Commission.

B. Reforestation Request – 1014 White Sails Way

*Staff recommends that Parks, Beaches and Recreation (PB&R) Commission consider the reforestation request of a City Indian Laurel Fig (*Ficus microcarpa* 'Nitida') located at 1014 White Sails Way. The applicant, Harvey Moore, has met the procedural requirements for reforestation established in City Council Policy G-1. If approved by the Commission, there will be a one-for-one replacement tree, 36-inch box, Dwarf Purple Leafed Plum (*Prunus cerasifera* 'Purple Pony') installed at the applicant's cost.*

City Arborist Nelson announced that the applicant has met all procedural requirements for reforestation. The applicant requested the tree be removed due to view issues, previous sewer damage and previous gas leak at the meter. Staff was not provided documentation indicating that there has been sewer damage and a gas leak caused by the tree. The Homeowner's Association (HOA) has the magnolia little gem as their designated parkway tree. Due to the magnolia's having Tulip Tree Scale infestation, staff requested for a variance to plant a Purple Leafed Plum "Purple Pony" tree instead.

In answer to Chair Ignatin's question, City Arborist Nelson noted that the tree in question is listed on the City's problem tree list and staff has not received any correspondence in opposition of the project. The existing tree is roughly 20-feet and the Purple Leafed Plum species reaches a height of 10- to 15-feet. He mentioned that the HOA has approved the request.

Commissioner Granoff mentioned that the HOA approved a Magnolia tree. City Arborist Nelson announced that staff can go to the HOA and clarify that the tree will be a Purple Leafed Plum tree instead.

In answer to Commissioner Archer's question, City Arborist Nelson informed the Commission that there are no other Purple Leafed Plum trees on the block currently.

In answer to Commissioner Hayes's question, City Arborist Nelson confirmed that the replacement tree is deciduous but only drops its leaves 2- to 3-months out of the year.

In answer to Vice Chair Daruty's questions, City Arborist Nelson answered that replacing the tree with a species that can be found on the block will pose the same concern regarding views, pests, and tree litter. Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar was supportive of the reforestation application because trimming the existing tree to accommodate the view would be detrimental to the tree. Also, staff supported having biodiversity on the block.

Commissioner Archer was concerned about setting a precedent on the street by allowing the installation of a small dwarf tree.

Commissioner Howald was concerned about how the Purple Leafed Plum tree will look in the neighborhood considering it is not an Evergreen tree. He supported the idea of having the HOA share their opinion regarding the installation of the Purple Leafed Plum species.

Chair Ignatin opened public comment.

Harvey Moore, the applicant, emphasized that the Ficus tree is a troublesome tree. One of the branches blocks the sidewalk, the canopy is 5-feet over the view plane and the primary goal of the HOA is to protect the view plane. The reason he wanted a smaller tree was so the City did not have to come every year and trim it to preserve his view.

Chair Ignatin closed public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Granoff; seconded by Commissioner Howald, to approve the reforestation request of a City Indian Laurel Fig (*Ficus microcarpa 'Nitida'*) located at 1014 White Sails Way. There will be a one-for-one replacement tree, 36-inch box, Dwarf Purple Leafed Plum (*Prunus cerasifera 'Purple Pony'*) installed at the applicant's cost, pending tree approval from the HOA. The motion carried by the following vote.

Ayes: Commissioner Howald, Chair Ignatin, Commissioner Archer, Commissioner Malouf, Commissioner Hayes, and Commissioner Granoff

Nays: Vice Chair Daruty

C. Appeal of Denial for Special Tree Removal Request- 1323 Ashford Lane

Staff recommends that PB&R Commission consider the appeal of staff's denial of the removal request of two Special City Lemon-Scented Gum trees located at 1323 Ashford at the intersection with Glenwood Lane. The applicant has met the procedural requirements for Special Neighborhood Tree removal request appeals established in City Council Policy G-1. At the applicant's cost, two 48-inch box Strawberry trees will be installed as the replacement trees.

Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar announced that the applicants requested the City remove two special neighborhood Gum trees due to planned landscape and construction, infrastructure damage, and safety concerns. After inspection, the trees were found healthy and stable. The City previously has done patching and asphalt ramping to the surrounding infrastructure. The applicant has received signatures from 60 percent of the neighbors in a 500-foot radius who support the project. Staff has received objection letters opposing the project from several neighbors.

In answer to Commissioner Malouf's question if there have been limb failures, Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar noted that there have been limb failures caused by wind but typically they are not large limbs. He noted that in October of 2020, a Eucalyptus tree fell at 1700 Candlestick Lane.

In answer to Chair Ignatin's questions, Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar remarked there has been no root pruning done by the City or contractors on the subject trees. He reported that the trees impregnated a utility water meter box with its roots. He shared that there have been no injuries and property damage caused by the trees.

Chair Ignatin opened public comment.

Glen Allen, a neighbor, did not support the removal of the two trees.

Matt Jacobsen, a neighbor, did not support the removal of the trees and believed removing the trees would set a precedent in the neighborhood.

Justin Wheeler, an applicant, was strongly concerned that a limb would fall in his front yard and hit his children who play there.

A representative from the applicant's construction team emphasized that due to COVID-19, many neighbors verbally expressed support of the project but would not sign the petition.

Chanel Arnold, an applicant, reemphasized that the safety of her children is the main reason to remove the tree.

Chair Ignatin closed public comment.

In answer to Chair Ignatin's questions, Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar answered that four oppositional letters were received from neighbors and 37 signatures were gathered who approved of the removal. Additional letters were received that contained a mixture of support and oppositional views of the proposal. Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar noted that the City will have to repair the damage the tree has caused to the gutter and sidewalk in the future. Currently, there are no trip hazards on the walking surface. He predicted the trees together were worth \$27,000. He predicted the cost for the removal and replacement of the two trees to be roughly \$7,000.

Vice Chair Daruty mentioned that there is ramping of the sidewalks at other locations along the street. Parks and Trees Superintendent Pekar confirmed that is correct.

Motion by Chair Ignatin, seconded by Commissioner Hayes, to Deny the appeal of staff's denial of the removal request of two Special City Lemon-Scented Gum trees located at 1323 Ashford at the intersection with Glenwood Lane. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Chair Ignatin, Vice Chair Daruty, Commissioner Archer,
Commissioner Malouf, Commissioner Hayes and Commissioner Granoff

Nays: Commissioner Howald

D. Ad Hoc Committee Appointment- Newport Ridge Park Pickleball Courts

Staff recommends that the Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission appoint three (3) commissioners to serve on the Newport Ridge Park Pickleball Courts Ad Hoc Committee to assist with conceptual design.

Director Detweiler announced that the homeowner's association (HOA) has agreed to work with the City to develop pickleball courts on an underutilized parcel of land. Staff has identified Prop 68 grant funds to partially pay for the project as well as general fund dollars proposed in the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget.

Chair Ignatin, Commissioner Malouf and Hayes volunteered to be on the Ad Hoc Committee.

In answer to Commissioner Granoff's question, Director Detweiler remarked that the proposal included eight courts. The HOA has preliminary agreed to a no-fee lease that allows six of the courts to be open to the general public and two courts dedicated to the HOA community. The City will maintain the public courts while the HOA will maintain the other two courts.

Vice Chair Daruty supported the nomination of Chair Ignatin, Commissioner Malouf and Commissioner Hayes to be on the Ad Hoc Committee.

Chair Ignatin called for public comment; seeing none public comment was closed.

Motion by Commissioner Granoff; seconded by Commissioner Daruty, to appoint commissioners Heather Ignatin, Kate Malouf, and Laird Hayes to serve on the Newport Ridge Park Pickleball Courts Ad Hoc Committee to assist with conceptual design. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

PB&R Commission / staff announcements/ Ad Hoc Committee updates or matters which Commissioner members would like placed on future agendas for further discussion (this is a non-discussion item).

Deputy Public Works Director Martin reported that on May 25th, 2021 there was a special joint meeting between the Finance Committee and the Public Works

Department. The focus of that meeting was on beach maintenance and after the meeting, the City Council approved increasing the level of service for Newport Pier, Balboa Pier, and Corona Del Mar. Staff will be adding more trash receptacles in the plazas, on the beach, and increasing staff to monitor afternoon crowds in hotspot areas. He announced on June 5th, 2021, the City will be giving away free compost to residents at the OASIS Senior Center.

In answer to Commissioner Hayes's question, Deputy Public Works Director Martin answered that the existing contract will be amended to facilitate more compost to be available to residents in future years. The amendment to the contract will also extend the contract with CR&R Incorporated for another 10-years.

Director Detweiler shared that the Grant Howald Park ribbon-cutting ceremony was successful. She reported that over 4,000 kids have registered for summer camps and staff anticipated the number to rise. Also, the movie in the park's series will begin in July of 2021 and several firework shows are being planned for the 4th of July.

Commissioner Howald expressed his appreciation to staff for their dedication to the community and providing wonderful programs for all the residents to enjoy.

Chair Ignatin opened public comment; seeing none public comment was closed.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Public comments are invited on non-agenda items generally considered to be within the subject matter jurisdiction of the PB&R Commission. Speakers must limit comments to three (3) minutes. Before speaking, we invite, but do not require, you to state your name for the record. The Commission has the discretion to extend or shorten the speakers' time limit on non-agenda items, provided the time limit adjustment is applied equally to all speakers.

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – 7:27 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Mariah Stinson, Administrative Support Specialist

Approved by: _____
Heather Ignatin, Chair