



REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
APPROVED MINUTES

Wednesday, December 11, 2013
7:00 pm

**El Cerrito City Hall
Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Management Assistant at 510-559-7001. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFT 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

1. **Roll Call 7:11pm** Present: Leslie Goldstein, Gary Hill, Seth Kaplan, Robin Mitchell, and Margo Takemiya.
Chair Manish Doshi arrived at 7:16pm
Commissioner Absent: Steve Lipson
2. **Commission / Staff Communications / Announcements** (*Informal reports on matters of general interest which are announced by the Park and Recreation Commissioners and City Staff*)
Gary Hill: Spoke on fundraising campaign for the additional parcel of land that will connect with the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area.
 - \$22,500 raised in 3 months. \$10,000 more pledged.
 - Neighbors house had a fundraiser that collected about \$4,000
 - Outreach to different organizations
 - Documentary about High School Mountain Bike League shown at Cerrito Theater solicited money for the campaign
 - Rebels with a Cause was shown on 12/7/13
 - Letters of Support are being distributed
3. **Oral Communications From The Public**
None
4. **Council Liaison Report:** Councilmember Jan Bridges (*Report on council meetings that have occurred since the last Park and Recreation Commission Meeting and other items of general interest.*)
 - Received FEMA grant for the Self Breathing Mask for the Fire Department
 - Closed session for a performance evaluation for the City Attorney
 - Reviewed how City Council interacts with Boards and Commissions. A conflict of interest was found. City Council liaison will come quarterly.
 - Update provided by the Police Chief about the Municipal codes regarding bicycles.
 - Mayor of El Cerrito is now Janet Abelson. Mayor ProTem is Rebecca Benassini.

- El Cerrito Resident was given recognition for receiving Nobel Science Award and 12/10/13 was declared “Randy Schekman Day”.
- Cardiac compression devices grant given to Fire Department
- Recognized Margo Takemiya for 8 years of service on the Park and Recreation Commission.

5. Approval of Minutes: Exhibit 1: Meeting Minutes from September 25, 2013
 Approve the September 25, 2013 Park and Recreation Commission meeting minutes.
 Motion to Approve: Moved, seconded (Takemiya/Mitchell; Ayes Commissioners Goldstein, Hill, Kaplan and Mitchell; Absent- Lipson) and carried to approve.

6. Discussion on the Reorganization of the Public Works Department: Yvetteh Ortiz, Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer

Commissioners received an overview of the Public Works Department’s reorganization including the new Operations + Environmental Services Division which is responsible for park and facility maintenance. The Department’s budget and staffing was also discussed as well as various ongoing and future projects in El Cerrito.

- Introduction of Yvetteh Ortiz, Garth Shultz & Stephen Pree.
- Overview of reorganization of the Public Works Department was given. There are two divisions in the Department: Engineering Division and the Operations + Environmental Services Division (Combines recycle waste management and maintenance division.)
- There is an active recruitment for a Senior Engineer position
- 2 budgeted vacancies in maintenance workers positions

Projects Discussed by Ortiz:

- Moeser & Ashbury pedestrian and bicycle corridor project (Federally funded project).
- Central & Liberty Streetscape project funded by 2 grants and Measure A. This project is designed to improve walking and bicycle routes. Making the sidewalks ADA compliant, installing shared roadway bicycle markings, and pedestrian level lighting.
- Ohlone Greenway Crossing Improvements Project
- Ohlone Natural Area and Garden Project
- BART project close to completion (ahead of schedule)
- Huber Park (funded by WW) has been put on hold for projects with tight deadlines. New Senior Engineer position will give priority to the Huber Park projects. There is community interest in resurfacing bottom playfield, redoing the picnic facilities, ADA improvements, and clubhouse & pathway improvements. Scope of work will be submitted to East Bay Region Parks.

Jones explained the Tassajara renovation project:

- Asbestos tiles removed, installing new epoxy floor, and painting walls. The container on site is storage for the project which is set to wrap up next week.

Doshi thanked Ortiz and the Public Works Department for their hard work and City improvements.

Jones: Addressed questions regarding the Portola Middle School area

7. Discussion on Parks and Facility Maintenance Initiatives by the Operations + Environmental Services Division: Garth Schultz, Operations + Environmental Services Division Manager

Discussion topics to include play field maintenance and long term planning for park and facility maintenance.

Schultz discussed El Cerrito Playfields: increased usage, drainage issues, balding, and irrigation problems.

Schedule for short term field improvements:

- Outfield bare patches, seeding etc
- Partnership with sports leagues:
El Cerrito Youth Baseball for infield renovations: Harding, Canyon Trail & Castro
- Future Planning- asses current needs, seek input from community and commissioners, develop long-term plan for facility maintenance (parks & clubhouses)
- Report problems to Laureteen Brazil at (510) 215-4369

Commissioners Items of Concern:

- Manish thanked the Department for their hard work, comments on growth in El Cerrito
- Hill suggested that the City reviews the process of which the connecting trails in El Cerrito are designed, constructed and maintained with community input.

8. Discussion and Possible Approval of a Letter Supporting the City's Application to the *Environmental Solutions for Communities Grant Program*: Gary Hill, Parks and Recreation Commissioner
Exhibit 2: Sample Letter of Support

Background information on the grant application process for the purchase of the Madera Hillside Property from the Trust for Public Land was discussed.

Hill suggests that the Commission send a letter of support for the City of El Cerrito's application to the Environmental Solutions for Communities grant program for the Uniting the Hillside Natural Area project. The letter was distributed to Commissioners. The letter is in support of the City of El Cerrito's application for a total of \$80,000 in grant monies: \$60,000 for acquisition \$20,000 for planning process.

Kaplan: offered a correction to the letter

Hill: Proposed to strike line beginning with "however."

Hill proposed to strike paragraph 4 entirely. Commissioners (Goldstein, Kaplan, Robin Mitchell, Takemiya, and Doshi) agreed.

Commissioners discussed about the grant funding, private funding, and WW Funds.

Commissioners may choose to draft a letter of support for the grant and authorize Chair Doshi to sign it on their behalf.

Motion: Mitchell authorize Chair Doshi to sign amended letter of support for the grant on their behalf as amended”

Motion to Approve as amended: Moved, (Mitchell; Ayes Commissioners Goldstein, Hill, Kaplan, Doshi and Takemiya; Absent- Lipson) and carried to approve.

9. Recreation Department Update: Christopher Jones, Recreation Director (*Update on items of interest in the Recreation Department*)

- Saturday, December 14th Annual Pancake Breakfast also drop-off point for the Fire Department Toy Drive.
- December 17th Council Meeting request for authorization to replace Swim Center heaters.
- Recreation Department now on Twitter @EICerritoREC
- Holiday Hours Closed 12/24/13-01/06/14 except 12/30/13
- There will be modified Swim Center hours
- There will be further modified Senior Center hours
- Holiday Break Camp will run 12/23/2013, 12/26/2013, 12/27/2013, 12/30/2013, 01/02/2014, and 01/03/2014.
- 12/12/13 main power will be off at Community Center so that we can go live with the Solar panels. Pool will be closed 8:00am-5:00pm.
- PG&E Will be taking back property next to Casa Cerrito Preschool. PG&E preparing for an upgrade and will need to utilize that land. 8-10ft decorative wall between Casa and PG&E.
- Commissioner Takemiya was recognized for her 8 years of services and presented with various City of El Cerrito memorabilia.
- Winter Spring Brochure digital copy online will be in mail soon
- Final Joint-use agreement was approved by City Manager

10. Items For Next Agenda

- Update on Portola Site
- Update on the Urban Greening plan

11. Meeting Adjournment at 8:31pm

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