

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**Virtual – Zoom meeting**

**March 22, 2021**

**4:00 PM**

**CONTENTS**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 PM.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Present: Chair Greenberg, Weiner, Turkmany, Karger, McCarthy, and Cullen

Absent: Nicholson\*

Commissioner Nicholson arrived at 4:07 PM.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner McCarthy moved to approve the January 25, 2021 minutes as written and the February 22, 2021 minutes with the following correction submitted via email on March 19, 2021.

P. 3, paragraph 5, sentence 5 – Corrected \$16M to \$13.8M, to read “The pool opened in March 2019 at a cost of \$13.8M to build, not including the land.”

Commissioner Karger seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ayes: Chair Greenberg, McCarthy, Turkmany, Karger, and Cullen

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Nicholson\*

**D. CEREMONIAL**

None

Commissioners Weiner and McCarthy confirmed that Ryan Beaupain had been recognized at a City Council meeting for his successful tree donation effort.

**E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit)**

Chair Greenberg opened the floor to audience participation. Seeing none, the floor was closed.

**F. GENERAL BUSINESS –**

Prior to discussing the workplan items, the new template for project updates was reviewed. Each ad-hoc committee will be responsible for preparing a monthly written update that will be attached to each agenda. Commissioner McCarthy offered some suggestions that will be incorporated into the template.

Chair Greenberg asked if there would be a Salute to the Troops event. Director Leyman replied that there is a preliminary plan for a shortened summer Concert in the Park series that will begin no sooner than August.

Discussion of 2021 Workplan Items:

**Donation Policy and Programs – (Turkmany, Karger)**

Director Leyman will be working with the City Attorney on the Legacy Gift legal language. Commissioner Karger has found some language from a city in San Diego and is looking at how to incorporate that into the current policy. The Parks Amenity Catalog will be updated when the inventory and replacement prioritization is complete. Military Recognition Wall – Public Works Engineer, Gil Gamboa has spoken with Ish Medrano, retired Public Works Engineer and designer of the Veterans Memorial, to gain some insight on materials, vendors, cost, etc. Mr. Medrano is gathering information.

**PMP Project Cost Estimates: P&R Maintenance and Replacement Budgeting – (Weiner, McCarthy)** Commissioner Weiner reported that this item has three parts. 1) cost of new projects proposed in the Parks Master Plan, 2) cost of maintenance and schedule of replacement for new projects, 3) maintenance costs and replacement schedule for existing facilities and amenities. He added that he may not have a lot of updates in the next few months but that as the individual projects and inventories are completed, more information will become available. The goal is to have these costs built into the budget and get an idea of how to fund these items in the future. Sr. Recreation Manager (SRM) Vincent offered to do a Parks and Recreation budget overview for the commission at a future meeting.

Commissioner McCarthy mentioned that the subject of restroom facilities came up multiple times in the community outreach and she wondered where they fall in terms of the budget. SRM Vincent stated that GoReach repair requests are regularly reviewed and prioritized by Public Works. Director Leyman recommended for anyone who would like to report a needed repair, to download the GoReach app. Chair Greenberg added that Public Works is very responsive to GoReach requests but he feels that very few people are aware of the app. He suggested that stickers with QR codes might help to increase awareness. Commissioner McCarthy suggested adding the information to new signs as old ones get replaced.

**Exploring the feasibility of developing an aquatic center – (McCarthy, Weiner, Cullen)**

Commissioner McCarthy reported that the ad-hoc committee had four meetings, including with Matt Wunder, who heads the Da Vinci Schools in El Segundo and Sherry Kramer, who did a lot of private fundraising for the facility. The ad-hoc committee will be touring the Redondo Union pool next. They reviewed the Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) aquatic facility feasibility study and would like to meet with BCHD reps, if possible. It is important to consider which site is most feasible. The committee would like to look at more information on the Begg site, and meet regarding the parking area adjacent to Village Field. The ad-hoc committee plans to tour the Torrance Aquatic Center and may visit Crespi Carmelite High School in Encino to view their new aquatic center. Commissioner Turkmany mentioned that Notre Dame High School in the Valley also has a new facility and he can coordinate a tour. Commissioner Weiner added that the committee had spoken with the architectural firm that built the El Segundo center and they were given great information that will enable them to predict costs. Chair Greenberg hopes that the committee is creating a central repository of the all the information gathered so that it can be used in the future as the project moves along. Commissioner Weiner is concerned that the scope of the project has not been established so the information being gathered now is mostly for comparison purposes. Commissioner McCarthy is keeping records of every meeting. As far as next steps for City Council, Director Leyman stated that once cost information, design options, and potential

location recommendations are established, then City Council can give direction on whether or not to further explore and move forward with outreach, etc.

**Explore acquiring Armory land** – (Greenberg, McCarthy) Chair Greenberg shared a straw man presentation roughly outlining the project. The parking lot that is adjacent to Public Works is owned by the Armory and currently shared during the day with Public Works. In 1948 the City gave 11.4 acres of land to the California National Guard. In 1963 the National Guard returned 6 acres to the City and in 1970 the City gained one additional acre when property lines were redrawn. In 1989 the National Guard considered selling some of its Southern California properties, including Manhattan Beach to raise money to modernize other facilities. The contact person for the armory has been established by Director Leyman. Chair Greenberg has also identified Major General David Baldwin as a primary contact. The intention is to draft a letter from Mayor Hadley to Major General Baldwin to establish contact. This draft will need to go through internal approvals before reaching Mayor Hadley. Directory Leyman stated that the City Manager would need to review and then it would likely be placed on a council agenda as a consent item. Chair Greenberg stated that ideally there would be a follow up meeting between Mayor Hadley and Major General Baldwin to discuss.

**Exploring Repurposing the Pay N Play Racquetball Courts**– (Karger, Turkmany) Commissioner Karger shared a Powerpoint presentation showing the current condition of the Pay-N-Play Racquetball court. The ad-hoc committee and staff met on-site.

Background: The City entered into a 35 year sublease agreement with Pay-N-Play Racquetball of America. The initial agreement expires December 31, 2021, with an option to renew for 2 consecutive 10 year terms under the same terms and conditions. The facility was to be constructed, operated and maintained by the tenant, at no cost to the City. The City receives a percentage of gross receipts.

Key Issues:

Current status of lease:

- 1) Need to determine if the tenant is in breach of the contract. Director Leyman is to review with the City Attorney.
- 2) Rent: Are rent payments current? – Director Leyman to confirm with Accounts Receivable
- 3) Use: Is the tenant promoting the facility in a commercially sound manner as to maximize gross receipts?
- 4) Maintenance – is the building being maintained to City standards? Recreation Supervisor, Michael Hudak did a site inspection with the Facilities Supervisor.

What is the best use of the property if the City can reacquire?

- 1) Keep the building as is and renovate for alternative uses (class rooms, ½ courts, indoor pickleball)
- 2) Tear down the building for outdoor use (basketball courts, tennis, pickleball, dog run)

*Cost Estimates for repair:*

The initial rough estimate to bring the building up to the City's normal standards would be \$30,000 for outside paint, \$15,000-\$20,000 for inside paint/repairs and \$4,000 for window replacement. Outside cracks will need further assessment.

Supervisor Hudak added that everything in the building is cement so tearing down the inner

walls would not be likely. The repair of the cracks are mostly cosmetic and does not look like structural damage. No inspection of the roof was done. No evidence of found of leaks on the inside, but the lighting was poor.

Commissioner McCarthy asked if the courts are being used. Supervisor Hudak reported that the courts do get used. They were closed because of COVID but have recently reopened. He added that lease payment are not up to date at present. Commissioner Greenberg added that gross receipts have been steadily declining over the years.

Commissioner Greenberg stated that the current lease term expires this year and so far, the tenant hasn't expressed a desire to renew for another 10 years. If the tenant does want to renew, the City should require the building be brought up to standard. Commissioner Turkmany added that the commission needs to know the City's stance.

Commissioner Nicholson recommends sending a letter, as soon as possible to the tenant, stating that the renewal is coming up, with list of things that need to be done to renew.

Commissioner Greenberg asked who the tenant would contact regarding renewing the contract. Director Leyman stated that for this particular contract, it would be Parks & Rec. He added that the City Attorney needs to weigh in on the City's options first. Commissioner Weiner reiterated that this is a time sensitive issue because of the expiration date of the contract. Commissioner Karger confirmed that the tenant needs to communicate his intention to renew no later than six months before the expiration of the contract. Chair Greenberg suggested having a conversation with the tenant before the six month deadline to let him know what might be required. Director Leyman stated that the relationship with the tenant has always been collaborative and in good faith, and will stay that way.

**Sand Dune Park Building-** Commissioner Nicholson reminded the commission that one option is to work with Studio Shed to install a new office space. This option would require the existing building which includes bathrooms and storage space, to be cleaned and upgraded. The office space could be installed for approximately \$60,000. The cost of upgrades to the existing building are not yet known. SRM Vincent reached out to another company for a 30' X 16' building (no restrooms). The estimate came back at about \$250,000, not including a foundation. Another alternative is to use repurposed freight containers so that will be explored. The addition would be not be adjoined to the existing building. The ad-hoc committee is currently considering structures that are 350-500 square feet. SRM Vincent clarified that whatever is put there will need to complement the existing facility. It should not look like facilities are just being dropped in next to each other. If the existing facility needs to be torn down, that will push the cost to the \$500,000 range for a pre-manufactured structure that can be installed on site. ADA upgrades would need to be addressed.

#### **Polliwog Park Enhancements – (McCarthy, Karger)**

NFC - SRM Vincent stated that staff will meet on-site with the building official and Public Works Engineer to determine the feasibility of installing the fitness equipment at the current Polliwog Park exercise area site.

Begg Field – staff has met with user groups who have expressed some interest in donating funds to re-turf the field in exchange for dedicated field time. Estimated cost for synthetic turf is \$1,000,000 (not including fencing and lighting). The northwest corner of the field may be a good place for a smaller Pony field which would make the area currently being

considered for a community garden, an ideal place for seating. Staff will also be meeting with the school district to determine their desired uses for the area. Staff would like to bring this item back to the April meeting for commission recommendations for City Council.

Playground replacement update – 90% completion plans have been submitted to the building division for approval. Still working on completion by the end of 2021/early 2022. Funding is still a work in progress and until the bid packages are received they cannot be finalized. In the meantime, funding has been identified that may be redirected from other projects and add-alternates are identified in the project if the total needs to be reduced.

Concert Pavilion – This project was placed on hold for this fiscal year by City Council.

**Dog Parks and Community Parkettes** – (Weiner) Commissioner Weiner reported that three or four location options have been identified and two of them are on school district property. Director Leyman and SRM Vincent will be meeting with the district to determine feasibility. For the non-district owned property located near residences, the sub-committee hopes to have a better understanding of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process by the next meeting. Commissioner Weiner will also be looking at the existing dog parks and how they might be improved. Chair Greenberg asked if anyone had thought of approaching the residents living near the 6<sup>th</sup> and Aviation location to gauge interest. Commissioner Weiner stated that he needs to better understand the public outreach protocol. The City has a process for public outreach and door knocking is not generally employed. Commissioner Nicholson added that in his experience, a location would be identified, the neighbors would be noticed and a meeting would be held to discuss.

**Nature Areas and Trails** – (Greenberg, McCarthy, Turkmany) Chair Greenberg shared a presentation.

Live Oak Park Nature Areas – The ad-hoc committee identified the area on the west side of Live Oak Park that acts as a buffer between the park and the residential area. The total amounts to about an acre of land. For consideration, the area was separated into zones with different topography. All of the areas are sloped and some are more accessible and inviting than others.

Sand Dune Park – The presentation outlined the fencing and the ad-hoc committee suggests making the area more inviting instead of removing the fencing. The objective is to make the nature areas more accessible and inviting so Chair Greenberg suggested a pilot project that would allow the commission to evaluate the usage and enjoyment of the nature areas if the areas were opened up. The pilot proposal includes:

- Open the four existing gates daily during park hours. Lock the gates at night. (Sand Dune Park Staff)
- Remove existing signage stating: “Keep Out. No Trail”
- Clean up landscaping to remove low-lying brush, stumps and other prominent hazards (Partner with Scout groups)
- Add signage stating: “Unmaintained nature area. Enjoy at your own risk. Parents should supervise children at all times.” Include hours

Estimated cost is \$200 for new signage.

The ad-hoc committee is recommending taking no immediate action at Live Oak Park as those areas are already open and children are using the area for play. To move forward with removing fencing there is likely to be resistance from the surrounding homeowners.

The committee recommends moving forward with the pilot program to see if people are enjoying the increased access. If so, the next step would be to start the process of removing some fencing at Sand Dune Park and taking another look at Live Oak to see if fencing should be removed.

Commissioner McCarthy added that there are obvious areas where some cleanup is necessary and would be an easy project to work on with the Scouts.

Commissioner Nicholson is not optimistic of the residents supporting the removal of the fences but likes the idea of opening the gates during park hours.

Next steps: SRM Vincent to schedule a meeting with Lt. Harrod and the City's risk manager to view the area.

Commissioner Nicholson suggested reaching out to Mayor Hadley, as she lives very near there, and walk her through the ad-hoc committee's thoughts.

**El Porto Family Park** (Greenberg, McCarthy, Turkmany) – Chair Greenberg shared a presentation outlining the area under consideration. The vision is for the northern triangular area to be a more passive area with benches and open areas, and the southern triangular area to be the more active area with a play structure. There may also be enough area to add a dog run on either the northern or eastern perimeter. In an informal survey of passersby, there was a general positive response to upgrading the area. Commissioner McCarthy recommended reclaiming the dirt path that runs east/west, since there is an existing paved pathway to the bike path immediately adjacent.

A meeting was held with Nate from Great Western Playground. Nate will be coming back with two different alternatives (including costs) for play equipment and a dog run for the south section and a plan for shade and benches for the north section.

Director Leyman will be reaching out to the County contact in the next few days.

## **G. STAFF ITEMS**

Director Leyman gave an update on recent City Council actions including the items below that are related to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Bruce's Beach Task Force has been disbanded but two of the subcommittees remain (Historical, Art project). \$350,000 was allocated from the Public Art Trust Fund for the new art project. Two new plaques will be installed at the site, staff is working with the historical committee on the plaques. The Resolution of Apology was continued to a future meeting.

City Hall will reopen for appointments only, on April 12. City Council is looking to open City Council meetings, but have not set a date.

Special Events – things are opening up quickly. Staff is looking at tentative dates in late Summer and Fall but cannot make any concrete plans until gatherings are permissible. Events have been included in the Fiscal 2021/2022 budget.

SRM Vincent – All youth sports have reopened, including games. Adult sports have also opened and Kickball and softball adult leagues will be starting in the next two months.

Expanding pickleball to two courts at Manhattan Heights. The department is working with MBUSD to open all fields. The Older Adults Program is looking into expanding operations for senior programs outdoors. Registration opened today for Spring and is almost full due to

our limited capacity. Summer Camp registration will begin on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Parks are still being utilized for fitness classes. Beach Volleyball courts are not open yet for organized groups, only drop in for now.

#### **H. COMMISSION ITEMS**

Older Adult Program update – Commissioner McCarthy asked about honoring the students delivering Senior Grams at a City Council meeting. Director Leyman has reached out to the City Clerk and is waiting for a reply.

Student update – Commissioner Cullen reported that school will go back to in-person learning on a hybrid system as early as March 29<sup>th</sup>. Every class will be only an hour long. Students will be in class on their computers on zoom. April 12<sup>th</sup> back in school after Spring Break. A student survey revealed that only about 35% of students want to go back on campus. Sports are reopening. There will be a swim meet against Redondo Union this weekend. It will be the first swim meet to be held in almost a year. The meet is not open to spectators. It will be open to athletes and coaches only.

MBUSD update – Chair Greenberg – The MBUSD rep to the commission is requested to present a report once a year at a school board meeting. This year Commissioner Cullen attended and did a great job updating the Board on commission accomplishments. The new gym has opened for business. Chair Greenberg encouraged everyone to watch the virtual tour. Volleyball and basketball are now practicing in the gym.

#### **I. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Nicholson moved to adjourn. Commissioner Cullen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ayes: Greenberg, Weiner, McCarthy, Turkmany, Karger, Nicholson and Cullen

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm to Monday, April 26, 2021.