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CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

January 28, 2008
6:30 P.M.

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ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Fitzpatrick, Gill, Harris, Lear, Murray, Nicholson and Shambaugh

Absent: None

Others Present: Director of Parks and Recreation Richard Gill, Recreation Services Manager Idris J. Al-Oboudi, Recreation Services Manager Mark Leyman, and Recording Secretary Jane Grace

AGENDA CHANGES

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October 1, 2007 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting were approved as written (MSC: Nicholson/Harris – Unanimous).

Commissioner Gill indicated that the minutes of the December 3, 2007 Commission/FSP meeting were accurate but suggested that a great deal of community discussion was excluded. He and Commissioner Nicholson indicated that there was a great deal of discussion regarding Polliwog Park, a skate park and neighbor’s concerns regarding recreation center use.

Mr. Gill indicated that Lindy Coe-Juell, Assistant to the City Manager, was present at the meeting and would be reporting on all of the community comments to the City Council in a future meeting.

The minutes of the December 3, 2007 Parks and Recreation Meeting were approved as written, keeping in mind that the community comments would be forwarded to City Council at a future meeting. (MSC: Nicholson/Gill – Unanimous).

CEREMONIAL

Mr. Gill reported that the Parks and Recreation Department recently conducted a “Rename the Class Brochure” contest and is presenting an award to Manhattan Beach resident Doug McMillan, winner of the contest, who submitted the name “Manhappenings.” Mr. McMillan was not able to attend the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

Recreation Services Manager Al-Oboudi reported that the Manhattan Beach class brochure “Manhappenings” received recognition from LERN, a national Learning Resources Network, for an outstanding example of a class brochure.

GENERAL BUSINESS

08/0128.1 – Presentation of “Improving the Youth Sports Experience”

Mr. Gill introduced Recreation Services Managers Idris Al-Oboudi and Mark Leyman who will report on the CPRS (California Parks and Recreation Society) Youth Sports Initiative. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that in 2004 he was asked to chair the first task force for enhancing youth sports in California and the chairmanship has since changed to Mark Leyman who continues to make nationwide presentations.

Mr. Al-Oboudi and Mr. Leyman reviewed the CPRS NAYS (National Alliance of Youth Sports) Youth Sports Initiative Framework, including the values and standards for youth sports fitness. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that adopting the initiative vision “*We create positive youth sports experience, better sports for kids, better kids for life*” and communicating it to participants, parents, coaches and key community stakeholders helps professionalize youth sports in Manhattan Beach. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the City of Manhattan Beach has taken initiatives in all of the following missions:

- Provide recreational youth sports opportunities
- Increase youth sports participation
- Teach fair play and good sportsmanship
- Facilitate coach/parent training and development
- Improve youth fitness and nutrition
- Reduce obesity in youth
- Strengthen youth sports image and value to the community
- Support professional growth in youth sports leadership

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the City of Manhattan Beach has been working with the California Parks and Recreation Society and NAYS to be a model community in implementing youth sports. He reported that there is a direct correlation between recreation, open space, activity, diet and exercise to health and wellness and self esteem and the City of Manhattan Beach continues to work diligently to make sure that our open spaces are available and opportunities and partnerships continue to enhance the ability of our youth to live better lives.

Mr. Leyman reported that implementing the NAYS program can make significant changes and provide the tools to create a culture for providing a positive youth experience. It focuses on the individual first, not a win-at-all-cost attitude; it holds people accountable for their behavior, creates an expectation of standards and empowers parents to tell others of their expectations. The City has been forming partnerships and sharing this information with AYSO, Manhattan Beach Little League, Manhattan Beach Youth Basketball, Mira Costa Pony Baseball, South Bay Soccer Club, MB Surf and Sand and the Manhattan Beach School District. Mr. Leyman reported that Manhattan Beach Youth Basketball, South Bay Soccer Club and MB Surf and Sand Soccer have already agreed that 100% of their parents will go through the NAYS training when they register for next season. Parks and Recreation sports supervisors and part-time staff have already gone through the NAYS training.

Mr. Al-Oboudi suggested that the City should implement the following community recommendations:

1. Adopt the recommended community philosophy that makes youth sports safe and positive.
2. Appoint a professional youth sports administrator to oversee the entire youth sports program (Recreation Services Manager Mark Leyman)
3. Hold people accountable for their behavior

During a discussion among the Commissioners, the following points were made:

1. Commissioner Nicholson inquired whether department staff is on site when user groups are on City fields. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that recreation staff opens and closes the facility and does rounds throughout the day to check on activities at the facilities.
2. Commissioner Gill suggested that it is a wonderful and much needed program and inquired whether it should be mandatory for field users. Mr. Al-Oboudi suggested that it is a practical idea but reported that user groups have a fear of interference into their program. Mr. Leyman indicated that various boards are resistant to the program but are open to having the City present at their meetings to discuss the program. He suggested that the City would be in agreement with the various sports organizations as long as they adopt the same code of ethics and minimum standards as suggested in the NAYS program.
3. Commissioner Murray is in agreement with Commissioner Gill, suggesting that a timeline should be set, expecting all field users to get on board with the NAYS program within the year.
4. Director Gill reported that the adoption of this program is subject to City Council approval and as we get buy-in from the organizations, City Council might be more apt to approve the program.
5. Commissioner Harris inquired whether the parents would have to be certified in every sport they participate. Mr. Leyman reported that it is an annual certification that would cover all sports.
6. Ms. Harris feels that the program is necessary but suggested that some of the definitions used in the program (i.e. “be a good spectator” and “meet the needs of the child”) are subjective and difficult to administer. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the parents would be given a list of examples of model behaviors at parent orientation and after discussions would sign an agreement stating that they understand what being a positive parent means.
7. Commissioner Fitzpatrick suggested that the Smart Start program is important, making sure the children are enjoying the activities which they are participating in. She inquired whether the program has been integrated into our school district/physical education. Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the school district is not involved in the program but some of our class contractors have adopted the program.

8. Commissioner Nicholson suggested that we might be starting kids in organized sports too soon, that they might not be ready from a motor and social skills standpoint. Commission Gill suggested that there is a difference between whether a parent forces a child to play and if the child chooses to play. Commissioner Harris reported that organized physical education is becoming more scarce and parents need to give their children a model to follow by being active and then give them choices to participate in organized activities.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

REPORTS

Commission Attendance at City Events

Commissioner Nicholson reported that the Holiday Crafts Night was great fun and an excellent family oriented program.

Commissioner Gill suggested that the Pumpkin Races were too long, with areas when no one was racing. It was suggested that some of the lag time was consumed by participants preparing their pumpkins for racing. Commissioner Harris indicated that it has been suggested that next year it might be required that the pumpkins all be prepared by a certain time. Commissioner Nicholson suggested that rules for the construction of the pumpkins were inconsistent and should be made clearer to the participants. The Commissioners all agreed that it was a terrific event with a nice family feel.

Commissioner Murray reported that the Mayor's Annual Golf Tournament and the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce are joining forces for one golf tournament in May. Anyone interested in participating in the tournament or sponsoring/volunteering for the event should contact Commissioner Murray.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.