

DRAFT

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH MINUTES OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

June 22, 2009
6:30 P.M.

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ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Fitzpatrick, Gill, Murray, Nicholson and Rosenthal

Absent: Commissioners Cajka and Harris

Others Present: Director of Parks and Recreation Richard Gill, Recreation Services Manager Idris Al-Oboudi, Recreation Supervisor Michael Brooke and Recording Secretary Jane Grace

AGENDA CHANGES

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 27, 2009

The minutes of the April 27, 2009 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting were approved as written.

CEREMONIAL

Richard Gill presented a certificate of appreciation from City Council to Commissioner Ned Gill for his year of service as Commission Chair.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

GENERAL BUSINESS

09/0622.1 – Selection of 2009/2010 Parks and Recreation Commission Officers

Mr. Gill reported that annually, the Parks and Recreation Commission is required to select a Chair and Vice Chair for the Commission.

In the past, officers have been selected on a seniority basis. Mr. Gill reported Vice Chair Nicholson would be next in line to serve as Chair, followed by Commissioner Murray. Although

this has been the practice in the past, it is not the rule. The Commission has the right to choose any member of the Commission they feel is most qualified.

A motion was made to nominate Commissioner Nicholson as Commission Chair.
(MSC: Gill/Murray – Unanimous)

A motion was made to nominate Commissioner Murray as Commission Vice Chair.
(MSC: Nicholson/Gill – Unanimous)

09/0622.2 – Consideration of Additional On-Leash Dog Access Along Specific Pathways in Polliwog Park

Recreation Supervisor Michael Brooke reported that the topic under consideration is the expansion of the current on-leash dog access area on the west side of Polliwog Park; the proposed expansion is near Premier Little League Field and along the southern path of the park near Manhattan Beach Blvd. Mr. Brooke reported that dog access will still be prohibited in and around the play areas, amphitheatre and historical house.

Mr. Brooke reported that Parks and Recreation staff conducted community outreach regarding needed dog committee members. A press release was sent on November 26, 2008 inviting new committee members resulting in four new members of the committee (Community Dog Advisory Committee).

Mr. Brooke reported that extensive notification to the community was pursued in the preparation of the new proposal for expansion of the current on-leash dog access area on the west side of Polliwog Park. A public notice was created, identifying proposed areas of expansion and sent on April 17, 2009 to all residents surrounding Polliwog Park. The notice listed the date, time and location for the May 5, 2009 Community Dog Advisory Committee meeting, as well as information regarding the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting on June 22, 2009. The notice was also posted on the city website. None of the general public attended the May 5 committee meeting and only two e-mails and a phone call (promising e-mails) indicating concerns were received by staff.

Mr. Brooke reported that the costs of the proposed expansion would be a total of \$1,450:

- Two (2) Mutt Mitt Stations - \$400
- Four (4) Signs - \$400
- One (1) Customized Stencil (for marking path) - \$200
- Marking of Authorized Pathways - \$450

Mr. Brooke reported that staff contacted the middle school principal regarding the proposed expansion of on-leash dog access at Polliwog Park. They agreed that weekday interactions by students for fitness and exercise classes would be minimal since most dog owners walk before 7:30 a.m. and after 4:00 p.m.

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

- Commissioner Gill inquired about how much the existing on-leash dog path in Polliwog Park is used. Mr. Brooke reported that staff refills the mutt mitts at least once a week and we regularly see people using the path, more often than not.
- Commissioner Gill inquired whether the dog path will interfere with special events such as Concerts in the Park. Mr. Brooke reported that signage would be posted prohibiting dog access during special events such as the concerts.
- Commissioner Fitzpatrick asked if there had been many complaints voiced about the current on-leash dog access area on the west side of Polliwog Park since its opening. Mr. Brooke indicated that no complaints have been received.
- Commissioner Fitzpatrick inquired if people stay on the designated pathway. Mr. Brooke indicated that most people stay on the pathway, generally coming from Premier field and exiting out onto Manhattan Beach Boulevard. He indicated that some people will gravitate towards Redondo Avenue, using the pathway that is being proposed this evening.
- Commissioner Fitzpatrick inquired about the content of the e-mails received voicing concerns about the proposal.

Mr. Al-Oboudi reported that the e-mails and phone calls expressed concerns about the increase of dogs in Polliwog Park. They voiced concerns about dogs in the play areas and special events and were happy to hear the new proposals will not allow dogs in the play area or during special events in the park. They also voiced their concerns about dog owners and their ability to handle their own dogs; and about dogs disturbing runners and disc golf participants. Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that after talking with those concerned and explaining the proposal, the majority of their concerns were alleviated; however, some are still in opposition.

- Commissioner Nicholson indicated that a resident had requested that we place more trash cans for the disposal of used mutt-mitts along the proposed pathways. Mr. Al-Oboudi indicated that there are a tremendous amount of trash cans in Polliwog Park but if we find the need to replace or increase the number, we will do so.
- Commissioner Gill suggested that if the pathways are approved and successful it might be a good idea to place a water fountain for dogs along the pathway. Mr. Al-Oboudi suggested that a water fountain for dogs might be obtained through the City's donation program.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Betsy Calkins, Manhattan Beach resident, reported that she walks her dog through Polliwog Park regularly and is very impressed with staff's thoughtful approach to dog issues in the parks. Ms. Calkins indicated that she is a dog trainer and would like to confirm that getting dogs outside and exercising, spending time with their owners and socializing is all a plus as far as the cost of having dogs in the community.

A motion was made to recommend to City Council the approval of an on-leash dog access for the pathways along the southern edge of Polliwog Park (near Manhattan Beach Blvd.) and the pathway around Premier Field. (MSG: Gill/Murray – Unanimous)

COMMISSION ITEMS

Funding for Movies on the Beach

Commissioner Fitzpatrick reported that we have some interest in sponsorship for Movies on the Beach and fairly confident that we will be able to fund two movies on the beach. She reported that to date we have sponsorship commitments from:

- Civic Couch - Bill Glavin and Friends (\$5,000)
- Shellback – Bob Beverly (\$1,000)
- Rock ‘n Fish – Mike Zislis (\$1,000)
- LOOK Optometry – Les Silverman (\$1,000)

Commissioner Murray reported that the Mr. Glavin would like to do the first movie with top recognition; they are planning games for the children and possibly fund raising for Civic Couch as well as other movie dates. Commissioner Gill questioned whether the fundraising would be appropriate at a City event. Commissioner Murray indicated that Mr. Glavin would be meeting with City staff regarding these issues. Commissioner Fitzpatrick suggested that she and Commissioner Murray meet with Mr. Glavin to discuss sponsorship issues for Movies on the Beach.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick indicated that the North Manhattan businesses are interested in possibly having a Movie on the Beach at the north end and Commissioner Murray is talking to the Manhattan Beach Lodging Association regarding sponsorship.

A motion was made for a sub-committee of Commissioners, Murray, Fitzpatrick and Nicholson to work with the City of Manhattan Beach Parks and Recreation Department to produce two “Movies on the Beach.” (MSC: Nicholson/Murray – Unanimous)

Commissioner Rosenthal suggested that the Commission contact the Mira Costa High School newspaper to promote a movie we may conduct in September.

Senior Advisory Committee Representation

Mr. Gill reported that the Senior Advisory Committee is a group of seniors represented by the Joslyn and Manhattan Heights senior clubs as well as members at large. They meet the third Tuesday of every month at 2:00 p.m. in the Joslyn Center to try to progress the ideas and activities for the seniors. They are asking for a representative from the Parks and Recreation Commission to attend their meetings on a regular basis and report back to the Commission.

Commissioner Nicholson volunteered to represent the Commission at the Senior Advisory Committee meetings and Commissioner Murray volunteered to be an alternate representative to Commissioner Nicholson.

Begg Pool Kickoff Party

Commissioner Murray congratulated the parks and recreation staff on a terrific Begg Pool Kickoff Party.

Civic Couch Meetings

Commissioner Murray reported that the Civic Couch is really supporting the community and parks and recreation and will be meeting with the seniors and teens at Manhattan Heights to determine what they will be providing, i.e. painting, Halloween party. Commissioner Murray recommended that the Commissioners attend the Civic Couch meetings.

Foundation Formation

Commissioner Nicholson inquired if there was any progress on meetings regarding the formation of a non-profit foundation. Commissioner Murray reported that she and Commissioner Cajka met with Dr. Thomas in San Clemente. Dr. Thomas explained that their foundation is their own entity who supports the parks and recreation department. He explained that with a foundation, donations (i.e. to Movies on the Beach) could be used as a tax write-off. Dr. Thomas then facilitated the paperwork to help us establish a foundation and board members (Brad Jacobson and Kathleen Paralusz from Civic Couch and Deirdre Murray and Tom Cajka) were selected for a foundation named the Manhattan Beach Community Foundation.

Commissioners Nicholson, Gill and Fitzpatrick expressed their displeasure that they were not informed of the formation of this foundation, indicating that a sub-committee was formed to investigate the formation of a foundation and report back to the entire Commission on their findings. Commissioner Gill suggested that the formation of a foundation should include a mission statement and approval from the entire Commission. Commissioner Murray asked that the Commission wait until Commissioner Cajka is also present to discuss the matter.

Commissioner Nicholson suggested that the sub-committee was to meet with Dr. Thomas in San Clamente and report back to the Commission with a recommendation on how we might go forward. He suggested that this topic be placed on the July 27, 2009 Parks and Recreation Commission and that Commissioners Murray and Cajka report on the information received at the meeting with Dr. Thomas in San Clamente.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.