



**MINUTES
RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2017
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBER
7:30PM**

Call to Order

Chair John Smith called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Cohen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

The following persons were recorded in attendance by the Recording Secretary:

Present: Chair John Smith, Vice Chair Lori Brown, Commissioner Deborah Cohen, Commissioner Albin Gielicz, Commissioner Maryanne LaGuardia, Commissioner Kurt Schwengel, Commissioner Alan Toy

Absent: All Commissioners were present

Also present: Karen Ginsberg, Director, Community & Cultural Services
Danielle Noble, Assistant Director, Community & Cultural Services
Anne Deasey, Executive Administrative Assistant

1. **Special Agenda Items – None.**
2. **Reports of Staff/Members -**
 - A. Director's Report: After reminding the Commissioners that Form 700s are due April 3, Ms. Ginsberg reviewed upcoming events and items of interest on the Council agenda, and gave highlights of the successful Parks Day events on February 25. She relayed information from Hector Kistemann, Public Landscape Manager, on the development of systematic park tree planting plans, which in 2017 will include Virginia Avenue, Ashland, Hotchkiss, Euclid, Douglas and Goose Egg Parks. Ms. Ginsberg also notified the Commissioners of efforts to build a bike center on residual land owned by the MTA adjacent to the 17th Street Metro Station.
 - B. Chair Report: Chair Smith reported on problems with homeless people in Reed Park. Santa Monica Police Department (SMPD) representatives Robert

Silverstein, Public Services Administrator, and Sergeant Jeffrey Glaser, who were present at the meeting, answered some questions regarding deployment of officers at the park.

3. **Public Input -**

Anthony Yannatta requested that the Commission address more recreation issues in the future.

4. **Consent Calendar -**

The Consent Calendar consisted of the following items:

- A. Approval of Minutes of February 16, 2017 meeting
Recommended Action – review and approve the February 16, 2017 meeting minutes

MOTION

Commissioner Toy moved and Vice Chair Brown seconded a motion to approve the February 16, 2017 meeting minutes. The motion was approved by the following voice vote:

AYES: Commissioner Cohen, Commissioner Gielicz, Commissioner Schwengel, Vice Chair Brown, Chair Smith

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Commissioner LaGuardia

5. **New Business**

- A. Review of Letter from Fields Sports Advisory Council (FSAC) regarding safety concerns at Memorial Park for consideration and possible action (To be considered concurrently with item 5B) – Discussion was postponed until after the presentation in Item 5B.

- B. Presentation on sports, recreation and Police Activities League (PAL) activities at Memorial Park – was presented by Bradley Albert, Community Recreation Manager. Mr. Albert provided information on the history of the park; hours of operation; staffing; sports and recreational activities; program participation; fee structure; and future steps. Eula Fritz, Principal Community Services Supervisor, presented information on educational, arts and health programming at PAL.

In public comment: Anthony Yannatta asked if the gym could be open earlier in the morning.

Discussion focused on: possible extension of gym and fitness center hours; outreach for PAL programs; the time frame for the expansion of the park; and program cost recovery and the fee structure.

A. Item 5A continued:

Discussion regarding letter from FSAC Chair Andrew Browning requesting expanded deployment of Public Service Officers (PSOs) and hiring of Ambassadors at the park due to safety concerns for youth sports participants.

Robert Silverstein reviewed the recent deployment of PSOs at Memorial Park to include consistent presence from 5pm to 10pm on weekdays and all day and evening on weekends. Sergeant Glaser explained the role of the Homeless Liaison Program officers in the park.

In public comment, Mark Kapczynski of Santa Monica Little League, indicated two areas of particular concern along the northeastern perimeter of the park on 16th Street and by Field 5.

Discussion focused on: the need for a stronger police presence in the park during youth sports; the impact of the nearby train station; solutions for addressing homeless issues; solutions for the two areas of particular concern, including encouraging parents and coaches to take photos of issues and use the Government Outreach system to notify Police and City staff; the merits of expanding PSO hours vs. employing Ambassadors; and the improvement in the park since the redeployment of PSOs took place three weeks ago.

MOTION

Chair Smith moved and Commissioner Toy seconded a motion to write a letter to Council endorsing FSAC's request that, in the interest of children's safety, the PSO presence in Memorial Park be doubled during the hours of 5pm to 10pm on weekdays and all day and evening on weekends. Further to ask that Council and SMPD consider hiring dedicated Park Rangers. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote with all members present.

6. Continued Items –

A. Committee & Liaison Reports:

- a. Community Gardens Advisory Committee: Commissioner Toy reported that they are collecting gardener profiles for future publicity and outreach use, and noted that resizing some of the larger gardens to create smaller plots might be an option to consider as a way to create more gardens and begin to address the waiting list.
- b. Planning Commission: No report
- c. FSAC: No report
- d. Virginia Avenue Park Advisory Board (VAPAB): Commissioner Gielicz reported that the latest meeting focused on discussion of the recent tragic death in the neighborhood and a possible memorial.
- e. California Park & Recreation Commission & Board Members (CAPRCBM): Commissioner Gielicz commended the California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS) Conference he attended in Sacramento and mentioned that outdoor ping pong tables might be appropriate for reuse of the

Petanque court in Palisades Park. Commissioner Toy also attended the conference and commended the educational value of workshops on subjects such as homelessness, disaster preparedness, and parks funding.

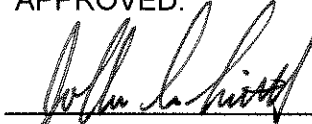
- f. Urban Forest Task Force: No report
- g. Park Creation Committee: No report

- 7. **Written Communication** – There were no written communications
- 8. **Future Agenda Items** – An action item on the proposal for a Parks Bond was scheduled for the April meeting. Formation of a subcommittee to work on updating the Park & Recreation Master Plan and discussion on a soda tax were tentatively placed on the long range agenda.

Adjournment –

Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 10:11p.m.

APPROVED:



Chair

ATTEST:



Commission Secretary