



City of

Santa Monica®

**MINUTES
RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2020
THELMA TERRY AUDITORIUM, VIRGINIA AVE PARK
7:30PM**

Call to Order: Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

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

Present: Chair Brown
Vice Chair LaGuardia
Commissioner Cohen
Commissioner Gielicz (arrived 7:45pm)
Commissioner Gomez
Commissioner Kaplan
Commissioner Smith

Absent: None

Also present: Karen Ginsberg, Director, Community & Cultural Services (CCS)
Anne Deasey, Executive Administrative Assistant, CCS

1. Reports of Staff/Members -

A. Director's Report: Director Ginsberg reviewed upcoming items of interest on the Council agenda and updated the Commission on current CIP projects, including:

- The Park & Recreation Master Plan draft will be released on March 23. After community input including from various Commissions, Council will consider the plan on June 9.
- The design/build contract was awarded for the first phase of construction of the Memorial Park Expansion project, and fiscal and use agreements are being negotiated with Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District and Santa Monica College.
- The Marine Park community gardens neighborhood outreach meeting will take place on March 21.
- Construction of the Civic Field is on track for completion by summer 2020.

Director Ginsberg also provided information on the Reed Park Pilot Ambassador Program, and in answer to questions, staff will forward final costs of the Clover Park restroom renovation to the Commissioners.

2. Public Input – No one was present for public input.

3. New Business

A. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Approval of Minutes of December 20, 2019 meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Cohen, seconded by Commissioner Gomez, to approve the December 20, 2019 meeting minutes. The motion passed by the following voice vote:

AYES: Commissioner Cohen, Commissioner Gomez, Chair Brown, Commissioner Kaplan, Vice Chair LaGuardia, Commissioner Smith

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Gielicz

ABSTAIN: None

2. Staff presentation on the City's rules and regulations related to operation of pedicabs in the City, including on the Beach Bike Path for Commission discussion and possible action – was presented by Judith Meister, Beach Manager, who reviewed the status of the North Beach Trail Project (NBTP), which will provide separate bicycle and pedestrian paths north of the Pier as well as improvements to Ocean Front Walk.

Ms. Meister also provided information on a possible pilot program to allow human-powered pedicabs to operate on the beach bike path. Key steps include: assess capacity of bike path following completion of NBTP; analyze current and possible future operations; identify department to oversee program, establish number of pedicabs to permit; develop regulations; revise the Municipal Code; and identify pick-up and drop-off locations. According to the proposed timeline, a pilot program could start in the summer of 2021.

Public Input: The following members of the public spoke on various issues regarding pedicabs: John Berry, Jesus Barrón, Randy Metz, Keith Brown

Discussion included but was not limited to: whether the timeline for allowing human-powered pedicabs on the bike path could be accelerated; concern regarding safety issues; issues with electric pedicabs; appreciation for the service pedicabs provide for people with mobility issues and young children; and suggestions to create a pick-up and drop-off area at Chess Park, and to consider establishing a speed limit on the bike path.

Motion by Commissioner Gielicz, seconded by Commissioner Gomez, to support an assessment and development of a pilot program to allow pedicabs on the Beach Trail. Amendment by Commissioner Smith to do everything possible to accelerate the timeline and to consider establishing a speed limit on the bike path. The amendment was accepted by the maker. The motion passed by the following voice vote:

AYES: Commissioner Cohen, Commissioner Gielicz, Commissioner Gomez, Commissioner Kaplan, Vice Chair LaGuardia, Commissioner Smith

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Brown

2. Staff presentation on the City's FY20-30 Ten-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget Plan for Commission discussion and possible action – was presented by Sam Fandrich, Principal Administrative Analyst, who reviewed the current budget parameters including submittal of requests for FY20-22 and preparation of a 10 year plan, noting that the city's finance department is projecting significant shortfalls in the general fund in the coming years. With limited funds available for the biennial CIP budget, all new requests must relate to a public safety concern and/or be directly related to a City priority. The CCS FY20-22 CIP budget submittal is focused on funding for existing projects and maintenance, funding for safety improvements, especially for playgrounds and beach access, and exploring alternative funding sources.

The ten-year plan will focus on long-term fiscal sustainability by maintaining existing facilities, fulfilling commitments on current projects, and addressing community priorities.

There was no one present for public comment on this item.

Discussion included but was not limited to: the need for splashpad improvements and playground shade; the status of funding for phases two and three of the Memorial Park Master Plan; funding for the Airport Park expansion; the need for improvements to the Douglas Park ponds; and the possibility of public/private partnerships and sponsorships as alternative funding sources.

No action was taken on this item.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2. Annual presentation by Virginia Avenue Park Advisory Board – was presented by Elizabeth Cruz, Chair, who showed pictures of the wide array of events and activities taking place at the park, and praised all the resources available for the neighborhood. She also reviewed proposed safety measures the Board has formulated for consideration by staff. Board member Mario Alarcon Garcia spoke on issues regarding people experiencing homelessness in the park. Board member Gloria Garcia expressed gratitude for all the programs and resources, advocated for continued City support, and commended Virginia Avenue Park staff.

Commission discussion included but was not limited to: homelessness issues; options to alleviate safety concerns; promotion of vending opportunities in the park; ideas to further activate the park; whether there is a need for more rules signage; and alternative funding sources for improvements. Commissioners thanked the board members for their dedication to the park.

A. Committee & Liaison Reports:

1. Community Gardens Advisory Committee: No report given

2. Field Sports Advisory Council (FSAC): Commissioner Gomez reported on a recent well-attended and informative meeting at Joslyn Park.
3. Planning Commission – Commissioner Smith reported that community groups are planning on fighting the 4th + Arizona development project.
4. Reports from Commissioners on park visits – Commissioner Gielicz reported he met a disabled person who was thrilled to be able to use a beach wheelchair on the sand. Commissioner Gomez reported a rat problem during evenings at Reed Park. Commissioner Smith reported on erosion on the hillside at Crescent Bay Park. Chair Brown requested that Commissioners visit community gardens.

4. Written Communication – No written communications received.

5. Future Agenda Items – Reviews of parklets and park signage, and an update on strategies to address homelessness were added, and a presentation on the fiscal and use agreements for Memorial Park was added to the March agenda.

Adjournment – Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 9:50pm.

ATTESTED:

APPROVED:

Commission Secretary

Chair