



## **RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION**

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Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 19, 2012

Council Chambers, City Hall, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica CA 90401

A special meeting of the Recreation & Parks Commission was called to order by Chair Brock at 7:32pm on Thursday, January 23, 2012 in Council Chambers, City Hall.

1. **Roll Call Present** Chair Phil Brock  
Vice Chair Jenna Linnekens  
Commissioner Deborah Cohen  
Commissioner Harry Keiley  
Commissioner John Petz  
**Also Present** Karen Ginsberg, Director, Community & Cultural Services  
Anne Deasey, Exec. Admin. Asst., Community & Cultural Services
2. The Oath of Office was administered to recently appointed Commissioners Alan Toy and Nishith Bhatt.
3. The minutes of the December 15, 2011 meeting were approved, with Commissioner Toy and Commissioner Bhatt abstaining.
4. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Director Ginsberg called attention to the following items:
  - Tree Hugging Day will take place at 5pm on March 19 at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel.
  - The *Active Santa Monica* program is launching this month with Active Week at the Memorial Park Fitness Room. Everyone is welcome to try out the equipment for free January 23 – 30, and follow activities on the Facebook page.
  - The Colorado Esplanade community workshop takes place at 10am on January 21 at the Ken Edwards Center.
  - The Downtown Specific Plan workshop is scheduled for 7pm on January 26 at the Civic Auditorium.
  - The schematic design for the Universally Accessible Playground was approved by Council, and plans are moving ahead for the development of the playground at the specified location.
5. **CONTINUED ITEMS:**
  - A. **Commission discussion and development of recommendation for transmittal to City Council regarding a permanent name for the new Civic Center Parks currently known as Palisades Garden Walk and Town Square** was presented by Julie Silliman, Sr. Administrative Analyst, Parks & Community Facilities Planning.  
  
In public comment on this item, Patricia Hoffman, Linda Piera-Avila and Elias Serna advocated for naming the parks after former Mayor Ken Genser and the Tongva tribe, the indigenous people who first populated the area.

Motion by Vice Chair Linnekens, seconded by Commissioner Bhatt, to recommend to City Council that the area in front of City Hall currently known as Town Square be renamed Ken Genser Square. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

In the ensuing discussion, Commissioners considered names suggested by themselves, staff, and the public, and the idea of a generalized name for the main park with designated areas to be named after the Tongva people and the Belmar Triangle, an African-American neighborhood which was razed to make way for the Civic Auditorium.

Motion by Commissioner Keiley, seconded by Commissioner Cohen, to recommend to City Council that the area currently known as Palisades Garden Walk be renamed Santa Monica Commons. Motion amended by Chair Brock to recommend that items of historical significance to the land and history of the community, including but not limited to the Tongva people and the Belmar Triangle, be recognized. Motion amended by Commissioner Petz to further recommend that the area currently known as Observation Hill be renamed Tongva Hill, and that an appropriate area of the park be identified in honor of the Belmar Triangle Neighborhood. The amendments were accepted as friendly by the maker and seconder. The motion as amended was approved by unanimous voice vote.

A short recess from 9:35 to 9:40pm was taken.

## 6. ACTION ITEMS:

**A. Staff presentation on proposed changes to the municipal code regarding park and beach use for Commission review and comment** was presented by Julie Silliman, Sr. Administrative Analyst, Parks & Community Facilities Planning.

Recommendation to review proposed changes to the Santa Monica Municipal Code guiding use of City parks and the beach, and review a list of community concerns regarding non-City sponsored fitness classes in parks and provide comments.

With regard to the fitness classes, the Commissioners suggested staff research legal precedents and how other cities handle the issue, and consider a lottery system, and time and site limits for various activities.

Motion by Commissioner Toy, seconded by Commissioner Petz, to support staff recommendation for modifications to the Municipal Code guiding park and beach use and to recommend that Council give staff direction to look into regulating non-city sponsored fitness classes in City parks and at the beach. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

## 7. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

**A. Request by Chair Brock to discuss upcoming California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS) Conference scheduled for March 20 through 23** – Chair Brock highlighted the educational benefits of attending the CPRS Conference in Long Beach, and suggested that Commissioners attend the California Association of Park and Recreation Commissions and Board Members (CAPRCBM) dinner on March 22 at which Barbara Stinchfield, recently retired Director of Community & Cultural Services, will be honored.

**B. Review of Long Range Agenda** – Items tentatively scheduled:

February – Presentation on accessible pathways on the beach and beach wheelchairs.

March – Palisades Park Plant ID Program.

April – Presentation on Virginia Avenue Park programs and update on the Pico Neighborhood Library.

Pending: Cost analysis and timeline for providing more accessible swings at all parks, and process for funding the proposed playground in Palisades Park.

8. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS:

A. COMMUNITY GARDENS: Commissioner Toy will be the liaison.

D. LANDMARKS COMMISSION: Chair Brock will be the liaison.

E. VIRGINIA AVENUE PARK ADVISORY BOARD: The Board invites RPC to visit the park and hold a meeting there in the near future.

L. STATE RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION BOARD: Chair Brock reported that he is honored to be participating in district meetings and panels and appreciates the learning opportunities.

9. **Public Comment** – There was no one present for public comment.

10. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:47pm.

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Chris Brock", written over a horizontal line.

Chair

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Anne Deasey", written over a horizontal line.

Commission Secretary

