

**MINUTES OF THE
REDONDO BEACH RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 14, 2021**

A. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Recreation and Parks Commission, conducted as a Zoom meeting, was called to order by Chairwoman Korman-Soooper at 7:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Arrata, Korman-Soooper, Varvarigos, Escontrias,
Almeida, McCauley
Commissioners Absent: None
Officials Present: Laurie Koike, Interim Community Services Director
Shannon Sneed, Recreation Coordinator
Ted Semaan, Public Works Director
Scott Martin, Traffic Division, Police Department
Laura Diaz, City Clerk's Office

C. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

At the request of Chair Korman-Soooper, Commissioner Varvarigos led the Salute to the Flag. Chair Korman-Soooper announced that Commissioner Berling is planning to relocate and has resigned from the Commission. She sends love and best wishes from all the Commissioners.

D. APPROVAL OF ORDER OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Arrata, seconded by Commissioner McCauley, to approve the Order of Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

E. BLUE FOLDER ITEMS

Interim Director Koike noted that there were no Blue Folder Items.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

1. Approval of Affidavit of Posting for the Recreation and Parks Commission Regular Meeting of April 14, 2021.
2. Approval of the minutes of the Recreation and Parks Commission Regular Meeting of February 10, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Arrata, seconded by Commissioner Varvarigos, to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously.

G. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

H. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Interim Director Koike read an e-comment from Warren Chun in regard to Franklin Park, expressing the desire of residents to keep the park as it is. He requested that there be no pickleball courts and no skatepark installations at Franklin Park.

Laura Diaz said that Barbara Epstein wanted to address the Commission, but was having audio problems and would come back at a later time in the meeting.

I. ITEMS CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS AGENDAS

None.

J. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION PRIOR TO ACTION

J.1. TRAFFIC CONCERNS AT ALTA VISTA PARK

Interim Community Services Director Laurie Koike said that at the last Commission meeting, Commissioner McCauley had asked to have this item added to the agenda for tonight's meeting, stating safety concerns about speeding cars on the street running through Alta Vista Park. She noted that Julia is a public street and is marked at 15 MPH. Interim Director Koike introduced Ted Semaan, Public Works Director, and Scott Martin, Traffic Sergeant in the Police Department, and asked them to start the discussion of this topic. Director Semaan confirmed that Julia is a public street with a posted speed limit of 15 miles per hour. He said his department will be doing an investigation based on the concerns the Commission has voiced, which will include determining whether the posted speed limit is enforceable with radar and radar equipment. They will rely on the Police Department to help with this. Engineers from Public Works will do some data collection, some speed surveys, and observation of the traffic in the park. They will bring the results to the Public Works Commission in August and will notify the Recreation and Parks Commission of the date of that meeting in advance so that they can be present for the report. He asked if the Commissioners had any questions.

Commissioner Escontrias raised a question as to why it takes a study to determine how to enforce a Vehicle Code law. He expressed concern about the safety of residents while the study is underway.

Director Semaan replied that they have to go through an assessment of the situation on the roadway to determine what the data is showing us. Part of this includes working with the Police Department to learn what they have observed as prior concerns in their enforcement role. They will determine what the real issues are and take that to the Public Works Commission.

Commissioner Escontrias asked whether the Police Department has been out there for directed patrol or enhanced enforcement in that location.

Sergeant Martin said they have not had a directed enforcement at that specific area for the last five months while he has been in that department. When he was in Motors, there was a focus on drivers running the stop sign in the area of Julia and Knob Hill. The issue of speeding in that location has not been brought to his attention until now. There are things that can be done right away. Police presence in the area will help to calm the traffic, and they can use lighted signs to tell drivers their speed and advise them to slow down. He explained some of the complications related to enforcement on such a short stretch of road.

Commissioner McCauley thanked Director Semaan and Sergeant Martin for coming to the meeting. He pointed out that this is not a regular street, but is a dead-end in a park, with children running across it at certain times of day. He said he welcomes the study, and asked if there could be different criteria for volume or miles per hour, considering unique features of this street, and considering the reality of children being present there. He said the residents he has

spoken with would recommend having speed cushions installed. He understands the study is necessary to get to that solution.

Chair Korman-Soooper said she is often at Alta Vista with Redondo Sunset, and sees that the street is treated by pedestrians as if it were shut down to traffic like a farmer's market street. The people who are speeding may be residents who are using the park for the sports leagues, the tennis courts, the community center, etc. She suggested having these various groups email their members reminding them to please be very careful when driving through the park. She asked if they, as a Commission, could reach out to the leagues.

Interim Director Koike replied that Community Services works with all the leagues, because they have to have permits to use the fields, and they would be able to remind people, and agreed that this would be a very timely message now.

Director Semaan said this was a brilliant idea, because the three "E's" they use in addressing such issues are Education, Engineering, and Enforcement, and this would be the education component, to remind people that this is an area with a speed limit, where there are lots of children, and asking them to be mindful and slow down.

Commissioner Arrata said she really likes the idea of the lighted flashing signs informing drivers of their speed. She asked how they would do the study and collect the data to come up with recommended changes.

Public Works Director Semaan said that they have an inconspicuous machine that can record speeds and the volume of vehicles traveling on the street. This will help the Police Department to know the times of day to target some of their enforcement. He explained various options for traffic calming and some of the constraints, such as the angled parking, the difficulty of installing speed bumps with angled parking, and certain types of speed bumps that are not allowed on public streets. He gave a number of options that could be considered as possible solutions after they have gathered the data.

Commissioner Almeida said he has spent a lot of time in the park with his kids playing on sports teams. He wondered whether anyone had considered putting stop signs at the place where the raised platform is. He stated that the people who are speeding are not the parents of the kids on the teams, but are the people trying to get to the other end of the park to the tennis courts.

Director Semaan said that gaining compliance with stop signs in places where they may not be warranted becomes very limited and very challenging.

Sergeant Martin concurred and said that a stop sign in that location would give pedestrians a false sense of security that drivers would pay attention. He observed that drivers are more distracted now than they have ever been. On the education front, he suggested a social media campaign in partnership with their community-based officer department to try to get the word out to be mindful of speed and the pedestrian traffic in the park.

Commissioner McCauley said that was a great idea, and he agreed with Commissioner Almeida that the speeders are those who are trying to get to the other end of the park. He asked if it was possible to reclassify the street so it is not a public roadway.

Public Works Director Semaan said that if the street were declassified, the City could lose control of the parking and the access. It is also a lengthy, complicated process.

In reply to a question from Chair Korman-Sooper, Director Semaan said that once the study is completed, it will go to the Public Works Commission, who will take it to the City Council to have the appropriation of funds approved by City Council. The Recreation and Parks Commission will be welcome to attend the meeting of the Public Works Commission when this item is being discussed.

Sergeant Martin said he will talk with his team tomorrow morning. He said the three tools they can use immediately are visibility, enforcement, and using the lighted sign.

Commissioner Varvarigos said he wanted to thank Director Semaan and Sergeant Martin for being there and he found it very educational.

All the Commissioners thanked them for coming to the meeting and sharing information with the Commission.

H. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Returning to item H. on the agenda, Barbara Epstein addressed the Commission. She introduced herself as a board member of South Bay Parkland Conservancy and a member of the Community Gardens Committee. Parks are to her the most important thing. The reason she wanted to speak tonight is that the condominium in which she lives has been having discussions about dog owners' usage of Czuleger Park. There have been big dogs off the leash attacking smaller dogs. They even knocked a lady off her feet. Some of the neighbors have addressed the problem in a letter to the City. She thanked the Commission and just wanted to make them aware of this problem. She would love to have a celebration with the Commission, South Bay Parkland Conservancy, and community members at Wilderness Park as soon as it is possible.

J.2. THE POSSIBLE RE-NAMING OF THE FLAGLER AND RIPLEY PARKETTE

Interim Community Services Director Laurie Koike introduced the Chair of the Historical Commission, Ron Maroko, who will address the Commission about a family who lived in Redondo Beach for many years. Pictures of the family and an article about them are in the agenda packet for the Commissioners to review. Tomo and Kimi Ito were longtime residents of Redondo Beach. Their family had owned the property at 1902 Havemeyer since the 1930's. Tomo graduated from Stanford University with a masters in geology and was a mining consultant. Kimi lived in Redondo Beach for 99 years and graduated from Redondo Union High School in 1931. In 1942, Kimi and Tomo were married. They were sent to the Poston-Colorado River Relocation Center in Arizona, an internment camp, during World War II.

Historical Commission Chair Maroko said the Historical Commission recommends renaming the Flagler & Ripley Parkette as either the Ito Family Open Space or the Ito Family Parkette. The Ito family lived a block away from the park. What the Historical Commission is proposing will be a three-step process: first, to rename the park, second, to dedicate the park to honor the Ito family, and last, to install some kind of educational signage in the park to inform the public about the role that Japanese internment camps had in our history. There was a very large Japanese-American community in North Redondo, as well as a large Mexican-American community.

In response to a question from Commissioner Arrata about how they chose that particular location, Ron Maroko said that it was an open space area often used by neighborhood dogs, and that it never had a name until recently when this Commission began surveying the parks.

In response to a question from Commissioner Varvarigos, Ron Maroko replied that the kids from Jefferson Elementary walk right by this park when they go to visit the Historical Museum every year. He said there could be a marker at one end that tells about the family and a marker at the other end that tells about the internment camps. They are not far enough along on the idea of historical murals, and would need the participation of this Commission and the Public Arts Commission to plan the installation of a mural.

Commissioner Varvarigos said the location makes sense to him, because it is right there close to the Historical Museum. He said that he supports the idea of changing the name of the park.

Commissioner Escontrias thanked Mr. Maroko for his presentation to the Commission. He said he had recently gone to the City's website and noticed that there are several parks named after individuals, but no explanation as to why they are named for those people.

Interim Director Koike said we could look into adding information to the website or having some kind of link to the Historical Commission information.

Ron Maroko said he has researched information on all the named parks and would be willing to share this information with the Commission.

Commissioner Arrata asked how they decided on honoring this family, and whether they asked for nominations from the community.

Ron Maroko said he looked at this park that didn't have a name and a family with long roots in North Redondo and an interesting story related to internment camps in World War II and felt it would be an interesting story to tell.

Commissioner Arrata asked whether the historical museum would be opening on June 15th.

Interim Director Koike replied that presently the Historical Museum has only one volunteer, who is not able to serve in that role at this time.

Commissioner Arrata asked Ron Maroko if they were planning to have information on this item inside the museum when it reopens.

Ron Maroko replied that the Historical Commission is considering overall museum upgrades and has received a design concept from a consulting firm, and the Historical Commission will be able to decide about the direction they wish to propose when they begin meeting monthly.

Commissioner Varvarigos made a motion to receive and file, and to recommend the re-naming of the parkette.

Chair Korman-Soooper said that she would rather call it the Ito Family Open Space rather than the Ito Family Parkette because she does not want to pigeon-hole it as a parkette.

Commissioner Varvarigos said that the motion is to recommend the possible renaming without specifying the name.

Interim Director Koike said they could propose possible names that they liked, which they could share with her and the Historical Commission now or at a later time.

Commissioner Escontrias asked what definitions the City has for what is a parkette and what is called open space. Hopefully we could research this before designating it one or the other.

Ron Maroko said this park is the same size as the parkettes, but is designated on the inventory as green space. But the point is to get this to the City Council so that they could consider the possible choices.

Chair Korman-Soper said her concern is to do what the Historical Commission is requesting.

Ron Maroko said all he is looking for is a joint recommendation from the Recreation and Parks Commission along with the Historical Commission in support of the renaming.

Chair Korman-Soper said, knowing how Council might approach something like this, the question might arise about vetting other families, and how they arrived at honoring this particular family. She asked whether he had spoken to any City Council members about this idea.

Ron Maroko said he first broached this idea with his Councilmember for District Three, who then reached out to staff to learn what the protocol would be. His Councilman was onboard with it when he went to Interim Director Koike to find out how to implement it.

Interim Director Koike said it is appropriate to have a joint recommendation if this item is brought forward to City Council.

Commissioner Arrata said she is in favor of getting input from the community on this idea and asked whether the Historical Commission has gotten any feedback on it.

Ron Maroko said other than from the Ito family, they have received no feedback.

Commissioner McCauley asked if it even has to be called a re-naming, because it seems like the park doesn't officially have a name yet.

Chair Korman-Soper agreed.

Commissioner McCauley amended the motion to say the Recreation and Parks Commission recommends to City Council to name the area in question in honor of the Ito Family. Commissioner Varvarigos seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

J.3. HISTORICAL MURALS IN PARKS

Interim Community Services Director Laurie Koike introduced this topic by saying that the Historical Commission has a sub-committee that has been exploring the idea of bringing information about the rich history of Redondo Beach outdoors to the parks in the form of murals. She introduced Chair Maroko of the Historical Commission to speak about this idea,

Chair Maroko referred to the report by the Historical Murals Sub-Committee of the Historical Commission, on page 24 of the agenda packet. This project is aiming to get the history outdoors, so that people can have access to it any time. This will be a joint project of three commissions—Public Art Commission, Recreation and Parks commission, and Historical Commission. Initially they are proposing an interim project of historical lawn signs with a QR code to a website that can have audio stories, pictures and a link to more resource information.

Commissioner Arrata spoke in support of the idea of murals in parks and suggested using the art of students in the area.

Chair Maroko said they would love to bring out the history of Native Americans in the area of Wilderness Park. He plans to reach out to Northrup Grumman for historical information about the City to be used as educational resources. For the murals, the Historical Commission will rely on the Public Art Commission for selection of artists and funding.

Commissioner Varvarigos agreed that Wilderness Park has a lot of history to be explored. He agreed that partnering with the Public Arts Commission is really essential. He asked whether they are going to form a joint committee among the various commissions.

Interim Director Koike said the Historical Commission is seeking the support and interest of the Recreation and Parks Commission for the idea of working on this as a joint project.

Commissioner Varvarigos said if they are looking for a representative of their Commission, he would recommend Cindy Arrata, because of her background as Chair of the Historical Commission.

In reply to a question from Commissioner McCauley, Chair Maroko said the Commission could have a person designated as a representative to work with the other two Commissions on this project.

Commissioner McCauley inquired whether they should make a combined motion to designate one member of their Commission as a representative and to approve the idea of the 90-day signage in the parks.

Chair Maroko replied that it should be two motions.

Motion by Commissioner McCauley, seconded by Commissioner Arrata, to support the proposed 90-day signage in the parks. Motion carried unanimously.

J.4. UPDATE ON RECREATION PROGRAMMING

Interim Community Services Director Laurie Koike introduced Shannon Sneed, Recreation Coordinator in Community Services, who provided a report to the Commission.

Shannon Sneed provided an update about the following programs:

- Rec Club Study and Play Program at Anderson Park, Veterans Park, and Perry Park started in September and ended just before Spring break.
- After-school programs have begun at City park locations and will run until 6/10.

- The biggest challenge right now is staffing.
- Summer camps and classes will be provided outdoors.
- Spring Newsletter is available with all the classes and camps available.
- Eight summer camps will be available for children.
- Registration for summer camps and classes can be done online.
- All information on camps and classes is available on the City's website.
- The Web-Trac registration system allows users to search in various ways.
- Demonstration of Web-Trac system was provided on the screen.
- Registration can be done online and documents can be uploaded.
- Soon Community Services will be able to accept facility reservations online.

Commissioner Arrata said she thinks it is fantastic to have all these options available online.

Commissioner McCauley said he appreciates the online system, as a user of the programs. He asked whether the system could be used to reserve playing fields. Ms. Sneed replied that it will probably be available as an online process by September.

Chair Korman-Soper said she used the online system last night. Chair Korman-Soper also noted some concerns about a class she observed to have seventeen children and the instructors didn't take attendance of the students present at the class.

Shannon Sneed said for outdoor classes they are allowed to have fifteen registered. She will talk to the instructor and ask why more people showed up than registered.

Chair Korman-Soper thanked her and complimented her on the online system and how easy it is to use. She said she had received several inquiries about the basketball camp, which she heard was super-popular.

Shannon Sneed replied that they will be having a basketball camp beginning July 12 at Perry Park. Coach Corky Bell, who ran this camp for years may be retiring.

Interim Director Koike thanked Shannon for all her work on the recreation programs and said that all the people in the office and in the community were appreciative of the new registration system.

J.5. DIRECTORS REPORT

Interim Community Services Director Laurie Koike provided her Director's Report, noting the following items:

- Both of the libraries will be opening this Monday, April 19.
- Community Services will start issuing passports on May 5.
- Aviation Gym is still closed and will open when LA County is in the yellow tier.
- The Performing Arts Center is still closed, but does have virtual performances.
- The basketball hoops have been reinstalled in the parks.
- The ordinance for the pilot program for dogs in parks went into effect October, 2020. Because of community concerns, Council has asked for a report to come to them in May.
- Recruitment for the Community Services Director is in its final stages.
- The small hand-launch was installed at the end of March at the Harbor.

- The updated report on park amenities in poor condition will be given at a later date.
- RFP's are being worked on for the skatepark and the Dominguez playground.
- The roof replacement at the Morrell House has been completed.
- The Community Garden proposal was taken to City Council on March 9.
- Council requested staff look at potential locations for Community Gardens.
- Council directed staff to work with South Bay Parkland Conservancy on the Alta Vista location and prepare a Budget Response Report on other locations.
- The City received an Aquatic Center Grant in March for sailing programs.
- 4th of July fireworks may be possible; staff is looking into the options.
- Council voted to have a modified season at Seaside Lagoon.

Commissioner Escontrias asked how the community concerns regarding dogs in parks will be investigated and how the analysis will be conducted. He has seen dogs off leash and running in Dominguez Park, and has seen many comments posted on Next Door about problems.

Interim Director Koike said she has been keeping a file of emails forwarded to her on this issue. They will be in touch with the Police Department and Parks staff to gather information.

Commissioner McCauley said that a few years ago the State passed the Parks Bond Initiative and created the LA County Regional Park and Open Space District. Redondo Beach has some priorities that are on the list for possible County-funded projects. There is supposed to be a representative from each City to the LA County Regional Park and Open Space District. Do we have anybody who is talking to them to advocate for Redondo Beach? They could possibly pursue a grant application to obtain part of the bond funding that is available.

K. COMMISSIONER REFERRALS TO STAFF

Commissioner Varvarigos said he has been getting a lot of suggestions from the community about having an earth slide at Wilderness Park. It could possibly be a collaboration with the Public Art Commission.

Motion by Commissioner McCauley, seconded by Commissioner Arrata, to add to the agenda for the next meeting a discussion of the possible grants available from the LA County Regional Park and Open Space District, as discussed in the last section. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Korman-Soper asked for an update on the status of adding pickleball courts in parks.

Chair Korman-Soper asked for direction on how the Commission could participate in finding additional locations for community garden sites, as discussed in the Council meeting last night.

Interim Director Koike informed the Commission that this will probably be her last meeting with them, but she will be sure to start getting everything set for the next agenda.

Commissioner McCauley asked when we will start having Commission meetings in person.

Interim Director Koike replied that the City needs to finish up the remodeling of the Council Chambers, and she doesn't have a date yet.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Korman-Soper announced that the next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Commission will be on June 9th at 7:00 p.m., and adjourned the meeting at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Koike
Interim Community Services Director