

Richmond Recreation & Parks Commission

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 2, 2022 6:00 PM



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CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order by Chair Joey Smith at 6:08 pm

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Joey Smith, Allison Blakeley, Maryn Hurlbut, and Catalin Kaser,

ABSENT: Soheila Bana (Excused), Aaron Rowden (Excused) and Eleanor Thompson (Absent)

Chair Smith provided a brief overview of the meeting procedures and the Mission of the Recreation & Parks Commission. In addition, she advised there is a lack of quorum in attendance, therefore we will not be able to make decisions on agenda items. However, as there is a public speaker and presenter in attendance, the meeting can go forward, and information received by those present.

OPEN FORUM

Cordell Hindler, Richmond, began by congratulating Chair Smith, Secretary Blakeley and Commissioner Hurlbut on their reappointments to the Recreation and Parks Commission. Mr. Hindler shared he will be talking to the Youth Council to get their interest in filling vacancies on the Recreation & Parks Commission. Mr. Hindler followed by inviting all to the Richmond Rotary Club meeting at the Richmond Country Club on Friday, November 4th at 12:30 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGH THE CHAIR

- a) Chair Smith advised the Next Commission meeting would be held on December 7, 2022, via Zoom.
- b) The balance of the Commission Trust account remains at \$413.08; the RTA Snow Ball account is \$0.00.
- c) There were no membership changes.

Chair Smith added that she would like to close this meeting in honor of Mr. Bob Dabney, who recently passed away. Mr. Dabney provided tremendous support to the City of Richmond, especially the Iron Triangle area and her request was met with no opposition.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Lack of Quorum, unable to move forward on this item; however, those in attendance had no requested corrections or updates.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

Public Works: Facilities

Jose Urquilla, Superintendent of Facilities, provided a detailed verbal and visual report.

Parks & Landscaping Divisions

Ranjana Maharaj, Deputy Director for Community Services – Recreation presented for Greg Hardesty, Superintendent of Parks & Landscaping, by giving an overview of the visual report.

Community Services Division: Recreation and Neighborhood Services

Ranjana Maharaj provided an extensive oral and visual report with Commissioner Kaser asking for clarification and better understanding on the Snow Ball's affiliation with Recreation.

PRESENTATIONS

Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC) – Becky Orme, Chairperson for the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee, provided a verbal report on concerns for the planting of tress, as presented by Mr. Amos White and 100K Trees for Humanity. Ms. Orme expressed how their plan does not follow the City of Richmond's established best practices and urged caution on moving forward unless it is in cooperation with the City of Richmond's existing expertise and knowledge.

Chair Smith suggested providing the Commission in writing, examples of their concerns, for a better understanding of their position. Ms. Orme stated she will reach out to her team to draft a formal presentation in the future.

Ms. Orme answered questions from Secretary Blakeley, Commissioner Kaser and Commissioner Hurlbut and shared her contact information as follows:

Becky Orme: bleckyblorme@gmail.com

AD HOC COMMITTEE STATEMENTS

a.) Sustainability and Climate Responsiveness Committee (Catalin/Maryn/Allison)

Commissioner Kaser shared they haven't had a committee meeting but recently attended the tree planting at JFK Park.

b.) COORDINATE Open Conversation on How the City can Support the Native Stewardship of Ookwe Park:

No updates given as Vice-Chair Rowden was not in attendance.

DISCUSSIONS & ACTION ITEMS

1. DISCUSS ways to raise funds for the Commissioner Trust Accounts

Commissioner Hurlbut shared a brief history and purpose of the Commissioner Trust Accounts. Commissioner Kaser stated the need to review the City of Richmond's Master Parks Plan and determine what has been accomplished. Ranjana Maharaj shared of a recent meeting with the City Manager, to develop an assessment of our parks and update the Master Parks Plan accordingly. Ms. Maharaj will reach out to Greg Hardesty to provide an update at a future commission meeting.

COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORTS / COMMENTS

Chair Smith shared attending a meeting with Ward One for EBMUD and hopes they will be able to give a presentation to the City of Richmond in the future.

Secretary Blakeley joined the Park Plaza Neighborhood Council meeting and has reached out to share the conflicting meeting times of the May Valley NC and Park Plaza NC.

Commissioner Hurlbut participated in a Fall Clean up at the Hurlbut Park by the Plunge. She also attended a meeting with the West Contra Costa School District (WCCUSD) to address concerns on sharing public parks with students. In addition, she pointed out that Judge Carroll Park has two concerning issues - a gopher infestation making it unsafe for children to play and that visitors are unleashing and not cleaning up after their dogs.

Ms. Maharaj shared of a recent meeting with WCCUSD on the Joint Use Agreement (JUA) and revisions that were agreed to by adding language for public park usage for students. In addition, a meeting followed with Washington School staff to provide an update.

Commissioner Kaser shared she joined the tree planting at JFK Park and attended the Health and Wellness Fair at Nicholl Park. In addition, she attended the ribbon-cutting at Unity Park for Phase One of the Wellness Trail. Ms. Kaser expressed concern for the eastern span of the Greenway and suggested having an official City of Richmond dog park.

AGENDA SETTING FOR NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE TOPICS

Chair Smith reiterated the need to identify the updates of the Master Parks Plan going forward.

Commissioner Hurlbut asked for a status of the Associate Commissioner Program that was to be presented to City Council but did not move forward. LaShonda White, Interim Director for Community Services, advised there will be a presentation to discuss the Associate Commissioner Program and to discuss the current age limit policy at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine George
Executive Secretary