

Richmond Recreation & Parks Commission

MINUTES

Wednesday, April 5, 2023 6:00 PM



To view a video of this meeting click on this link:

https://richmond.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=37

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order by Chair Joey Smith at 6:04 pm

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Joey Smith, Allison Blakeley, Catalin Kaser, Dani Lanis, Aaron Rowden and Samantha Torres* (*Arrived after Roll Call)

ABSENT: Maryn Hurlbut (Excused)

Chair Smith provided a brief overview of the meeting procedures and the Mission of the Recreation & Parks Commission.

AGENDA REVIEW

Motion by Commissioner Kaser to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Vice Chair Rowden, and carried unanimously by a voice vote.

OPEN FORUM

Tony Tamayo from the Mayor's Office, spoke to advise of an upcoming budget meeting and provided flyers on the event.

ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGH THE CHAIR

- a) Chair Smith advised the Next Commission meeting will be held May 3, 2023, in person.
- b) The balance of the Commission Trust account remains at \$413.08.
- c) Commissioner Thompson submitted her resignation effective February, 2023.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion by Vice Chair Rowden to approve the minutes of March 1, 2023, seconded by Commissioner Torres, and carried with a voice vote with Vice Chair Rowden abstaining.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

Parks & Landscaping Divisions

Carl Capistrano, Interim Superintendent of Facilities, introduced himself to the Commission and provided a brief visual and verbal report.

Greg Hardesty, Superintendent of Parks & Landscaping, shared a verbal and visual report and answered questions from Chair Smith and Commissioner Hurlbut.

Community Services Division: Recreation and Neighborhood Services

Ranjana Maharaj provided an extensive oral and visual report on recent and upcoming Recreation activities.

Troy Porter and Tetteh Kisseh, Recreation Supervisors, shared information on the Pop-Up Events previously sponsored by Community Services. Commissioner Kaser shared the open streets programs offered in other cities, where the Recreation Department provides recreation kits and are less resource intensive.

PRESENTATIONS: None

AD HOC COMMITTEE STATEMENTS

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

Commissioner Kaser advised that this committee is currently looking to pursue two different tracks and will provide more details soon. Secretary Blakeley shared she has reached out to a master gardener who could collaborate as to fire safe trees in Richmond. Ms. Blakeley contacted Becky Orme from Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC) and a seven-member committee has been formed.

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

Vice-Chair Rowden expressed concerns on the viability of this project and hopes by next month to have more information. He also stated it may be necessary to create an alternate way of living up to our land acknowledgment. Ms. Maharaj suggested meeting with Winifred Day, the Arts & Culture Manager, as she could offer insights and assistance.

c.) Youth & Associate Commissioner Initiatives (Maryn/Joey)

Commissioner Hurlbut hasn't been able to reach Guadalupe Morales in Community Services and Ms. Maharaj advised she will reach out to have her contact Ms. Hurlbut.

DISCUSSIONS & ACTION ITEMS

a) APPROVE Election of Officers to the Recreation & Parks Commission (Officer Posts are Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer)

Commissioner Hurlbut shared that the nominations were made and accepted to re-elect our current Officers as follows: Chair Joey Smith, Vice Chair Aaron Rowden, Secretary Allison Blakeley, and Treasurer Eleanor Thompson. Motion by Commissioner Hurlbut, seconded by Commissioner Torres and carried with an agreed voice vote.

b) DISCUSS the Availability of Sports Fields

Commissioner Torres stated she is collaborating with the community and city council members to

develop more sports fields, specifically soccer fields beyond MLK. One of the focuses has been to designate certain fields for specified age groups to help maximize the field space.

Chair Smith stressed the importance of including neighborhood councils with future plans to ensure the local community is part of the process and development. Commissioner Kaser shared the importance of outreach beyond the neighborhood councils, to confirm that local neighborhoods are included to encourage community engagement.

Commissioner Torres continued with an update on the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) as to the Gilman Fields in Berkeley.

COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORTS / COMMENTS

Chair Smith shared she participated in the Snow Ball scholarship distribution and visited many parks to assess the recent storm impacts. She has worked with Commissioner Hurlbut on the allocation listing of parks for the commission. In addition, Ms. Smith would like to have a tour of the parks in the near future.

Vice Chair Rowden stated he has had the opportunity to use the Recreation programs offered and was impressed with the quality and dedication, specifically as to the nutrition programs and cost for services when compared to other communities.

Secretary Blakeley organized a volunteer group to paint in Lamoine Park, however the event was rained out and inquired regarding business cards for the commission.

Commissioner Hurlbut asked for an update on the Joint Use Agreement Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sharing with the school districts and adjacent parks usage and Ms. Maharaj advised that the agreement is currently with the school districts legal team. Ms. Hurlbut shared that the lighting at Nicholl Park has been updated and she would like to get a meeting to start advertising for Snow Ball 2023.

Commissioner Kaser visited an interactive park in Sacramento that offered many activities for all ages.

Commissioner Torres reiterated her excitement to get the JPA moving forward and looks to continue exploring new parks when the park allocation list is updated.

Commissioner Lanis praised the maintenance at Burg Park, as he made a claim with the City for repair and it was handled quickly and efficiently.

AGENDA SETTING FOR NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE TOPICS

Commissioner Torres wished to make a presentation on the Sports Fields Updates and Commissioner Blakeley will provide a report on the fire safe trees committee.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine George
Executive Secretary