



## Minutes Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission City of Pacifica

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2013 – REGULAR MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
2212 Beach Boulevard

### CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chair Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

### I PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Ewell.

### II ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Abbott, Ewell, Finnegan, Murphy, Sambrailo  
Commissioners Absent: None  
Commissioners Excused: Cochran, Zuromski  
Staff Present: Director Michael Perez, Captain  
Spanheimer, Field Services Manager Biagini

### III APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting 11/28/12 and 1/23/13  
Commissioner Abbott made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by  
Commissioner Finnegan and approved 5-0.

### IV ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner Finnegan made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Commissioner  
Sambrailo and approved 5-0.

### V SPECIAL PRESENTATION

None

### VI ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

### VII ITEMS FOR CONSENT

None

### VIII ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- A) Sanchez Dog Park – Discussion Item- Director Perez read the staff report, providing an introduction to the discussion. Public Works is in negotiations with a vendor to install an irrigation system at the park; POOCH has pledged support for the “slats” project; Commissioners had asked to have the dog park on the agenda regularly/quarterly for review.

POOCH submitted comments to the commission prior to the meeting, which were included in the commission packet. Forrest Parnell, a dog park neighbor, also submitted comments, a pdf of a Facebook discussion of the dog park from Patch, and two pdfs of email communications between Forrest and Jana Lane, the president of POOCH.

-Acting Chair Murphy open up the item to public comments.

-Monica Woodworth, has owned her house which is behind the dog park for 14 years. She stated that her neighborhood is no longer quiet and peaceful. She asked how would you feel having a dog park behind your house. No more family get-togethers without constant noise, fighting. They begged and pleaded to not have it here and knew it would be a major impact. Dogs and owners start to fight, there is yelling and cursing by dog owners, young children and loud dogs.

-Fiona McDonnell – works at Stephen Johnson Photography studio located next to the dog park. Has experienced negative encounters, the entry is right near where she works. She is worried about human life, she has heard threats, she feels like her life is in danger, has had to stop production because of noise and there is a lot of animosity.

-Tim Thompson – 1320 Avila Ct. – his house is in the middle of the dog park; backyard has been taken away, can't go out and enjoy the patio because of dogs and barking from time when he gets home; rules are not being enforced by the City and doesn't think neighbors should be policing it.

-Jeff Tiedje – feels the same as the other neighbors (he lives behind the park); the noise is unbearable; he has 2 German shepherds and quiets his own dogs when they bark; with it getting warmer there are more people using the park; constant noise, people are arguing, it is a bad environment; he was sort of neutral in the beginning of the park process.

-Stephanie Poloni – 1316 Alicante – neighbor behind the park – read a letter that was submitted to Director Perez following the meeting. She feels the park should be locked up and closed until the neighbors' (residence, artists and patrons) concerns and impacts are addressed and mitigated up to and including moving the Dog Park to a more compatible location. She cited the General Plan guidelines for Land Use Element for public and semi public as well as the noise element requirements. Feels that the park has not created a stronger sense of community, just conflict and frustration, dust. She also cited minutes from a December 2008 City Council meeting regarding the dog park, specifically a council member's comment that "if conditions were not adhered to, the park would be discontinued." Said that she and her husband had an unpleasant run-in with park user who followed her/her husband to her to her house and threatened them. They have logged over 80 (on video) violations of park rules, and there are 300-500 barks per day. 10 neighbors' signatures agreeing the park is inappropriately placed in addition to 26 other Pacificans; we don't feel safe.

-Tony Poloni – while he was speaking he played the audio from a recording at the park – anger is a daily emotion I experience due to the amount of barking, peace and tranquility has been removed from my life and my home; why did Pacifica take away our peace and quiet to have anger in our lives; your logo Parks Make Life Better is completely false in my eyes; nobody cares because they are not affected by this constant barking 8 feet from their home; I am in charge of unlocking and locking gate, Pacifica does not have enough man power to do this and POOCH refused to do this; asked if anyone would raise their hand if they wanted a dog park 8 feet behind their fence and asked why wouldn't you want constant barking behind your home; this is a highly charged and close to the heart debate; argument is not whether to close or open, but where can we move the dog park; we thank the City of Pacifica to spend money for the benefit of our wonderful pet – he offered solutions – build a sound wall; anti-bark horns (dogs can only hear when they bark); anti bark collars (rule); or move the park to a compatible plot of land

-Stephen Johnson – park is 12 feet from his business; most serious negative impact to his artistic career in 40 years; almost everything he predicted about the dog park has come true; barking all day and driving him nuts; rude people; most folks are nice, courteous people; people bring multiple dogs; speeding and honking; there are violent words and actions directed at him/his studio; parking violations; his studio was invaded; he has written Mike (Director Perez) more than a dozen times this past year, called PD and noted there is a conspicuous non-enforcement of leash law at the site; it is a huge interruption; Tuesdays are his relief; his blood pressure is high and he has had sleepless nights; states 300-500 barks/day is an underestimate; please shut it down and move it; is there consideration to moving the park entrance? Is there a consideration to moving the dog park? Any consideration for sound mitigation (gave city a bid for sound proofing)?; talked about what the EIR/Neg Dec talked about was not accurate. Feels as though some folks might be

trying to drive him away from his studio. There is documented information regarding damage to people's health from barking dogs and psychological impacts.

-Jana Lane, president of POOCH, read a statement from POOCH – read the POOCH mission statement; said it is not POOCH's park, they are there to help and support; talked about the four years of fundraising, docents collected and shared info with PB&R; will donate money for trees and slats; donated \$25,000 to park construction; helped with adjusting park hours; will continue and step up to help with education and the park.

-Forrest Parnell – submitted letter, Facebook communications about dog park, and email copies of communication between he and Jana Lane, POOCH president. Read his email/letter. Stated that the past POOCH president was in contact with him and not so with the current president. There were docents around at the park in the beginning. Wanted to know why did POOCH let us believe they would stay involved. Feels the park was instituted under false pretences. Feel like a prisoner in his own home. Thinks it should be closed, or closed on the weekends. Asking to manage situation now. We need relief now. Has never seen Steve Johnson do anything but be polite and kind, courteous and friendly to people.

-Staci Diaz – 1635 Linda Mar Blvd. – worked 15 years as a vet assistant/dog behaviorist - agrees with neighbors on several different issues. There are threatening people, it is a negative atmosphere and it is an unsafe environment for us dog owners. The disgusting negative comments that come from the photographer, have heard him speaking in horrible manners to people. I have been every day, 3x/day (since November, and recently taking noise) and have never once heard anyone using profanities except for Mr. Johnson and a person who came to lock up the park who threatened to punch me in the face if I dared went back into the park. When I bought my house no one promised people wouldn't speed on Linda Mar blvd, but they do. Most barking I have heard has come from the neighbors dogs. Dogs do growl and make noises when they play as part of communication, when it happens Mr. Johnson comes out and glares at the owners and happened to he did that to her recently. Feels people are embellishing and she hasn't seen any of the behavior described.

-Michael Schreiber – Can't go in park at 7am, uses the Sanchez field prior to when park opens. The sprinklers won't work and thinks we should change the surface. He goes almost every day since it opened and has not witnessed (the issues/bad behavior) described.

-Arthur Storey – Would like to see the park improved rather than it closed or thrown away.

-Bernie Sifry – feels that we have change – when anything changes in a community you have to prepare people for it or you end up with problems like this -people not prepared for a dog park. He talked about the change becoming intolerable when people are not prepared – change in hours, change in schedule and asked where are the city employees. People have not received training, whether paid or unpaid. Incompetent untrained people trying to manage this, is where the problem lies. Brought this to the council and Steve Rhodes said we did more than the follow the regulations than the city set up before we put in the park. The community had opportunity before approval to come and speak, they were informed. Did they come or speak up? No. They hired a lawyer, wasted money. Property values didn't go down. Have to be fair for everybody. You can raise money if organized – neighbors, dog owners, store owners. When someone gets unique parking for his land, that is illegal and it will be thrown out in court.

Acting Chair Murphy closed the public comments and brought the discussion back to the commission.

-Commissioner Abbott – Asked for a report from police present at the meeting.

-Captain Spanheimer – reported that since April 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 they have had 50 passing checks and 30 foot patrols for a total of 80 visits to the dog park. These are only those reported by officers on the radio, and there may be more than that. In addition there have been 25 incidents reported – noise, parking violations; oftentimes people are not on scene or the parking situation has been rectified when officers arrive; there has been 1 parking ticket issued; 1 actual police report; I am aware of other incidents have been reported via email to Director Perez, but police were not called.

-Commissioner Abbott – asked clarifying questions about the 80 times.

-Captain Spanheimer – the 80 visits were at direction of himself and/or the Chief to be proactive.

-Commissioner Finnegan – asked if there was only one police report

-Captain Spanheimer – that is correct, 1 since April 2012.

-Commissioner Finnegan asked for a report from Ray Biagini, Public Works (PW) Field Services Manager. In terms of dust, has PW seen any improvements?

-Field Services Manager Biagini – reported that PW was not doing the test with the water, and had heard there were improvements and have been directed to look into the irrigation.

-Action Chair Murphy – asked how often PW staff was out there

-Field Services Manager Biagini – we have a very short staff with the amount of parks we have, and try to hit every area as far as garbage every morning, unfortunately people are off or sick and some areas get passed over; we try to get there in the mornings or sometimes in the afternoon; schedule is not always met.

-Commissioner Abbott – asked if there are any issues as far as dust and litter; we had the drainage problem; when we did the study on the surface we found that it is a similar surface used in other parks, correct?

-Field Services Manager Biagini – said that as far as he understands from the engineering department that did the study, that is what he was told.

-Commissioner Abbott – asked if that dry gravel continued to be a common surface in dog parks.

-Field Services Manager Biagini – stated that he has seen other surfaces, sand, tan bark and other surfaces; this is what the engineering department had come up with.

-Commissioner Finnegan – said that we had talked about putting trees in

-Field Services Manager Biagini – reported that we had donated trees; however, they were not suitable for planting; the city did plant one that was unfortunately damaged, but is doing o.k. There is no irrigation, but if we go forward, there would be another planted.

-Commissioner Abbott – asked Director Perez if PB&R is listed as the primary contact

Director Perez – confirmed with Field Services Manager Biagini that both PW and PB&R numbers were listed.

-Commissioner Abbott – pointed out that it was done that way because it was a city park, and

POOCH was assisting us as a volunteer organization.

-Commissioner Finnegan – thinks the PD should be listed as a point of reference.

-Commissioner Abbott – have we been able to look at ways to have city staff lock/unlock the park.

-Director Perez – stated that when hours were changed, that was a concern. PD already locks up several other areas – they are not going to make locking up a facility a priority over a call. It was not considered a viable option (having staff lock the park). It was discussed there might be problems with people using the park before and after hours; Stephanie Poloni (park neighbor) volunteered to lock and unlock the park. We don't have someone that could commit to being there – from the "get-go" it wasn't an option.

-Commissioner Ewell – asked if we had any data about noise mitigation, trees and slats and whether they would help or not. He has heard different things.

-Field Services Manager Biagini – stated there wasn't any data, just discussion that we had in previous meetings with neighbors and concerned citizens.

-Acting Chair Murphy – stated that one idea was to plant shrubbery between the park and the neighbor fences, do we have anything available?

-Field Services Manager Biagini – responded that it was discussed, but the group at the time seemed to be leaning towards slats.

-Acting Chair Murphy – thought there was a consensus that in the beginning the neighbors didn't want anything there, but were coming over to wanting to have something there, so if we could get some shrubbery, we could discuss it with the neighbors.

-Field Services Manager Biagini – discussion were around getting something established, might take awhile to get to that point, irrigation would be needed, but thought discussion was leaning more towards the slats.

-Director Perez – reported we had a possibility of getting some trees from a nursery, but they would have to be spread out quite a bit. There is one neighbor in particular that would not want anything behind their house – concern over whether the city would take care of it or not. When we did meet with neighbors that did come prior to the park being built this was brought up. Follow discussion in the fall, there are some neighbors that would want something, but not right up against their fences. We need to get a plant/tree that was already very mature – 6ft in height and would eventually need the irrigation.

-Field Services Manager Biagini – remembered that the dust was making it up onto/over roofs of driveways and cars the neighbors and that no matter the height wouldn't keep all dust, but maybe for noise.

-Commissioner Finnegan – read the emails and comments on Pacifica Patch, but takes it with a grain of salt because I know there is some fraud going on with a lot of that stuff. As a commission we have met quarterly for our review; thinks it is important that we continue that. Thanked Mr. Poloni for bringing the noise to the meeting and for the opportunity of a site visit to your house and the pictures of dust she saw from Stephanie. Only heard a little about the dust tonight, and it sounds like the noise and the general behavior was the common theme tonight. Thinks this is about education, which is important. As far as making a decision, we should have a study session. Set up – what are goals of the meeting, what do we hope to get out of it and what are our next steps. Thanks everyone who came out, and thanked Jana of

POOCH – there are usually a handful of people who do a lot of work.

-Commissioner Sambraile – how many dogs are there on a regular basis? Drives by frequently, and a lot of time there aren't many people in there, but there are peak hours where there are several dogs/owners in there. Talks to a lot of dog owners who were excited in the beginning, but a lot aren't going there – surface tears up dogs' feet, park too small, etc.

-Commissioner Ewell – asked Director Perez about numbers

-Director Perez – reported that we were getting numbers through the summer, which was brought to Commissioners. Some docents stopped volunteering; as the park continued, educating regular users didn't seem to be an issue. It has been a task getting numbers, we don't have that ability to report and maybe we could talk to POOCH for more numbers. Maybe we can figure out how to get numbers for Commissioners.

-Commissioner Sambraile – acknowledged that it is a tough job to ask people to do with potential for confrontations. Asked about comment cards.

-Director Perez – talked about reasons for not getting numbers, less volunteers, repeat users not needing to hear the rules again.

-Commissioner Abbott – appreciates everyone coming out. Commission made a commitment to continue to talk about the park. She feels there is positive and negative. Talked about a recent visit – 8 or so, some yappy dogs, sense of community, mostly very well behaved. While there is a lot of positive, there clearly does need to be continued and ongoing support to create community. Fear by anybody is not o.k. Can't discount if people are feeling that uncomfortable. While POOCH has been there to help kick off, fundraise and bring to community, it was voted on in Dec 2008. It has pretty much been a 50/50 support, mix of opinion. Commission helped with operation hours compromise. Would like to see several things followed up on – locking an unlocking, PB&R number/point of contact, shrubbery on fence line, more about the surface, continue quarterly reviews, like to see behavior training offered, conflict resolution process PCRC – how to work together and how to come together, overall better communication plan – shared out more broadly.

-Commissioner Ewell – thanks to everyone for coming out. Thing that has struck me is that we are talking about community and there seems to be real divisiveness, that concerns me, but it also seems it is difficult to understand what is going on. Would encourage more people to show up if we are going to have a study session. I think it needs to be resolved. The challenge I have around the community aspects, it looks divisive. I think there are ways we can address noise and dust. If there are community challenges with how people relate, that really bothers me. The fear thing is also not cool. I want to push this forward and remediate some of these issues. Appreciate POOCH's efforts, but also see where it can be tough, neighbors having to lock up/open, seems like we need to address some things.

-Commissioner Abbott – asked if we should make a motion of the things we covered.

-Director Perez – I heard that Commission would like to have a study session. Talked about available dates for a study session. Repeated what he heard from Commissioners in terms of topics for the meeting. Will send out dates.

-Commissioner Abbott – would like to hear anything fellow Commissioners wanted to talk about, and what we are going to be moving forward with.

-Acting Chair Murphy – asked about having the entrance moved as something to be put on the list.

- Director Perez – repeated what he heard about topics for the study session – what are our goals, what do we want and what are our next steps?  
Locking and unlocking of park, knowing PBR is primary contact, shrubbery/plants, information about the surface, continue quarterly review, ongoing trainings, contacting PCRC, overall communications plan (chronological and how we've gotten here, things that have come up and how we've addressed that), moving entrance, noise, dust and education and behavior.
- Commissioner Ewell – roles and responsibilities should be added, what is expected of people and what is expected of others. I know we don't have a lot of time, but it needs to be data driven, something more empirical than a tape of something, I am hearing pretty nasty things, but doesn't appear the police have been contacted.
- Commissioner Finnegan – stated that Mrs. Poloni had a lot of data - pictures, recordings – neutral data that is factual; it really is what it is. I would suggest that also.
- Commissioner Ewell – just wants to understand what is going on, sounds like a melee going on.
- Commissioner Finnegan – there is only one police report out of 25 incidents....
- Director Perez – clarified the visits, incidents from PD
- Captain Spanheimer – the 80 passing checks/foot patrols are self-initiated; separately there were 25 incidents – reports about noise, parking, whatever and officers responded to that, and a separate 1 police report which was a crime documentation between two parties.
- Director Perez – stated that he will be in contact with Captain Spanheimer – he forwards emails and info from calls, many times they are not the day of. Mr. Johnsons has mentioned incidents and has told PB&R, those have all been forwarded to Captain Spanheimer.
- Acting Chair Murphy – so we will have this for our next study session.
- Director Perez stated – will contact Commissioners about the date, and we will notify the folks.
- Commissioner Sambrailo – how effective are some of these measures, do we have any way of finding out – the fencing, the brush.
- Director Perez – explained the watering of the park with the hose.
- Commissioner Sambrailo – how effective is the fence, the brush, etc.
- Acting Chair Murphy – the shrubbery is for noise abatement.
- Commissioner Sambrailo – neighbors are worried about views.
- Director Perez – getting them tall enough is more of the issue, than them being too high. An automated sprinkler covers the whole area at one time and can be regulated. There is also a cloth tarping system that might work and be more cost effective than slats.
- Acting Chair Murphy – that will be all, hope to see you all at the study session.

## **IX REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

- Commissioner Sambrailo – none

- Commissioner Finnegan – thanked Director Perez for helping to get SF Rec and Park to get the pot holes filled on the levy in Sharp Park.
- Director Perez – thanked Commissioner Finnegan for bringing it up and getting the process started. Director Perez talked with a counterpart in SF
- Commissioner Abbott – nothing
- Commissioner Ewell – thanked Commissioner Finnegan for the levy.

## **X       REPORTS FROM STAFF**

### **A)       Director's Update –**

#### **Parents' Night Out:**

On December 7, 2012, the Pacifica Recreation Department kicked off its first Parents' Night Out event at the Pacifica Community Center. Children, ages 5-11 years old, spent the night making ginger bread houses, playing no-base-baseball, eating dinner, and watching *How Grinch Who Stole Christmas*. The event had 27 children participate, and volunteer support from members of the Leaders in Training Education (L.I.T.E.) program and the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). At the end of the night, each child was sent home with their very own snow globe, containing a picture of them at the event. A second Parents' Night Out was held on February, 15<sup>th</sup> at the Pacifica Community Center. While parents had a night out on the town, their children were enjoying a night of outdoor and indoor games, arts and crafts projects, dinner and a movie. Since the weather was great, staff and volunteers played camp games outside, including PB&J tag and an all-time favorite LOUD-MOUTH. The event had 19 children participate, and volunteer support from members of the Leaders in Training Education (L.I.T.E.) program and the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). The next Parents' Night Out is Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at the Pacifica Community Center.

#### **YAB**

The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) held Pacifica's first Community Movie Night on Saturday, January 12<sup>th</sup> at the Pacifica Community Center. The event had about 40 people in attendance, and raised nearly \$100 for the YAB in raffle and snack sales. Members reached out to local businesses for donations, and they received items such as restaurant and store gift cards, ground coffee bags for raffle, and whole pizzas to sell at the snack bar. In addition, businesses made monetary contributions as support. The YAB chose Pixar's *Up*, which was overwhelming enjoyed by all age groups at the event. The YAB hopes to hold more movie night events in the future. Recently, the members have decided their next event or project will be focused on something specifically for teens in the community. They are researching and planning for the possibility of holding a teen dance in the spring. When the members are not working on YAB projects, they are volunteering their time at city events, including the Senior Rummage Sale and the Recreation's Parents' Night Out.

#### **Child Care**

The California Department of Education, Child Development Division's (CDD) Center-Based Monitoring Unit (CMU) will be visiting the City of Pacifica's child care programs the week of March 4-8, 2013. During the review, 44 family files will be reviewed and child care sites will be visited. Due to budget cuts in previous years, this review has not been conducted in 6 years.

#### **CPRS**

Director Perez and Coordinator Russo will be attending the annual CPRS conference in San Jose this year – next week, from March 6-8. Director Perez will also be attending the CPRS District IV awards to accept a community award of excellence for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Fun Fest, this Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### **STEM Program**

Director Perez will attend the San Mateo County STEM Innovation Reception on Thursday February 28<sup>th</sup>. Currently we are running two classes at IBL and one each at Sunset Ridge and Ortega.

#### **Seniors**

**Bocce Ball Court** – opened up in grand fashion on February 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Pacifica Senior Services' Night on the Town dinner for Meals on Wheels Clients**

On February 28<sup>th</sup> of our Meals on Wheels clients and a guest of their choice are invited to the Community Center for an evening of dining and entertainment. Funding was made available through the City Department staff and community contributions from our Meals on Wheels gift basket silent auction held in December. \$1,100 was raised for this event, so there is no cost to the participants.

### **Volunteer Recognition Dinner**

April 24<sup>th</sup> 4pm. This is a special event where staff has a chance to thank all the volunteers that help serve our senior community. Over 140 volunteers aid us.

### **Aquatics**

The daytime schedule changes in March due to the high school using the pool for P.E. The revised hours will continue through May 17. Ocean Shore School has been coming in on Wednesday mornings with their adapted students. Next swim lesson session begins first week of April. The swim team is holding steady at about 195 swimmers. We are looking for a fourth coach at this time to help out with the team.

### **Staffing Update**

In December, our Coordinator Nicole Acquisti resigned to take a job as a Recreation Supervisor with the City of Burlingame. We are in the process of interviewing the final candidates, and hope to have the position filled by early-mid march.

Also, after 13 years with the department our Administrative Assistant Lisa Warns has also resigned. We are Interviews are scheduled for mid-March, and we hope to have it filled soon after.

As was previously announced, Ray Lopez our Meals on Wheels/Transportation Coordinator is retiring. Ray has worked for the City for over 25 years. His last day will be March 29<sup>th</sup>. We are going to use this opportunity to redesign the senior services division and have created a Recreation Specialist assigned to Senior Services that will mostly handle the Meals on Wheels duties. We are also going to hire two part time bus drivers to handle transportation duties.

With all the changes happening in the department, we have had to rely on several staff members to take on additional duties and continue doing their current jobs. In particular staff at the Community Center and the main office. We have several part-time employees that have also stepped up to help. They are filling in the gaps, learning some new skills and contributing efforts to keep things running.

### **Devil's Slide Ride**

Pacifica's Weekend Shuttle which is FREE. The Shuttle Launch is Saturday Dec. 1, at 10:30am at the Community Center during the Elf Market. The shuttle will be open to everyone and will operate from 8am-5pm on weekends.

J-Teen Dances – Fridays March 8, April 12, May 10 and June 7 – 7pm at CC

Spring Aquatics registration begins on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Pacificans Care Casino Night is coming up – May 4<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are available \$40, or \$50 at the door.

## **XI CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **XII ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Abbott made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Ewell seconded, and motion passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:59pm.

**The City of Pacifica will provide special assistance for disabled citizens upon at least 24 hour advance notice to the City Manager's office (738-7301). If you need sign language assistance or written material printed in a larger font or taped, advance**

**notice is necessary. All meeting rooms are accessible to the disabled.**