

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, January 26, 2011 7:00p.m.

El Cerrito City Hall Council Chambers 10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito

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1. Roll Call:

Chair Doshi, Leslie Goldstein, Seth Kaplan, Robin Mitchell, Margo Takemiya Commissioner Absent: Michele Jawad

2. Commission/Staff Communications/Announcements

Kortz in introduced and welcomed new Park and Recreation Commissioner Robin Mitchell and announced the reappointment of Commissioner Leslie Goldstein.

Kortz introduced Officer Chalk from the El Cerrito Police Department and Police Officers Association. They are proposing to sponsor a car show on July 16, 2011 at Cerrito Vista Park as a fundraiser. There is a concern of its proximity to the Fourth of July, but feel that a car show will reach a different segment of the population. The POA will seek out solicitations from businesses such as paint shops and automotive businesses. This item will be agendized for further discussion.

Kortz reported that El Cerrito High School is breaking ground on the El Cerrito High School field, tennis courts, and soccer fields this fall. Commissioner Lipson added that the high school fields will be synthetic turf. The stadium's completion will be 2014, and there will be six tennis courts. The groundbreaking will be between October and March next year for the new middle school. The name for the new Portola Middle School will remain the same even at its new site at the old Castro School. It is expected to have a population of 600, new gym, and garden area. The fields will be ready late 2014. The park area at Castro will remain the same.

Quick Start registration will be start in March. This is the youth tennis program that started last year, sponsored by the El Cerrito Tennis Association, and coached by volunteers.

Kortz introduced Bill Driscoll, maintenance supervisor, who will be Public Works staff liaison and will update the Commission on Public Works issues.

3. Oral Communication from the Public: None

4. Council Liaison Report:

Councilmember Lyman reported that at the November 15, 2010 meeting, the City Council met to approve contracts to rebuild the Recycling Center.

At the December 6, 2010 meeting, Council re-organized and Council Liaisons were re-assigned. Councilmember Bill Jones was elected Mayor ProTem, and Councilmember Ann Cheng was elected mayor. The new police dog, King, was sworn in. Interviews were conducted to fill board and commission openings.

At the January 18, 2011 meeting the City Council approved a waiver for the West Contra Costa Unified School District so that they can continue to issue bonds that have been approved by voters. This will allow the release of bonds which will pay for the high school stadium. In the past the school district was not allowed to exceed the 2 percent tax value of the district. The City still has yet to get a waiver from the State.

5. Approval of the Minutes:

Commissioner Kaplan stated the comments about Measure R in Item 2 of the minutes, were made by Commissioner Lipson. Commissioner Takemiya moved, and Commissioner Kaplan seconded the motion to approve the minutes with the correction in Item 2. The motion carried with two abstentions, Chair Doshi and Commissioner Mitchell, who were not at that meeting.

- 6. Discussion Regarding East Bay Regional Park District Funds, Measure WW Park Bond Funding 2011 Application:
 - Bradshaw explained that the deadline for WW applications for projects is March 31, 2011. He reviewed the 2009 WW priorities:
 - a. Replacement of the Cerrito Vista play structure, which was installed July 2010.
 - b. Gilman Fields project, the City of El Cerrito's obligation was paid. That money has been obligated for our share.
 - c. Creekside Lighting –The environmental impact report has been completed.
 - d. Central Park improvement: small play area installed
 - e. Huber Park improvements—not approved by East Bay Regional Park because of need for more detailed plans.
 - f. Land acquisitions: only a cursory study of this has been done

The remaining balance of WW funds is \$489,576.

Bradshaw listed additional WW project suggestions which have come up in the past several months:

- a. Cerrito Vista field rehabilitation, which includes improving drainage or synthetic turf, which will increase usability of field. In regards to Cerrito Vista Park, the City is unsure of West Contra Costa Unified School District's commitment. There are plans to install competition fields at the high school, which would decrease their usage of Cerrito Vista.
- b. Installation of Quick Start Tennis Courts at Cerrito Vista Tennis Courts: Quick Start may be partially funded by a donation from the El Cerrito Tennis Association.

- 7. Batting cages at Cerrito Vista Park:

 Commissioner Lipson stated that the construction material for the batting cages is in storage, and volunteers can assemble it. This project can move forward under
- 8. Casa Cerrito land development, which is actually a large parcel, and would include the installation of fields, drainage, and removal of trees:

 It is premature to discuss the development of the land behind Casa Cerrito.
- 9. Acquisition of Portola Gymnasium:

own and needs no WW support.

We are unsure about the Portola gym, and did not know how it would figure into Measure WW. Commissioner Goldstein questioned the safety of the gymnasium, considering Portola has been closed because it is seismically unsafe. It was explained that the gym has been retrofitted.

This Commission decided not to make any additional project recommendations for 2011. Funding for WW will be available for 18 years. This is only year three, so there is no urgency in naming and getting projects out.

Commissioner Mitchell asked how the list of projects was created. Bradshaw explained that a City-wide survey was sent out, and hundreds of responses were received.

Tom Panas, 7345 Fairmont, stated he had spoken to this Commission previously about acquiring land. He would like the Commission to think about acquiring land now, particularly since land is at a low price.

Commissioner Mitchell asked how WW money will be affect by the State budget. It was explained that it would not be.

Commissioner Takemiya moved that more projects not be recommend as prospective WW projects. Commissioner Goldstein seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

10. Report Regarding Possible Location for Batting Cage and Quick Start Junior Tennis Court at Cerrito Vista Park:

Commissioner Lipson explained that the baseball community had been considering the strip of land by the tennis court parking lot on Avis Drive as a sight for a batting cage. Chair Doshi, Commissioner Lipson, and John Leonard a parent from the El Cerrito High School Baseball, met to consider the area adjacent to the Cerrito Vista baseball diamond, on the third base line. They measured an area at Cerrito Vista which will accommodate a batting cage and not interfere with soccer. Now there is a temporary cage made of plastic tubing that some of the parents have put together.

11. El Cerrito Trail Trekkers Introduction and Update:

David Weinstein, Environmental Quality Committee Member, explained he was speaking as a Trail Trekker, not as a EQC member. The Trekkers formed about six months ago and has 30 members. Their charge is to create a map of the trails,

paths and walkways of El Cerrito. Some of the trails could be improved with steps, hand rails, and many are good shape. They plan to map trails, do some landscaping, lead hikes, and install signage. They have a website, www.ec.trailtrekkers.org.

Commissioner Mitchell asked if the trails could be determined to be park, and eligible for WW funds. Bradshaw said that would be an academic discussion, and that in his opinion anything that is improved could be called a park. City owned improved pathways were included in the study for the Landscaping and Lighting District. They could qualify for funding.

Commissioner Kaplan asked whether a right of way is City owned land. Bradshaw explained when a subdivision is allocated, lots, easements, right of ways are dedicated for certain purposes, but the City is not given free title.

12. Environmental Quality Committee Green Teams Introduction and Update: David Weinstein explained that the EQC teams have been involved for a year and a half. The idea is to increase community involvement. Some of the projects that they have been involved in were: one hundred sixty two hours of broombusting in the Hillside area; 24 volunteer hours of Baxter Creek clean up; partnering with Windrush School, and tree planting. One of their goals is to increase community involvement and education.

Commissioner Kaplan asked if they had tools for group projects. Weinstein explained if some group had an environmental project, the EQC could help with tools. Chair Doshi suggested partnerships with the existing environmental groups at schools and offered to facilitate that.

13. Staff Update:

- a. City is anticipating a donation \$25,000 from the El Cerrito Tennis Association, which is dissolving. City has agreed that Alvin Hom, one of the original founders of the ECTA be involved with how that money is used.
- b. Day camp programs are out. We have received positive feedback on how easy to read the program is. This summer we have over thirty camps.
- c. We have received some pool rentals. The Splash Park will also be available for rental.
- d. Youth swim lessons will resume in April.
- e. The Aquatics staff is planning and end of school year celebration at swim center. A special family rate will be offered.
- f. The After School Programs include Jr. Golf at Madera, band at Madera and Harding schools, and enrichment programs at all three schools, Madera, Harding and Fairmont Elementary Schools.
- g. July 4th planning has already begun.
- h. Holiday Breakfast: We had a holiday breakfast which was very successful.

14. Items for Next agenda:

- a. Car Show
- b. Commissioner Lipson asked if Bill Savidge from the WCCUSD could attend to give an update. Chair Doshi asked for a timeline for the high school in lieu of Mr. Savidge's attending.
- c. Update on Huber Park
- d. Update on batting cage

15. Reorganization of Park and Recreation Commission:

Chair Doshi called for the re-organization of the Park and Recreation Commission. He commended fellow Commissioners for their service and City Staff for their accomplishments, especially considering the difficult economic times. Commissioner Takemiya said it was a pleasure having Chair Doshi as chair.

Kortz called declared the offices of Chair and Vice-Chair as vacant. She called for nominations for office of Chair.

Commissioner Kaplan nominated Commissioner Doshi as chair. Commissioner Goldstein moved that the nominations be closed. Kortz called for further nominations, and with no further nominations, closed the nominations. Commissioner Lipson seconded closing nominations. Kortz called for closing of nominations by voice vote. The motion carried unanimously. Kortz called for a voice vote in favor of electing Commissioner Doshi as chair. With a unanimous vote in favor of electing Commissioner Doshi chair, Kortz announced Commissioner Doshi elected as Chair of the El Cerrito Park and Recreation Commission.

Chair Doshi called for the nomination of vice-chair. Commissioner Takemiya nominated Commissioner Lipson. With no other nominations, Chair Doshi moved the nominations be closed. Commissioner Kaplan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Chair Doshi asked for a voice vote in the election of Commissioner Lipson as Vice Chair. He was elected unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Submitted by: Lori Teachout