



**MINUTES OF
RECREATION & PARK COMMISSION
MEETING OF JULY 10, 2008**

2226 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 747-7529

DATE: Thursday, July 10, 2008
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Room 360, City Hall, Santa Clara Avenue and Oak Street, Alameda, CA 94501

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Terri Ogden, Vice Chair Joe Restagno (late), Commissioners Lola Brown, Mike Cooper, and Gina Mariani

Staff: Dale Lillard, Director
John McDonald, Park Manager (PM)
Patrick Russi, Recreation Supervisor (RS)
Trini Blumkin, Sports Coordinator (SC)

Absent: Commissioners Jo Kahuanui and Bill Sonneman

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/S/C MARIANI/BROWN (approved)

“That the Minutes of June 12, 2008 Recreation and Park Commission Meeting are approved.”

Approved (4): Ogden, Restagno (late), Brown, Cooper, Mariani
Absent (2): Kahuanui, Sonneman

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, AGENDA

(Any person may address the Commission in regard to any matter over which the Commission has jurisdiction or of which it may take cognizance that is not on the agenda.)

The following people spoke to ask for the Recreation & Park Commission's support in keeping the maintenance at the Golf Course under City Control:

Terry Flipppo, Park Maintenance Worker and ACEA Board Member
Robert Devlin, Park Maintenance Worker
Alan Elnick, ACEA Representative

Chair Ogden stated that the Recreation and Park Commission does not have authority over the Corica Golf Complex. The Golf Commission would be the governing body.

Commissioner Cooper agreed and stated that this issue is not part of the Recreation & Park Commission's scope.

Commissioner Mariani stated that City Council has already made their decision and the Recreation & Park Commission cannot serve as an advisory on the issue.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review and Discussion of Drought Field Use Policy – (Discussion/Action Item)

Director Lillard stated that staff is requesting a temporary modification to the Field Use Policy due to over use of the fields and current drought conditions. Usually at this time of year, we close the fields to over seed, perform field maintenance, and extensively water the fields. But, with the 30 percent water reduction required by EBMUD it has affected our ability to take care of our fields in the usual manner.

PM McDonald stated that due to recent budget constraints and because the City has been asked by EBMUD to reduce water usage by 30 percent (due to drought restrictions), staff is recommending limiting the use of City of Alameda fields to Alameda residents only. This restriction would allow field use by the Recreation Department, AUSD Schools, and Alameda non-profit organization use for those who have 75% residents. Director Lillard stated that, if needed, we can review the policy again in 30, 60, or 90 days. Staff feels that EBMUD will not lift their restrictions until February or March 2009, after they have a chance to review their snow pack studies.

PM McDonald stated that even without the EBMUD restrictions, with the increase of park property to be maintained by the Park Maintenance Workers due to budget constraints and the amount of outside use that the fields have had this year, it will be very difficult to allow outside teams to use any fields.

Commissioner Mariani asked if staff had checked with other cities regarding what they were doing. PM McDonald stated that in other cities, he found that they have cut out all use during the spring and summer to rest their fields. The other cities also cut out mostly soccer and football play, but did allow softball and other light activities.

Director Lillard stated that this restriction will not affect resident groups.

Commissioner Mariani asked what percentage of field users has been non-resident. Director Lillard stated that is hard to determine. As long as there is one Alameda resident team playing a non-resident team it is fine. The problem is when there are two non-resident teams playing. In checking various league websites, there was approximately 1,000 hours used by non-resident teams last spring which is a lot of use for non-resident teams.

Commissioner Restagno asked if the non-resident use is more prevalent in the spring and/or fall season. Director Lillard stated that it is probably worse in the fall.

PM McDonald stated that for the first time this year, staff has been approached by groups to use the fields for off season, outside league use. A lot of other cities are not allowing outside use so other outside groups are coming to Alameda. Staff is receiving a lot of requests for fields at this time.

Ron Matthews, representative for Alameda Little League, Alameda Babe Ruth, Alameda All Stars and Alameda World Baseball, stated that all of their leagues are local. Mr. Matthews supports Director Lillard's and PM McDonald's recommendations. The field situation impacts all of baseball when non-resident usage comes in and bumps locals from using the fields. Their group has helped purchase \$10,000 worth of temporary fencing so that soccer and baseball can co-exist. But, when they find out that they are being bumped off the field by non-resident soccer teams it is very upsetting. Mr. Matthews reiterated that he supports the restricted use policy 100 percent.

Christopher Seiwald, former Alameda Soccer Club President and current President of Jack London Soccer League, spoke regarding their use of fields for soccer practices and games. Alameda Soccer has donated a lot of time and money to build the Hornet Field and help pay for the Alameda Point (AP) Multipurpose Field. Mr. Seiwald asked the Commission to please consider their needs. They have donated \$60,000 toward the construction of the AP Multipurpose Field, Mr. Borsoni donated over 1,000 hours of his professional time over the last couple of years, funds were given to repair the Lincoln Park field when it was needed and being used by both soccer and football, they also spent \$10,000 on temporary fencing, and provide a lot of equipment (goals), they built the Hornet Field (approximately \$300,000), and assist AUSD with some of their field needs. They do use AUSD fields to help alleviate the pressure on the City fields. Mr. Seiwald stated that they feel they have carried the load in the past and they would like to maintain their status quo.

Director Lillard stated that the restrictions would not affect Alameda Soccer Club (local group). They will receive their allocation of fields. It is the Jack London Soccer League (Bay Oaks) that is not meeting the Alameda resident requirements.

Commissioner Cooper asked how many Bay Oaks soccer players were registered. Mr. Seiwald stated that he thought there were approximately 450 players of which 33 percent of them are Alameda residents. Mr. Borsoni stated that there are actually 380 players with 134 (33 percent) of them from Alameda.

Commissioner Restagno asked of the 10 percent games, how many games and how many hours would that approximately equate. The issue is 1,000 hours of use by non-residents. Mr. Seiwald stated that as of the last ranking it was way in excess of 10 percent. Director Lillard asked what 10 percent would equate to in number of hours. Mr. Seiwald stated that they would have to provide that information at a later date.

Commissioner Cooper stated that given the water restrictions and wear on the fields he is concerned that the fields would be ruined. He appreciates that the soccer group has made monetary donations, but donating \$20,000 is not enough if the field needs to have major repairs/renovations because of overuse. Director Lillard stated that as an example the City is currently redoing Rittler Park Field and the cost is approximately \$200,000. Director Lillard stated that staff appreciates the donations that Alameda Soccer has made toward care of the fields. This year is a unique situation and we will have to limit field use.

Commissioner Mariani asked for clarification that the Alameda Soccer Club meets the residency requirement. Director Lillard stated the groups that would be permitted to use

the fields would be Alameda Soccer, Alameda Little League, Alameda Babe Ruth, and Alameda Football.

Commissioner Mariani asked for clarification on percentage of Alameda residents with Bay Oaks. Director Lillard stated that it was 33 percent.

Commissioner Restagno asked about practice use. Mr. Seiwald stated that every club provides some practice space to Bay Oaks. Alameda would provide some space as well.

PM McDonald stated that 340 hours were games 398 hours for practice from April to June. Staff is reviewing how permits are issued. Permits will be given out by days, games, and hour. That way staff will know when and where the practices are and will also know who is supposed to be out on the field at that particular time. Director Lillard stated that in prior years staff would issue permits with blocks of time to one person and that person would then parcel out the times and dates to the various groups.

Mr. Seiwald stated that Bay Oaks does not plan to have a repeat of what happened in the spring. With the new rules they will manage it appropriately and make sure that there are alameda kids on alameda fields.

Commissioner Cooper asked which fields Bay Oaks uses. Director Lillard stated that it changes from season to season, scheduled field renovations, etc.

Commissioner Brown stated that she is concerned that with the drought issue we are looking at the possibility of damaged fields. If we start looking at exceptions there will be others who will make the same types of requests and then we are putting the Recreation & Park Department in a position of trying to make exceptions for other groups.

M/S/C MARIANI/BROWN (approved)

“That use of City of Alameda fields be limited to Alameda residents only during these drought restrictions. Groups allowed to use the fields are: Recreation Department, AUSD Schools, and Alameda non-profit organizations with 75% residents. Groups not meeting the requirements are not allowed to use fields during this time. Policy will be reviewed in 90 days or sooner.”

Approved (5): Ogden, Restagno, Brown, Cooper, Mariani
Absent (2): Kahuanui, Sonneman

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Furniture Guidelines for the Dog Park Located at Lower Washington Park – (Discussion/Action Item)

Director Lillard stated that this item was discussed at the last Recreation & Park Commission Meeting. The Recreation & Park Department has received numerous complaints regarding furniture being left in the Washington Park Dog Park. Issues include:

- Safety concerns created by old rusty metal type chairs being left in the park.
- Vandalism - Chairs often end up in neighbor's yards, tennis courts, or on the property owned by the East Bay Regional Park District.
- Overall unappealing and junky look of some of the items.

Staff would like to have the chairs be molded plastic which can be stacked in an orderly manner.

Director Lillard stated that once permanent furniture is purchased and installed there would be no need for the molded plastic chairs.

Several small dog park users were at the meeting to discuss the issue.

M/S/C RESTAGNO/MARIANI (approved)

“That the Furniture Guidelines for the Dog Park located at Lower Washington Park be approved. Rules are:

- **Chairs must be of the molded plastic variety. No metal furniture will be allowed.**
- **No benches, other than the ones placed by the Recreation & Park Department will be allowed.**
- **Chairs must be stacked in a designated area as determined by the Department when not in use.**
- **Unauthorized furniture will be removed immediately as it is a safety hazard.**
- **Once permanent seating options are provided the portable chairs will need to be removed after use and will not be allowed to be stored at the site.”**

Approved (5): Ogden, Restagno, Brown, Cooper, Mariani
Absent (2): Kahuanui, Sonneman

7. REPORTS FROM RECREATION COMMISSION AND RECREATION AND PARK DIRECTOR

A. Park Division

See July 8, 2008 Activity Report. Renovation of the Rittler Park Field has begun.

B. Recreation Division

See July 8, 2008 Activity Report.

Commissioner Restagno asked staff about Day Camp going green. He mentioned that Day Camp staff requires participants bring bag lunches and that everything needs to be disposable. The trend is that everyone should go green, so maybe we should have participants bring their lunch in a lunch box. RS Russi stated that he will have to talk to staff about the suggestion and get back to the Commission.

C. Mastick Senior Center

See July 8, 2008 Activity Report.

D. Other Reports and Announcements

8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, GENERAL

Director Lillard stated that the Budget process is complete. All departments took an 8% cut with the exception of Police and Fire who cut 4%. ARPD cuts were:

- ARPD took back the contract for the passive parks. Park Maintenance Workers are now maintaining those passive areas.
- Tennis court lights will be eliminated at Leydecker Park.
- There will be no General Funds used to pay for the Meyers House & Garden Museum.
- Senior Clerk reassigned to Housing Authority.
- Special Events (Art in the Park and Run for the Parks) will not be held this year.

Commissioner Brown asked if there was some way that the Friends of the Parks, Inc. could underwrite the Art in the Park Event. Director Lillard stated that staff has met with the representatives from the Frank Better Center and Webster St. Business Association. The event will not be held this year. But, Webster St. Business Association will allow local artists to participate in their Webster St. event this year. Next year the Frank Bette Center (FBC) will take over the event with ARPD as a co-sponsor. FBC will do all the administrative work (e.g., contact artists, booth assignments, etc.) and ARPD will handle logistics (e.g., provide, park, assist with City permits, etc.).

9. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

10. SET DAY FOR NEXT MEETING Thursday, August 14, 2008

11. ADJOURNMENT