



## **ALAMEDA RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING**

**DATE:** Thursday, November 12, 2020  
**TIME:** 7:12 p.m. Called to Order  
**PLACE:** City Hall Council Chambers

A video recording of the meeting may be viewed at <https://alameda.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>  
The following are action minutes in keeping with the Sunshine Ordinance 2-91.17.

### **ROLL CALL**

Present: (Teleconference via Zoom) Chair Alexander, Vice Chair Robbins, Commissioner Limoges  
Commissioner Barnes and Commissioner Navarro  
Staff: (Teleconference via Zoom) Alameda Recreation and Park Department (ARPD) Director Amy Wooldridge

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Alexander moved to accept the minutes of October 8, 2020 Regular Meeting as presented.  
M/S Commissioner Navarro / Vice Chair Robbins. All present in favor with 5 ayes via roll call vote.

### **WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

- Written Communication: none
- Oral Communication: none

### **REPORTS FROM THE RECREATION AND PARK DIRECTOR**

ARPD Director Amy Wooldridge gave the report. (See Exhibit 1)

### **REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

- Commissioner Barnes: Participated in more conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion for the Diversity and Inclusion Policy for ARPD.
- Commissioner Navarro: Has been checking out the various parks and nine times out of ten, sees people wearing masks and being diligent. Went to Tillman Park and enjoyed the park as there was fewer people. Encouraged public to check out the smaller and lesser used parks for easier social distancing.
- Vice Chair Robbins: Went by Washington Park at 8:00am and was concerned that two different groups of twenty were on basketball courts doing exercise classes, while people who were there to play basketball had to wait. Question: Is there a permit process? Answer: Yes, ARPD has a permit for fitness classes and it's challenging to enforce. If people are unable to use the courts then they can call the ARPD office or Park Monitor phone line.
- Chair Alexander: Put signs all around parks for the Rename Jackson Park effort to solicit name ideas for the parks while Vice Chair Robbins put signs up along Webster Street. Did outreach to many organizations and on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Also commented it was good to see kids back on the swings and at the ball field again and noted the Pickleball Courts are full. Observed the RAP program and said the staff was doing a great job.
- Chair Limoges: Visited Portola Triangle Park and didn't realize it was under ARPD. A great little park and is delighted to see the debris is being cleared out and logs have been added for

seating and climbing. Director: This park was previously under Public Works maintenance and recently was added to the Parks Department. Several Park Maintenance staff including Nigel Lewis did an amazing job cleaning up the park.

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **6-A Bayport Park Playground Design Review and Comment**

Jordan Hall, ARPD Intern from Cal State East Bay, gave the presentation, which included the history, site location, funding sources and design plan which is an outer space theme to complement the Star mascot of the adjacent Ruby Bridges Elementary School. The fully inclusive playground design includes a variety of swings, slides for all ages, interactive panels and a swaying rocket ship with a cockpit control. There will also be a few shaded picnic tables.

Commissioner Navarro motioned to accept the Bayport Park playground design as presented. M/S Commissioner Navarro / Vice Chair Robbins. All present in favor with 5 ayes via roll call vote.

### **6-B Review and Recommendation on Gaga Pit at Portola Triangle Park**

Jack Wilhem, ARPD Recreation Leader and Eagle Scout, gave the presentation (Exhibit 2) which included his idea to fundraise and build a Gaga Ball pit for his Eagle Scout project, location, diagrams of the Gaga Ball Pit and how the game is played. Also shared the history of Gaga Ball which originated in Israel in the 1970's and in Hebrew, Gaga translates to "touch touch". Friends of the Park have agreed to donate \$1,000 towards the \$6,000 project. Jack Wilhelm will be responsible for the overall fundraising goal which includes selling spots for engraved plates on the pit and a Go Fund Me account. ARPD will help promote the fundraising effort.

Vice Chair Robbins motioned to approve the Gaga Pit to be installed at the park as presented. M/S Vice Chair Robbins / Commissioner Limoges. All present in favor with 5 ayes via roll call vote.

## **ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA:**

- Recommendations for naming the park formerly known as Jackson Park
- New park naming and renaming process
- Introduce new Parks Manager Matt Nowlen.

**SET NEXT MEETING DATE:** December 10, 2020

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn

M/S Commissioner Navarro / Vice Chair Robbins

Motion carried by the following voice vote: All in favor with a 5 ayes via roll call vote.

Chair Alexander adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM

## EXHIBIT 1

### 11/12/2020 ARPD Director's Report

#### Presented by Recreation and Park Director Amy Wooldridge

#### **Recreation Services**

- Krusi Park Virtual Grand Opening is live and can be viewed at [www.alamedaca.gov/recreation](http://www.alamedaca.gov/recreation)
- On Thanksgiving Day, Aquatics is hosting a Turkey Dip with different types of workouts before the Thanksgiving meal. Weekend lessons will continue through the winter and as well as Lap Swim and Aqua Aerobics.
- The Alameda Point gymnasium is open and hosting youth practices with social distance and safety protocols in place.
- Alameda Youth Committee – youth leadership development group - is now meeting and planning teen activities
- Friends Connect, a social group for teens with developmental disabilities, is also now meeting online.
- Halloween Family Trivia Night on Halloween: This first Trivia Night was very successful with over 63 computers registered and over 100 participants. Lots of positive feedback and family fun. ARPD will be hosting more trivia nights in coming months.
- Upcoming ARPD events
  - a. Virtual Mayors Tree Lighting and Family Trivia Night – December 5.
  - b. Virtual Santa Visits – December 19-23.
  - c. Winter Wonderland Camp – taking place at various sites for Teens and Youth from December 21-December 31.

#### **Mastick Senior Center**

- Membership total from July 2020 – present, has reached 2,061.
- Offering 19 ongoing Zoom classes and three outdoor classes (Yoga, Pickleball and Drawing/Painting).
- Recreation Manager reached out to nearby city senior center staff to compare programming. All are focused on essential services, case management, mental health services, some Zoom classes and very limited outdoor classes. Working with Alameda County Health for clarification in which tier senior centers are classified.
- Preparing the construction documents for the front entryway project. Depending on weather, anticipate the project's completion by January 2021.
- Offering a scavenger hunt to Mastick members as a holiday event.
- For over 25 years, Mastick volunteers have responded to the letters received in the Santa mailbox positioned on Thompson Avenue (Santa Claus Lane). This year, as a result of COVID, staff will respond to the letters to maintain the holiday tradition.
- At present, a handful of volunteers are coming into the Center to assist with the garden maintenance, thrift shop, loading the kiln, and media room (Book Grab and Go program) and class instruction. Volunteers follow all safety protocols.
- Mastick Social Hall is being used for a blood drive today and for a free flu shot clinic on Dec. 7.

#### **Park Maintenance**

- Reopened all playgrounds with safety compliance being the responsibility of visitors. We continue to have many residents who are not wearing their masks while at the playground or at parks. We are increasing mask awareness signage and our Park Ambassadors are out educating the public every weekend. We ask that everyone over the age of 2 to wear a mask at all times while in public and at parks.
- Also opened basketball courts at smaller, neighborhood parks, also requiring masks, social distancing and only used by household members at one time.
- Parks staff/contractors planted just over 100 trees in October
- Preparing for new park openings at Alameda Point in 2021.

### **Administration / Projects**

- The Rename Jackson Park Committee received 153 park name ideas from the community outreach last month. The committee is now vetting the names and will bring a final short list of name recommendations to the Commission in December.
- Collaborated with Rhythmix and on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm is the virtual opening of the Creating Our Future art installation – a public art display at the park formerly known as Jackson Park on Encinal Avenue at Park Avenue.
- Long-time ARPD Parks Manager John McDonald has retired. Huge thanks and appreciation to 20+ years of John's service to the city. His dedication, creativity and hard work truly made parks and the Alameda community better! We welcome Matt Nowlen as our new Parks Manager. He was promoted to this position and brings a wealth of park maintenance and project management experience. We are now promoting for the hiring of the Parks Supervisor and will have other positions open soon.
- The Alameda Point Neighborhood Park is anticipated to open in January 2021. We are working to allocate staffing for maintenance of this new park, funded by an assessment district.
- A use agreement with the Alameda Soccer Club is being recommended to City Council for its continued use of the Alameda Point soccer fields and Hornet soccer field and futsal court. The AP Fields is a 10-year agreement with a 10-year option to renew. This longer term helps Alameda Soccer Club apply for grants and identify donors to build more infrastructure at the fields including in-ground irrigation, possibly lights, storage, permanent fencing and improved landscaping.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan for ARPD. City Manager's office wants to create a citywide foundation and will be engaging with a consultant to do this work. Then funding will be requested through the next budget cycle with the department level DEI work, such as an Action Plan, occurring later in 2021.

# Gaga Ball Pit

Jack Wilhelm's Eagle Project Portola Triangle Park

## Why Gaga ball?

- Game made in the 1970's by summer counselors in Israel
- "Gaga" = touch touch
- Learned about at social retreat
- Worked at Lincoln Park and played it with the youths
- Active and fun w/o moving long distances.
- Easy to learn but fun to master.
- No gaga ball pits in Alameda





What it looks like





# Location



## Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq7tuG6xbuY>

# Plan

- Purchasing gaga ball pit kit, ground pads, and ground/path preparation (approximately \$6,000)
- Kit to be assembled by Scouts from Troop 78
- Scouts to participate in ground prep as needed
- Fundraising plan to sell spots on engraved plates on pit
- Total cost of engraving will be around \$500-\$600
- FOTP=\$1,000