

# **Richmond Recreation & Parks Commission**

## **MINUTES**

**Wednesday, July 13, 2022 6:00 PM**



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### **CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Meeting called to order by Chair Joey Smith at 6:01pm

### **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Joey Smith, Soheila Bana, Allison Blakeley, Catalin Kaser, Aaron Rowden and Eleanor Thompson

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 Blakeley to accept the agenda meeting as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Thompson, and carried unanimously by a voice vote.

### **OPEN FORUM**

Cordell Hindler, Richmond, congratulated Commissioner Thompson on her re-appointment to the Recreation and Parks Commission. In addition, Mr. Hindler extended an invitation to the Richmond Rotary Club meeting at the Richmond Country Club on Friday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 12:30pm.

David Swanson and Diane Richwine, Richmond, expressed their desire to have more neighborhood block parties; however, the process with the City of Richmond is too expensive and difficult which needs to be streamlined. It is their experience that more block parties would help with crime control and improve neighborhoods getting to know one another.

Commissioner Kaser also expressed support for block parties, as it is a proven fact that getting to know your neighbors helps to secure our city and make our streets safer. She would encourage action be taken to make block parties something Richmond celebrates and encourages.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGH THE CHAIR**

- a) Chair Smith advised that the Next Commission meeting would be held on August 3 2022 via Zoom.
- b) The balance in the Commission Trust account was reported to be \$6,750 in the Trust for the RTA Snow Ball account; however, Commissioner Hurlbut was not in attendance to verify the exact amount or advise if Snow Ball scholarships have been awarded.
- c) There were membership changes with the Re-appointment of Commissioner Thompson through 10/26/24. In addition, Vice Chair Havenar-Daughton advised the Commission via email that he needed to resign, as he has been given the opportunity to seek other endeavors.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Approve Minutes of the May 4, 2022 Special Meeting**

**Approve Minutes of the May 4, 2022 Meeting**

**Approve Minutes of the June 1, 2022 Meeting**

Commission Kaser asked that the minutes be addressed separately, as she and other commissioners were not in attendance for all the previous meetings.

As to the May 4, 2022 Special Meeting and regular May 4, 2022 Meeting, Commissioner Kaser motioned to approve these minutes, seconded by Commissioner Rowden, and carried with a voice vote to approve with Commissioner Blakeley abstaining.

As to the June 1, 2022 Meeting, Commissioner Rowden motioned to approve these minutes, and Chair Smith seconded as she was the only other person in attendance. Item carried with a voice vote to approve with Commissioner Blakely, Kaser, and Thompson abstained.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

### **Public Works: Facilities**

Report from Jose Urquilla, Superintendent of Facilities, was provided verbally and visually, and responded to questions as to the concerns of the hydraulic lift damage at the Auditorium.

### **Parks & Landscaping Divisions**

Greg Hardesty, Superintendent of Parks & Landscaping, provided a verbal and visual report, and responded to questions as to the use of goats to handle weed abatement and he hopes to get further funding in the future. Secretary Blakeley inquired as to the status of portable facilities at Cheese Park and Mr. Hardesty advised he will follow up to get them out there soon. Commissioner Bana asked about weed abatement to the 94803 area and expressed her concerns as we approach fire season. Commissioner Kaser brought up the need to replace the rubber mat at Burg Park and Greg advised they were aware and anticipate getting bids soon. Chair Smith asked for an update on the multi-language signage in which Greg informed they are getting correct verbiage before posting.

### **Community Services Division: Recreation and Neighborhood Services**

Ranjana Maharaj, Deputy Director for Community Service-Recreation, provided an extensive oral and

visual report and responded to comments from Chair Smith, specifically as to the process and timeline of how the Richmond Tool Library handles requests and returns.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

**Harbour 8 Park Update** – No one appeared to speak

**West Contra Costa Fire Safe Council** – Commissioner Bana gave an educational report on this new council and how they will focus on keeping our neighborhoods safe from fire and other natural disasters. In the near future, they hope to get a web site for public outreach and to further educate the public.

## **AD HOC COMMITTEE STATEMENTS**

**Sustainability and Climate Responsiveness Committee** (Catalin/Maryn)

Commissioner Kaser advised she has been in contact with Amos White of *100k Trees for Humanity*, who would like to include places in Richmond to get more trees planted and would like to give a presentation in September. In addition, she has spoken to Ben Kaufman, from Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, who is working on improving recreation connectivity in Richmond and will be giving a presentation in August. Commissioner Kaser extended an invitation to add members to this Ad Hoc Committee and Commission Blakeley volunteered.

## **DISCUSSIONS & ACTION ITEMS**

Commissioner Bana requested that a recommendation be made to City Council to remove the application process and fees for small groups. Chair Smith and Ms. Maharaj advised this needs to be discussed in-house with CSD management team.

a) **NOMINATE** Committee for the election of Officers to the R&P Commission

Chair Smith advised there were nominations for herself as Chair, Commissioner Rowden as Vice Chair, Commissioner Blakeley to continue as Secretary, and Commissioner Thompson as Treasurer. All have accepted these nominations. Commissioner Kaser moved to ratify the slate of candidates as was presented, with a second by Commissioner Bana. The matter was carried with a unanimous voice vote.

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

With Vice Chair Havenar-Daughton's resignation, Chair Smith asked if any commissioner would like to lead this endeavor and Commissioner Rowden expressed his interest and will reach out to Brendan for updates.

## **COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORTS / COMMENTS**

Chair Smith thanked CSD, Landscape and Parks, and Richmond Fire Department for their support for Willie Mays Day, the Juneteenth celebration, and the July 3<sup>rd</sup> Fireworks event. Chair Smith expressed her excitement for attending the opening of permanent pickleball courts on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Commissioner Blakeley provided written comments as to her updates and asked if it was possible to

apply for grant funding for restrooms at Cheese Park and Ms. Maharaj stated she will check with staff.

Commissioner Kaser reported she was able to enjoy many park activities such as the Juneteenth celebration and the pickleball opening. She asked if there could be a park assignment and further guidance on specific tasks to fulfill more details to report on.

Commissioner Rowden reiterated he would appreciate further instruction as stated by Commissioner Kaser and Chair Smith will follow up to provide clarity.

Commissioner Thompson thanked all who helped with the Willie Mays Day and the July celebration. She voiced concern over limited Summer classes for Tennis and Swimming, as she was contacted by members of the community, who were unable to get all their children enrolled before slots were filled.

Commissioner Kaser expressed interest in getting a physical map of all City of Richmond Parks given to the Commission. She further asked if there was a plan for reviewing and revising the Master Parks Plan. Ms. Maharaj stated she will reach out to Greg Hardesty, as it will be a collaborative effort between Recreation and Parks.

Ms. Maharaj offered to provide a parks tour in the future. Chair Smith would like to check on the vacancies on the commission and offer a tour once those vacancies are filled.

#### **AGENDA SETTING FOR NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE TOPICS**

Secretary Blakeley reiterated that Greg Hardesty will follow up with getting portables for Cheese Park and provide an update for the next meeting. In addition, we will plan to hear presentations from Ben Kaufman (*Rails-to-Trails*) at the August meeting and Amos White (*100k Trees for Humanity*) possibly at the September meeting. Ms. Maharaj will reach out to Toody Maher and the Mayor's office to possibly reschedule presentations for future meetings.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:40pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Christine George  
Executive Secretary