

Richmond Recreation & Parks Commission

MINUTES

Wednesday, December 7, 2022 6:00 PM



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CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Joey Smith, Allison Blakeley, Maryn Hurlbut, Catalin Kaser, Aaron Rowden and Eleanor Thompson

ABSENT: Soheila Bana

Chair Smith provided a brief overview of the meeting procedures and the Mission of the Recreation & Parks Commission.

AGENDA REVIEW

Motion by Commissioner Hurlbut to approve the agenda, seconded by Secretary Blakeley, and carried unanimously by a voice vote.

OPEN FORUM

Cordell Hindler, Richmond, invited everyone to attend the Richmond Rotary Club Holiday Auction on Friday, 12/09/22 from, 12:00 pm – 2:00pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGH THE CHAIR

- a) Chair Smith advised the Next Commission meeting would be held on January 11 2023, via Zoom.
- b) The balance of the Commission Trust account remains at \$413.08; the RTA Snow Ball account total is unconfirmed pending confirmation from Staff.
- c) There were no membership changes.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion by Commissioner Hurlbut to approve both the minutes of October 5, 2022 and November 2, 2022 as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Kaser, and carried with an unanimous voice vote.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

Public Works: Facilities

Jose Urquilla, Superintendent of Facilities, provided a detailed verbal and visual report.

Parks & Landscaping Divisions

Greg Hardesty, Superintendent of Parks & Landscaping, shared a verbal and visual report and answered questions from Commissioner Kaser. In addition, Commissioner Hurlbut expressed concerns as to the newly resurfaced ball fields at Nicholl Park and how to get them back to their original condition. Ms. Hurlbut specifically inquiring as to what the maintenance protocols are currently and how to get ideas going forward to keep the fields in good working order prior to baseball season. Greg stated he will need to do some research and will put together a plan or recommendation.

Mr. Hardesty provided an update as to the signage for facilities and indicated that approximately 90 percent of the park signs have QR graphics which provide the RMC codes in both English and Spanish. Chair Smith inquired as to having QR signage to include several other languages but indicated the Spanish language signage should be a priority, as this has been a specific request in the past.

Commissioner Hurlbut suggested reaching out to the Neighborhood Councils to get their input for the signage at the parks in their area. Commissioner Blakeley proposed having signage using pictures graphics as seen at other city parks. Chair Smith reminded everyone that picture signage was previously discussed and was believed to be an option. Mr. Hardesty stated he could have stickers created to address the leash law.

Commissioner Kaser discussed there are two matters on the signage topic– the legal concerns that can be enforced by law enforcement and the communication issues which should be prioritized, as it can ultimately help all understand the expectations at each park. By posting picture signage this would provide a quick solution. Mr. Hardesty reiterated he would pursue the picture graphics for each sign.

Vice-Chair Rowden also encouraged the use of the Neighborhood Councils to assist in the uniqueness of each park. Mr. Rowden expressed the importance of ensuring every member of the community are on the same page to keep our parks safe and welcoming to all. Chair Smith reminded all that our goal is to fulfill the public's requests and looks forward to getting this issue resolved.

As to the Fairmede Park discussion item, Mr. Hardesty informed all that this park is under the jurisdiction of the school district but stated he could reach out to their landscape supervisor to express the concerns of the field conditions.

Community Services Division: Recreation and Neighborhood Services

Ranjana Maharaj provided an extensive oral and visual report with Commissioner Hurlbut asking for details on the upcoming Snow Ball event.

Hope Lattell, Senior Accountant for Community Services-Recreation, provided a brief visual and verbal update on the Discount Report Overview for the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2022/2023.

PRESENTATIONS

Richmond Parks Master Plan– Marcia Vallier shared an oral and visual presentation of the Richmond Parks Master Plan Parks Assessment. Commissioner Kaser followed up with questions and expressed her excitement for the new Parks Master Plan and looks forward to having an updated, useful tool of Richmond Parks. Commissioner Hurlbut asked to be included in future discussions on pickle ball and dog parks.

AD HOC COMMITTEE STATEMENTS

a.) Sustainability and Climate Responsiveness Committee (Catalin/Maryn/Allison)

Commissioner Kaser shared they have not been able to have any meeting in the last month.

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

Vice-Chair Rowden stated he was unable to provide any updates but hopes to have more details in the upcoming year.

At this time (8:03 pm), Chair Smith called for a motion to extend the meeting beyond the scheduled 8:30 pm time which was motioned by Vice-Chair Rowden to extend 15 minutes (8:45 pm) and seconded by Commissioner Hurlbut and carried with a unanimous voice vote.

DISCUSSIONS & ACTION ITEMS

a) RECEIVE an update on the Associate Commissioner Program

Ms. Maharaj provided a brief history of the Associate Commissioner Program as it was recorded through the Recreation and Parks Commission past meeting minutes. LaShonda White, Interim Director for Library and Community Services, shared that the previous option known as the Y-PLAN was no longer possible due to the city's staffing capacity. As a result, Ms. White stated the next steps were for the Commission to have discussions and report back on future plans, keeping in mind the City of Richmond's staffing constraints.

Commissioner Hurlbut shared the importance in educating youth on what it takes to become a civil servant. Commissioner Kaser shared that while this is important, she sees the most urgent issue is recruiting and retaining members of the community to the many vacancies on boards and commissions. Vice-Chair Rowden shared the importance of having a youth member in the future.

Commissioner Hurlbut proposed to have a new ad-hoc committee for youth community outreach.

COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORTS / COMMENTS

Chair Smith shared she visited her parks and has reached out to staff regarding the Snow Ball event and is still awaiting an update.

Vice-Chair Rowden requested the need to be assigned parks in 2023.

Secretary Blakeley made arrangements to donate to the Snow Ball Scholarship Fund.

Commissioner Hurlbut reviewed her parks and continues to clean up a couple times per week. In addition, Ms. Hurlbut shared her commitment to offering funds to all applicants for the Snow Ball Scholarship Funds.

AGENDA SETTING FOR NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE TOPICS

Ms. Maharaj informed all that Commissioner Hurlbut’s motion to add an Ad-Hoc Committee for Youth Outreach was not seconded and voted on. As Commission Kaser has left the meeting, there is no quorum, so this will become an Action Item at the January meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine George
Executive Secretary