

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY & OLDER ADULT SERVICES COMMISSION

August 23, 2012

The regular meeting of the Community Services Commission was called to order at 6:32 p.m., Thursday, by Vice-chair Russell in the Mitchell room, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

Members present: Commissioner Fralish, Commissioner Bologna, Commissioner Pitcher, Commissioner Russell, Commissioner Nelson, and Commissioner Farwell.

Commissioners absent: Commissioner Burrows.

Staff present: Jerry Van Leeuwen, Director of Community Services; Amy Shipley, Older Adult Services Manager; Karen Williams, Program Coordinator for the Park Avenue Community Center, Corinne Triol, Administrative Coordinator; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

INTRODUCTIONS: The Commissioners introduced themselves to the public audience.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Pitcher, to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2012, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE & INFORMATION: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATION: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

STONE BREWING - UPDATE

Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that there was no movement with Stone Brewing Company taking over concessions in Kit Carson Park. He also stated that another company was possibly interested.

CURRENT BUSINESS:

1. SELECTION OF NEW CHAIR

ACTION:

Moved by Vice-chair Russell, seconded by Commissioner Pitcher, to nominate Commissioner Bologna for Chairman. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION ORDINANCE** – Received.

3. **SELF-DIRECTED TOUR**

Mr. Van Leeuwen referenced the staff report and provided an overview of the following parks:

a. Grape Day – James Stone Pool, Play Equipment, dog walk (new ideas)

Commissioner Nelson asked what funds were freed up from the community room. Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that over \$1 million would be available in five years with \$400,000 being available this year.

Commissioner Bologna and staff discussed the impacts of waiving development fees, on the recreation department. Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that this would impact park development funds.

Wendy Barker, Director of History Center, provided the background history for the History Center. She expressed her concern with Grape Day Park being known as having a large population of homeless, which impacted both the park and the History Center. She indicated that the park needed more active and family oriented uses. She stated that they conducted surveys of the park through grants and created a master plan in 2009. She stated that they held 6 movie events in the park, which were well received. Ms. Barker stated that they were in favor of installing play equipment in Grape Day Park, noting that they had some funds to help with the installation.

Jesse Longacre, Escondido, asked if the police department had been contacted to do bicycle patrolling in the park. Ms. Barker noted that she had seen them in the park but was not aware of how often they patrolled the park.

Commissioner Farwell asked Ms. Barker what the age group was that visited the center. Ms. Barker noted that the ages ranged from 5 to 12.

Chairman Bologna asked if the repairs being done on the Grape Vine play equipment was caused from normal use or vandalism. Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that the repairs were for normal wear and tear.

b. KCP – ESC Community Room. Batting Cages

Chairman Bologna suggested considering using a third party to operate and install the batting cages, noting his concern for City liability.

Commissioner Bologna and Mr. Van Leeuwen discussed the viability of creating a community room in Kit Carson Park without a kitchen. Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that the direction was to consider creating a playground with a shade structure.

- c. Charros/El Caballo Trailhead – Equestrian facility, will it be included in the City park system

Benjamin Cueva, Escondido, provided some background history of the Charros de Escondido. He felt the City should consider creating a master plan for an equestrian facility at Daley Ranch. He noted that the facility would incorporate therapeutic riding for children and veterans, noting they had already been in touch with the Wounded Warrior Foundation as well as Freedom Dogs. He stated that in order to be an official Charro Association a female component was needed, noting he would like to see a school through their fundraising for the Escaramuza. He elaborated that they already had donations for the facilities but needed a master plan approved by the City.

Marta Jimenez, Escondido, noted she had formed the Escaramuza Charro in 2008. She felt this would be a great component for the community's female population. She stated that she was in favor of the proposed project.

Rick Paul, Escondido, noted that he volunteered at Daley Ranch and was on the Board of Directors for Daley Ranch. He stated that the whole community came together for the equestrian use and the park use. He stated that a master plan needed to be developed for Daley Ranch, feeling it would also pull the Escondido Creek Plan together. He also noted that they petitioned to become a 501c3.

Commissioner Farwell asked if anything was happening at Daley Ranch. Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that some work was occurring at the ranch house, noting it was very popular.

Commissioner Pitcher questioned what the fiscal financial impact would be. Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that the Charros was an independent association. He stated that some options would be to lease a larger piece of the property, use the property as a City developed property and rent space, or build it and operate it.

Commissioner Nelson asked if the preliminary piece was to identify Daley Ranch as a Park. Mr. Van Leeuwen replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Pitcher asked what a master plan would cost. Mr. Van Leeuwen felt it would cost approximately \$50,000.

Nova Morgan, Escondido, was in favor of creating a park master plan for Daley Ranch. She felt creating an equestrian park would be very beneficial for the community.

Dale Elmer, Escondido, noted that the vision of the El Caballo Coalition was to develop a recreational, educational, and rehabilitation use park and to preserve its natural beauty. He asked that the City approve the parks' name as El Caballo Park, allow the coalition to proceed with a master plan, and that the City help fund said master plan.

Marilyn Carpenter, Escondido, noted she was a volunteer at the Humane Society and a member of the El Caballo Park Coalition. She stated that they had meetings biweekly for creating the El Caballo Trailhead, noting they had a website, were on Facebook, and had blogs. She noted that the goal was to improve the area. She felt the Charros arena and the Humane Society should be included in the master plan.

Don Greene, Escondido, requested that the City approve the El Caballo Trailhead area of Daley Ranch as a park and provide funding for a master plan.

Salvador, Escondido, noted that he was the secretary for the Charros. He noted that the Charros was not limited to the Spanish community, noting the whole community was welcome.

Sergio, Escondido, noted that he was an Iraqi Veteran and supported the concept of creating an equestrian venue for the veterans.

Commissioner Pitcher asked who would supply the horses for the programs. Mr. Cueva stated that they had associations who would provide the horses until they could get a program up and running. He also noted that discussions had ensued regarding creating equestrian patrols for Daley Ranch.

Mr. Rick Paul noted that he would like to see a horse rental component included in the Master Plan.

Virginia Kuwahara, Escondido, noted she was on the Board of Directors for Hoofs and Woofs Animal Rescue, noting they were interested in donating horses for the programs at the park.

Aaron Gutierrez, Escondido, felt creating an equestrian park would help keep the youth off the streets.

Mercedes Iglesias, Escondido, asked the audience who were associated with the El Caballo Organization to stand. (Where upon the majority of the audience stood)

d. Jesmond Dene – Youth baseball field #3 lighting

Chairman Bologna questioned whether the expense of installing the lighting would justify the expenditure for tournaments.

Commissioner Farwell expressed concern with the fencing for the park.

e. Escondido Creek Trail – Adjacent Washington Park – Unsupervised skate park.

Commissioner Pitcher and staff discussed the location for the proposed skate park.

Commissioner Farwell was opposed to an unsupervised park.

Commissioner Nelson felt it would be a liability to the City. Commissioner Bologna concurred.

f. 11th Avenue Park Site

Discussion ensued regarding a clarification of the subject area.

Chairman Bologna felt the subject site had potential for the future, but expressed his view that other parks needed to be focused on.

Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that the Commission had the option to keep the funds in the bank until enough funds were available to do something substantial.

g. Pocket Park at the Corner of Felicita and Escondido Boulevard – Upgrades including play equipment

Commissioner Pitcher felt the area was limited.

Louise Conner, Escondido, questioned whether the subject piece of property could be traded for another piece of property. Mr. Van Leeuwen felt it might be difficult to trade given its small size unless the adjacent business wanted to expand.

Commissioner Pitcher was in favor of pursuing the 11th Avenue Park, El Caballo Park, and the City's pools.

Commissioner Farwell liked the concept of a splash park in Washington Park.

Commissioner Pitcher noted Washington Park was used extensively and always busy.

Victoria Kahn, Escondido, asked that the lot at Ash and Washington be included in the Escondido Creek Trail.

Discussion ensued regarding installing the splash park in Grape Day Park.

Commissioner Nelson was in favor of moving forward with El Caballo Park and seeing if the partnerships would come forward to participate with the City. He was in favor of pursuing Grape Day Park and the 11th Avenue Park proposals. He also was in favor of pursuing the Kit Carson Park batting cage concept if the City did not have to fund it.

The consensus of the Commission was not to pursue the unsupervised skate park, Felicita pocket park, and the Jesmond Dene park lighting.

Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that there was a master plan for the 11th Avenue Park site, which incorporates a walking area.

****ACTION:**

Moved by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by vice-chairman Russell, to recommend the following: 1) Ensure that the existing parks were being maintained and repaired in a manner best for the community; 2) focus on venues that provide the best return and that maximize the participation of the greatest number of community members; 3) build the neighborhood feel so that everyone was treated equitably; 4) expand on items historically and culturally reflective showing the partnerships with existing facilities; and 5) include historical background of Grape Day Park. Motion carried unanimously.

4. INTERIM USE OF VACANT LAND

Mr. Van Leeuwen referenced the staff report and questioned whether the Commission would be in favor of allowing the lease or rental of vacant land that the City owned. He noted that the City has been approached by various entities to rent vacant City owned land.

Commissioner Bologna asked if BMX approached the City. Mr. Van Leeuwen replied in the affirmative.

Louise Conner, Escondido, suggested creating a dog park on the south side of Escondido.

Virginia Kuwahara and Ms. Conner suggested using the vacant land in the area of Ash and Washington as a community garden.

Commissioner Pitcher asked who would provide the irrigation. Mr. Van Leeuwen noted that the City would provide it, noting it would require a drip system.

Commissioner Farwell was in favor of a community garden. She also stated that the schools might be able to participate.

Commissioner Russell suggested talking to Rick Mercurio, noting community gardens required a lot of work. Mr. Van Leeuwen suggested talking to the Revealing the Creek Coalition and suggesting this as a component for the project.

Commissioner Nelson and Mr. Van Leeuwen discussed creating a term lease for the garden project.

5. DOGS ON LEASH IN ESCONDIDO PARKS

Mr. Van Leeuwen referenced the staff report and requested input regarding the following options: 1) Continue to restrict dogs from the park; 2) allow dogs on a leash in designated areas of the park; and 3) allow dogs on a leash anywhere in the park.

Commissioner Nelson was in favor of allowing dogs on a leash but felt signage needed to specify that they must remain on a leash.

Commissioner Farwell felt people would bring dogs to the park regardless of on a leash or not.

Chairman Bologna was in favor of allowing dogs in parks as long as they were on a leash.

The consensus of the Commission was to pursue renting or leasing vacant City owned land.

6. RECREATION UPDATE

Ms. Shipley noted that they had a community meeting at the Sports Center with the hockey league to receive input.

Commissioner Farwell noted they were called to the meeting because the recreation division was to be taken out of the park, noting that the community did not want to take the recreation division out of it.

Ms. Shipley noted that the disc golf course was well received in Kit Carson Park, noting that staff was working with disc golf to improve the play and etiquette and signage. She noted that Aces has helped build the sport, noting that a large tournament would be held in the park in the near future. Ms. Shipley then provided an update on the Cal South soccer event held at Ryan Park as well as the summer camp programs.

Discussion ensued regarding updates on the City's swim programs.

Ms. Shipley noted that the Maple Street project would be open in September. She also noted that the City had been approached by AMGEN, noting that Joyce Masterson was putting in a proposal for the beginning leg of the race to occur in Escondido.

7. OLDER ADULT SERVICES UPDATE

Ms. Williams referenced the Senior Center Newsletter and then provided a brief overview of the Nutrition Program and the new classes that were being offered at the Center. She noted that the Kiwanis painted the Joslyn lounge. She also stated that they were working on a sponsorship package for senior based organizations as well as working on changing the name of the Joslyn Center to the Park Avenue Community Center and creating signage.

The Commission was in favor of the proposed signage plan and name change of the Joslyn Center.

Ms. Williams referenced the Wellness Expo flyer and noted that it would be held on October 20, 2012.

Commissioner Bologna asked if any comments had been received regarding soccer fees. Mr. Van Leeuwen noted this would be talked about at the next meeting.

8. BUDGET UPDATE – None.

UPDATE ON CITY COUNCIL ACTION: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

ITEMS FROM DEPARTMENTS:

Future Agenda Items – No discussion.

Recreation Programs – No discussion.

Development Projects – No discussion.

Older Adults Projects/Programs – No discussion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Site Committee
Revenue, Operation Review
Community Activities
Facility Use

No reports were given.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for October 25, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.



Jerry Van Leeuwen, Director of
Community Services

Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk