



## Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

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City Council Chambers, 200 Old Bernal Avenue, Pleasanton, CA  
and Via Zoom

May 19, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chairperson Joanie Fields.

### Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

### Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Lisa Brown, Chuck Deckert, Rameshu Immadi, Kira Ritmuller, Michael Vickers, and Chairperson Joanie Fields

Commissioners Absent: Steve Berberich

Staff Present: Heidi Murphy, Library & Recreation Director; Michele Crose, Assistant Library & Recreation Director; Zack Reda, Management Analyst; Nilo Velazquez, Recreation Supervisor; and Ania Pawlak, Office Manager. (Transcribing by Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary).

Chairperson Fields provided details about Executive Order N-29-20 and approved AB 361 suspending provisions of the Brown Act allowing meetings via teleconference due to COVID-19 as proclaimed by Governor Newsom on March 3, 2020.

### AGENDA AMENDMENTS

### MINUTES

#### 1. Approve regular meeting minutes of April 14, 2022.

A motion was made by Commissioner Vickers, seconded by Commissioner Immadi, to approve the April 14, 2022 meeting minutes. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

### **2. Introductions/Awards/Recognitions/Presentations**

Chairperson Fields welcomed new Commissioners Lisa Brown and Kira Ritmuller advising that Commissioner Ritmuller was the new youth commissioner for the commission. Commissioner Brown advised she has been a Pleasanton resident for nineteen years and has three boys who all attend different local schools.

### **3. Public Comment from the audience regarding items not listed on the agenda.**

None.

## **MATTERS FOR THE COMMISSION'S REVIEW / ACTION / INFORMATION**

### **4. Recommend City Council Adopt a Resolution Updating the Master Fee Schedule and Fee Policy for Recreation**

Ms. Murphy introduced Nilo Velazquez and Zack Reda advising they were to take the lead on the presentation for this item.

Mr. Velazquez indicated he would be going through information regarding the purpose of establishing a cost recovery model and then Mr. Reda would provide information regarding the financial components of the recommended model and staff's recommendation, both would then be available to answer any questions commissioners may have.

Mr. Velazquez advised that the purpose of the recommended cost model is to update the city's policy utilizing a more nationally recognized model. He commented on the current Master Fee Policy for the City of Pleasanton that indicates all recreation programs should attempt to return the full cost of instructors and materials with an additional 30% for program supervision and office support, something that is infeasible to achieve and stay in the local market for program and service delivery. Additionally, the proposed model will help key stakeholders and policymakers understand the logic in the overall pricing structure for recreation offerings and help serve as an administrative and equity tool for staff when setting fees for programs and services.

Commissioners were advised by Mr. Velazquez that this resolution will provide a method for recouping expenditures for programs and services based upon the level of community benefit.

Mr. Velazquez reviewed with commissioners the proposed model that is an industry model for parks and recreation. He described the five tiers of the model, explaining that items at the bottom of the tier that are mostly of benefit to the community are heavily subsidized through the general fund and as you progress upwards programs are geared more towards the individual and less subsidized and covered through program fees.

Commissioners were informed by Mr. Velazquez that with the categories established in the model, staff believes current and future needs of the community will be met.

Mr. Reda provided information pertaining to the breakdown of each cost recovery category based on fiscal year 2023 cost recovery projections. He began with the Mostly Community Benefit category (0 and 25%) where a cost recovery level of 3% is expected and noted that programs in this area include community and special events, volunteer programs, facility, and field rentals for PUSD and co-sponsor groups, and public art.

This was followed by the Considerable Community Benefit category (26%-50%) where the cost recovery level of 34% is expected with programs that include programs at the Senior Center, gallery exhibits, and facility and field rentals for Pleasanton nonprofit organizations. It is expected a large group of the Pleasanton community will enjoy the recreational offerings within this category.

Moving to a Balanced Individual and Community Benefit category, Mr. Reda noted that the cost recovery level could be anywhere between 51 and 75% and staff is expecting a recovery level below the 51% level. He noted that for programming to meet this threshold the revenues would need to increase and expenses would need to decrease by \$200,000 to \$750,000. There is an expectation for the department to achieve this goal by analyzing current programs and finding innovative ways to reduce costs and increase revenue over the next three years. Mr. Reda noted that together with programs mentioned by Mr. Velazquez other offerings in this area include adult softball, summer day camps and water aerobics.

In the Considerable Individual Benefit category, Mr. Reda noted that cost recovery levels can be between 76 and 100% and for 2023 staff is expecting a recovery level of 82% for this category. Programs in this area include all contract instructor led programs, Gingerbread Preschool, theater shows, and facility and field rentals for Pleasanton residents. It is anticipated that Pleasanton residents will enjoy these offerings more on an individual level rather than on a community-wide level.

Finally, Mr. Reda provided details on the Individual Benefit Category. He noted that no programs are currently offered in this category, but as new offerings come along this is a category that will be considered in the future.

Mr. Reda commented on the recommended changes for the Master Fee Schedule and the Fee Policy Resolution, noting the current language attempts to return full costs of instructors and materials, plus the additional 30% for program supervisions and office support. He noted that City Council authorizes staff to adjust fees and charges for services and facilities for up to 20% of approved fees and charges without resubmitting adjustments to them.

Commissioners were advised by Mr. Reda that staff was recommending they adopt the resolution to amend both the city's Master Fee Schedule and the city's Fee Policy for recreation programs, services, and classes to include a cost recovery model. Mr. Reda indicated that adopting the resolutions will provide staff with a clear direction on the ratio of revenue-to-expenses that specific programs are expected to achieve.

Noting that there were no virtual attendees, Chairperson Fields asked commissioners to provide their questions and comments so staff could respond.

Commissioner Deckert had a question pertaining to going below the range on program class services. Ms. Murphy advised that the plan is for the next three years to move into the correct percentage range of 51 to 75% which is why Mr. Reda had discussed cutting expenses and potentially raising some program fees to adjust for this and to meet the goal there is a need to increase revenue or decrease expenses by \$200,000 to \$750,000.

Mr. Reda confirmed that total revenue changes would need to be made across the board to meet the goal required and Ms. Murphy indicated that revenue recovered in recreation was about 50% of costs in a pre-pandemic environment, during the pandemic this was less.

Commissioner Immadi commented on the revenue versus the recommendations for each of the categories and questioned what would be the best model to derive where expenses can be cut, and fees increased. Ms. Murphy advised that the information provided was not intended to be a budget balancing tool and what was presented to the commission is a realistic remedy for the next three years for each of the categories.

Commissioner Immadi then discussed the city council 20% allowance for fee increases and it being several years to get classes assessed separately. Ms. Murphy noted that whenever the Activities Guide is published, staff looks at each class to determine the cost, the market rate for that class and whether an increase or decrease should be considered. She noted it was rare for a full 20% annual increase to be determined.

Another questioned raised by Commissioner Immadi pertained to category and subcategory allocations. Ms. Murphy advised that the purpose of the meeting was not to discuss changing categories or moving activities between categories, but if the commission felt strongly that something was out of line then it could be discussed.

Commissioner Immadi questioned if fees for programs were differentiated between residents and non-residents. Ms. Murphy advised that different fees are in place for residents and non-residents, and this will continue to be done as well as residents being allowed to register for programs before non-residents. Commissioner Immadi asked if this also applied to local and non-local businesses. Mr. Reda commented on how all businesses fall into a category for facility and field rentals.

Ms. Murphy confirmed for Commissioner Immadi that staff was looking for commissioners to consider the proposed language change for the recreation portion of the Master Fee Schedule.

Commissioner Vickers asked Ms. Murphy if there was a compelling reason to be making the proposed updates to the Master Fee Schedule and Fee Policy for Recreation at this time. Ms. Murphy advised that the compelling reason is that the department cannot meet the current policy without pricing out of the market. She noted that currently the department is recovering less than 50% of fees and therefore it makes sense to create a policy that programs can align with.

Commissioner Vickers then asked Ms. Murphy if any costs had been recovered in the public art category. Ms. Murphy advised that public art has some very generous donors whose donations have helped cover costs involved for purchasing pieces and the City then provides funds for the installation and maintenance of such.

Commissioner Vickers questioned if staff had any future considerations that the commission would need to be looking at. Ms. Murphy noted that when looking at facility and field rentals for non-residents and businesses was an area that not a lot had been done because they are areas that are heavily utilized, but if an opportunity were to be available for hosting a large tournament it could bring in a large amount of money and revenue.

Commissioner Brown asked staff to review with her programs in the various categories. Mr. Reda provided the needed information and discussed with her programs that fulfil community needs and then those that narrow in other categories and become more individualized.

Ms. Murphy confirmed for Commissioner Deckert that staff was looking for the commission to recommend the proposed language change and not determine specific ratio numbers.

Commissioner Brown made a motion recommending City Council adopt a Resolution to update the Master Fee Schedule and Fee Policy for the Library and Recreation.

Ms. Murphy requested that motion be changed to indicate Recreation only. Commissioner Brown agreed to the change and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Deckert.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

AYES: Commissioners Brown, Deckert, Immadi, Ritmuller, Vickers, and Chairperson Fields.  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Commissioner Berberich  
ABSTAIN: None

Chairperson Fields thanked staff for making the presentation on this item and noted it had been more complicated than commissioners had thought. Ms. Murphy noted that the original document had been put in place a long time ago and she was appreciative of people trying to update and refine the fee schedule and accountability of money.

**5. Review Existing Outreach Process for Parks and Recreation Projects and Recommend Modifications**

Ms. Murphy noted that at a previous meeting, members of the Parks and Recreation Commission had requested new standards for public outreach be considered for recreation amenities at public parks to improve inclusiveness, communication, and transparency within the community. She advised that the agenda report on this includes information on past, current, and potential future outreach standards for the commission to review and consider and highlighted the fact that this commission is one of the most complicated because of its interaction with so many different departments.

Ms. Murphy informed commissioners that most of what is shown for projects comes from Engineering and Operations Services, either through the Facilities Division or Parks Division together with some from Library and Recreation, so when talking about outreach, it is a true collaboration. Commissioners were informed that parks projects typically have Engineering's Landscape Architect as the lead designer for the project with Parks involved for maintenance issues and Facilities involved for facilities within the park site, then Recreation is involved with how it will ultimately be used.

She discussed the importance of wanting to be more transparent with the community and receiving more public input on projects by expanding the notification process. Ms. Murphy advised that staff has now expanded notifications to 1000-foot instead of the original 300-foot radius and is doing social media notifications on all social media sites and further notifications on the city's website and through city newsletters and email notifications, all of which requires a significant amount of staff time. Additionally, she advised that staff is suggesting that Park and Recreation Commission meetings dealing with a park amenity also be publicly noticed in the proposed locations with information about the project, so the public is made aware of the of what is being planned. Ms. Murphy advised that all other suggested outreach would also be conducted.

For projects of more significance, commissioners were advised that staff was proposing to do additional outreach, such as attending public concerts and events, doing additional outreach meetings, conducting a feedback survey, and posting sign boards. Ms. Murphy asked commissioners to consider outreach process for parks and recreation projects put together by staff and provide their comments and modifications. She also noted that additional outreach costs the City more time and money and can prolong project timelines.

Commissioner Deckert agreed with doing more outreach to let the community become more aware of what it is that the commission does and thought that one way this could be done more through social media. He discussed the city's social media platform and thought it was being accessed by a small percentage of the community. Ms. Murphy advised that about 83,000 people are accessed through the city's social media platform and emails. Commissioner Deckert felt that items on the library or city websites were not getting much attention and felt this was something that could be improved. Ms. Murphy agreed this was something that should be considered.

Commissioner Immadi indicated he was good with the recommendations made by staff.

Commissioner Brown confirmed that what staff was asking of the commission was to consider outreach done in the past with what is proposed for moving forward. Ms. Murphy agreed staff was asking the commission to review and recommend any modifications to the proposed outreach plans identified by staff. She noted that these changes were brought about by the recent proposal for a cricket pitch at Muirwood Park.

Commissioner Ritmuller questioned how people within the 1000-foot radius would be notified. Ms. Murphy advised that it is done the old way of sending a paper postcard in the mail to every address within a 1000-foot circle of the park.

Chairperson Fields felt it would be difficult to rely solely on social media notifications since so many people do not use computers and if they do, they either do not use social media or have difficulty using it. She suggested more printed publications as a possibility but noted that newspapers are not always including up-to-date information. Chairperson Fields also commented on people not paying attention to postcards from the City if they are coming for different departments.

Chairperson Fields felt staff and the commission had learned a lot from the recent proposal to include a cricket pitch at Muirwood Park and it was important to provide the community with complete information about proposed projects.

Ms. Crose commented on the mailing of cards advising that a decision has been made to increase the size of the card and provide them in a bright color for select projects, such as cricket, so they will be more visible when received in the mail, different verbiage will also be used depending on which department they will be sent from and if it is for public outreach. Chairperson Fields felt this would be an improvement since many of the people she had spoken to at the Muirwood Park presentation had indicated they had not received a card or had received one three days before the presentation. Ms. Murphy commented on the outreach that had been done for the Muirwood Park program.

Ms. Crose discussed the need for sending out notification cards in a timely manner and trying to determine what that time might be. She noted that if cards are sent too early, they are getting put aside and forgotten and receiving them too late is another issue, so staff is trying to make sure cards are sent within a two-week window.

Commissioner Immadi thanked staff for putting these recommendations together and was appreciative of all they had done. He felt everyone was trying to do their best and learn in the process. As commissioners they are ambassadors for City Council and need to help the community understand and be more involved in projects as they come forward. Commissioner Immadi felt everyone was doing things in the best interest of the community and he was thankful for what staff and the City does especially when it comes to the unique game of cricket. He asked about providing a handbook for commissioners that could also be put on the city's website, or a separate website, to help educate people.

Commissioner Immadi also suggested having information about new sports projects provided at public outreach meetings by people from other cities where the sport is already being played. He felt there was a need for a learning process for community members and wondered how a forum could be created either digitally or in-person. Ms. Murphy confirmed that Commissioner Immadi was asking for this for specific projects where a sport or amenity is new and different. Commissioner Immadi agreed and indicated he was not trying to make it an approach for all projects but thought it would be a way of engaging the community in more discussion.

In discussing the cricket project to be brought back to the commission, Ms. Murphy advised that City Council has directed staff to find a location at Ken Mercer Sports Park and staff is looking at three areas as potential sites. She discussed with commissioners the outreach needed for the three sites and how the neighborhood would be noticed. Commissioner Vickers agreed that this was the way to engage the public and have commissioners involved and learn about their interests. Ms. Crose commented on taking projects to the public and learning from them their ideas and comments and Commissioner Vickers felt the public was intelligent and would provide good comments and innovative ideas.

Ms. Crose noted that one of the things learned through the cricket outreach process was to have a FAQ sheet to provide information and not just be at outreach meetings to receive feedback. She noted that when outreach is to be done at the Ken Mercer Park, she and Mr. Gruber will create a plan to provide some visual details that can be attached to an FAQ sheet that would also help commissioners when receiving feedback. Ms. Crose felt that a number of valuable details had been learned from the Muirwood Park presentation.

Commissioner Immadi indicated he was a member of the 2020 Leadership Team that had talked specifically about how the police department engages with watch groups, etc. He suggested asking them if all the neighborhood watch groups are registered with the city so they too could be involved in any dialogue. Ms. Murphy felt everything was a possibility but there could be an issue with staff time to accomplish this, but thought staff could contact the police department and learn more about the neighborhood watch program.

Commissioner Brown indicated she had looked at this item in two separate ways, one pertaining to notifications via social media, email and snail-mail and was pleased to learn the mail aspect was being changed to a larger more colorful card. She discussed: 1) the possibility of conducting more informative outreach campaign through Twitter or Nextdoor for the community to learn more about the commission and what it does, 2) piggybacking with the Pleasanton Weekly emails that are sent out daily, or 3) a local coffee and donut get-together.

Commissioner Brown thanked Ms. Murphy for the outreach recommendations and thought they were very comprehensive. Commissioner Ritmuller agreed with Commissioner Brown's comments for providing more information on social media indicating this would be more appropriate for youth and could be made available through the school system and provide ways for the public to provide feedback.

Chairperson Fields discussed having the three presentations for cricket at the Ken Mercer Park all at the same time and thought this could be done by marking existing fields and following this with two additional public outreach meetings. The possibility of having large signs posted at the park detailing the outlay for a cricket pitch and public meetings at a separate time, at a commission meeting was discussed. It was noted that when presentations are done at the park location people often are not paying attention to the presentation.

Ms. Murphy asked commissioners to confirm that they were: 1) asking for the three proposed cricket pitch sites at Ken Mercer Park be chalked, that signs be posted detailing information about the pitch outlay, 2) provide email details where questions and comments can be sent, and



3) separate meetings be planned where community members can share feedback. She noted that such meetings would need to be publicly noticed and attendees would need to talk one at a time which meant long meetings.

Commissioner Vickers felt chalking lines would help provide members of the public with a visual image and receiving feedback in an efficient manner would be helpful. Ms. Crose felt it might be challenging to find an appropriate time to chalk the proposed cricket sites because of other field uses and she and Mr. Gruber were envisioning physically moving to each location during the outreach. Chairperson Fields felt chalk markings could be done and left in place when other field uses are taking place and pictures, or schematics could be left in place and different colored chalk markings could be used. She felt doing this and having separate meeting would help eliminate a lot of hostility.

To recap on commissioner comments Ms. Murphy noted that for most projects the commission was in agreement with staff's outreach process and recommendations for parks and recreation projects as outlined in items one and two on pages three and four of the May 19, 2022 Agenda Report, and for more challenging and larger scale projects that involves other departments and commissions more education will be conducted. Commissioners agreed.

With reference to the three proposed cricket pitch sites at Ken Mercer Park Ms. Murphy asked commissioners to confirm they agreed with Chairperson Fields recommendation to chalk the areas with different colored chalk lines, have notice cards sent out to residents within a 1000-foot radius and leveraging a commission meeting for receiving community feedback on the item. It was suggested that staff do a presentation first so community members will hear pros and cons on the sites and then they will be able to voice their opinions.

Commissioner Immadi commented on the signboard recommendation and suggested information be included about the project and the meeting date. Ms. Murphy confirmed for Commission Immadi that commissioners and the public are always allowed to interact with each other if an item is on the agenda.

Commissioner Immadi thanked Ms. Murphy and staff for keeping the commission informed and allowing them to provide feedback and help make things more productive. Commissioner Deckert noted that in his four years on the commission, the Muirwood Park issue was the first time such had happened. Chairperson Fields noted that all commissioners agreed with the summarization provided by Ms. Murphy.

## **COMMISSION REPORTS**

### **6. Committee Meetings**

- A. Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trails Committee – Commissioner Vickers indicated he had attended this meeting and two things had stood out to him from the meeting: 1) the annual collision review provided highlighted areas pertaining to the safety of cyclists on city streets and the need for people to be more aware, and 2) the importance of the

committee and how they generally feel that they are not being heard when they have an issue.

Commissioner Vickers indicated he had spoken to a member of the committee at the Mayor's Dinner and had indicated to him that he would bring this matter up to the commission and discussed the possibility of having a member of the committee present to the commission on a quarterly basis to report a report. He indicated the committee was concerned about the Master Plan that has been in place for years and the feeling that the City is not concerned. Ms. Murphy suggested Chairperson Fields navigate at the next committee meeting how best to move forward with this.

- B. Community of Character – Chairperson Fields provided details about the recent event at which \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to students from Foothill, Amador, and Village High schools and what amazing students the recipients are. She advised that twenty-five gift baskets were put together and raffled off raising a total of over \$1,500. Additional information was provided about the Mariachi Band program that began at Village High School in 2008 and now has over 200 students and their families involved. Chairperson Fields noted this was a great collaboration event involving the City, Chamber of Commerce, and PUSD.
- C. City/East Bay Regional Park District Liaison Committee – no report.
- D. Heritage Tree Review Board – Chairperson Fields advised the board had met and overturned an Engineering Department's denial for the removal of a 50' palm tree. Another meeting is scheduled for May 25, 2022 to discuss the cutting down of eight Eucalyptus trees by a resident without permission.
- E. Public Art Selection Sub-Committee – Chairperson Fields advised that the committee reviewed and discussed locations for two murals. It was agreed one should be on the wall of the Cultural Art building and the other is being considered for Rotary Park which is the entrance of the Main Street bridge. Both are being done with money received from a grant.
- F. Sports Council – no report.

**7. Other brief reports on any meetings, conferences, and/or seminars attended by the Commission members.**

None.

**MATTERS INITIATED BY THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Vickers indicated he had an item to bring up from Commissioner Berberich who was unable to attend the meeting this evening, but since it was not on the agenda was unsure if he should be bringing it up. Ms. Murphy suggested he mention the item and she would determine if it was something that could be discussed.

Commissioner Vickers stated that Commissioner Berberich would like to know if the City has ever had a contractor estimate the cost of converting the three Val Vista fields to synthetic turf. Ms. Murphy advised this has not been done but it is something that the commission or sports groups could bring up during the two-year budget priorities process.

Ms. Murphy reminded commissioners that if they had something they would like to discuss at a meeting they should contact staff to have the item put on the agenda for the meeting.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Murphy noted that since there will not be enough time to conduct outreach for the cricket pitch project and bring back in time for a June meeting, she was suggesting canceling the June meeting. Century House is planned to come back for commission review in July and Cricket in July or August, depending on the timeline for the additional cricket outreach.

Commissioner Deckert asked about the Century House project and Ms. Murphy indicated she did not have much to update at this time.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 7 p.m.