

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
TORRANCE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Parks and Recreation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:05 p.m. on Wednesday, March 9, 2005, in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Cook, Guyton, Robbins, Smoot, Taniguchi, Tookey, and Chairperson McGee.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Acting Community Services Director Barnett, Park Services Administrator Wilson, Recreation Services Administrator Jones, Administrative Analyst Witzansky, and Madrona Marsh Manager/Naturalist Drake.

**3. FLAG SALUTE**

President of Friends of Madrona Marsh Venora Lee led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Robbins moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Tookey seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**5A. MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9, 2005**

Commissioner Taniguchi noted the following correction to the February 9, 2005 meeting minutes:

Page 5, paragraph 8, "Commissioner Cook welcomed Commissioner Taniguchi and thanked the Commission for nominating him for the position of Vice-Chairperson."

**MOTION:** Commissioner Taniguchi moved for the approval of the February 9, 2005 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guyton and passed by unanimous voice vote approval (with Commissioner Robbins abstaining).

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**6B. FORMATION OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

This item was considered out of order.

Acting Community Services Director Barnett introduced the item. He advised that the proposed Community Services organization plan was presented to City Council on March 1, 2005 and, after hearing from impacted employees, their decision was deferred until March 22, 2005. He stated that in the meantime City Manager representatives and the steering committee would meet with affected employees to resolve issues.

Administrative Analyst Witzansky reported that City Council approved the capital funding to begin the automated process of the long-term plan that includes a scheduling and payroll software program, automated phone registration, and automated library self check out equipment. He stated that City Council has asked that more than \$350,000 in ongoing operating savings be found. He described the proposed long-term and short-term organization charts for the Administrative Services, Library Services, and Recreation Services Divisions included in the material of record. He stated that City Council was dedicated to avoiding layoffs and that positions would be lost or transferred through attrition.

Responding to Commissioner Tookey's inquiry, he explained that Youth Sports, Aquatics, and After school Programs would be consolidated into one section.

Commissioner Guyton questioned if there was a back-up plan if Senior Recreation Supervisors were overburdened after consolidation. Administrative Analyst Witzansky responded that the committee's goal was to remain as fluid as possible and adapt to changes.

In response to Chairperson McGee's inquiry, he stated that City Council was asking that the organization plan be evaluated after six months.

He advised Commissioner Taniguchi that there would be discussion and input at the March 22, 2005 City Council meeting and that she brought up a valid concern that attrition may not take place. He stated that the estimated timeline was five years, but that it may have to be delayed.

Acting Community Services Director Barnett encouraged Commissioners to attend the March 22, 2005 City Council meeting.

**6C. COLUMBIA PARK MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION**

With the aid of charts, Administrative Analyst Witzansky provided background and update on the Columbia Park capital improvement plan. He reported that staff met with North West Torrance Homeowner's Association on February 24, 2005 to reassess the neighborhood's priority list. He advised that, after hearing input from residents, staff was considering the creation of an additional picnic space on the southern portion of the park to draw users away from the east end. He stated that under this plan parking would be expanded along 190<sup>th</sup> Street rather than on Prairie Avenue. He advised that residents also requested that funding be applied to walkway security lighting improvements, drainage modifications, and new open field lighting in the center of the park.

Responding to Commissioner Robbins' inquiry, he stated the Department was considering the installation of a bocce ball court at the site of the former hockey rink. He stated that the area was best suited for a basketball court but that residents opposed it. He speculated that an architect for the Columbia Park improvements would be hired in the next fiscal year, with construction beginning in fiscal year 2007-2008.

**6A. MADRONA MARSH PRESENTATION BY TRACY DRAKE AND JOSEPH CHIANG**

This item was considered out of order.

Joseph Chiang, 4728 Reynolds Road, volunteer at Madrona Marsh Preserve, presented a film entitled "Madrona Marsh and the Preservation of Beauty" that he created utilizing still photography and music. He stated that in the video he attempted to capture the mood and changes that occur in the Marsh throughout the year.

**7. STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATES**

**7C. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

**7C1. APPROVAL OF THE MADRONA MARSH MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This item was considered out of order.

Commissioner Cook reported that the Programs Committee met twelve times to work on the Madrona Marsh Management Plan, and commended Manager/Naturalist Drake for the tremendous amount of time and effort she put into it and Recreation Services Administrator Jones for his leadership.

Chairperson McGee thanked Commissioners Cook, Robbins, and Smoot, Programs Committee members, for all their hard work.

Recreation Services Administrator Jones thanked Manager/Naturalist Drake and Friends President Lee for attending tonight's meeting, commended Joseph Chiang on his presentation, and recognized the efforts of the Programs Committee.

Manager/Naturalist Drake reported that the Management Plan was the result of more than 60 individuals' determination and dedication to the Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center. She stated that the purpose of the plan was to provide the framework and guidelines for the management, restoration, and visitor use of the Preserve and Nature Center. She recognized the efforts of the Programs Committee, Friends of Madrona Marsh, and staff members.

She advised that the Management Plan would be available on the Madrona Marsh Preserve, Torrnet.com, and Friends of Madrona Marsh website.

Commissioners individually commended Manager/Naturalist Drake and Friends of Madrona Marsh for the creation of the document as well as Joseph Chiang for this evening's presentation.

Friends President Lee offered her support of the Management Plan and recognized the teamwork between City staff, the Commission, and Madrona Marsh

Preserve. She stated that Friends was anxious to use the Plan effectively as they shepherd the Preserve through the coming years.

Manager/Naturalist Drake encouraged Commissioners to visit the Preserve, informing them that it is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Dr. Bill Forrest offered to arrange tours of the Preserve for Commissioners.

Bill Arrowsmith, Madrona Marsh member since 1972 and docent, thanked the Commission and stated that the Preserve was a wonderful resource for the entire community.

Acting Community Services Director Barnett reflected on history of the Preserve and requested that the Commission accept the Management Plan to be transmitted to City Council for their review.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Robbins moved to adopt the Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center Management Plan as submitted and for staff to forward the Plan to City Council. Commissioner Smoot seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**7A. OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE**

No report.

**7B. FACILITIES COMMITTEE**

No report.

**8. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY**

**8A. CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION**

No report.

**8B. PARK SERVICES DIVISION**

Park Services Administrator Wilson reported that the persons responsible for vandalism at El Nido Park and La Romeria Park have been apprehended.

He stated that a comprehensive report on the Living Tree program would be presented at the April Commission meeting.

Chairperson McGee initiated a brief discussion regarding storm drain and landscaping improvements at Miramar Park.

**8C. RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION**

No report.

**9. ORALS**

Administrative Analyst Witzansky announced that on March 8, 2005 City Council formally adopted the name Discovery Park for the new park at 226<sup>th</sup> Street and Ocean Avenue.

Recreation Services Administrator Jones announced that the March 15, 2005 Commissioner Orientation has been cancelled.

Acting Community Services Director Barnett advised that staff was contacted about the possibility of locating a wireless antenna in some City parks, and that they were considering Victor Park as a location. He reported that the mid-year budget review was on March 8, 2005 and that the Department generated more revenue than expected this fiscal year. He stated that 2.5% budget reduction scenarios were submitted and that the list would be presented to the Commission at the April Commission meeting.

Responding to Commissioner Tookey's inquiry, Administrative Analyst Witzansky stated that over the last five years the Department had budget reductions of mitigation factors of approximately 9-10%.

At Chairperson McGee's inquiry, Acting Community Services Director Barnett reported that on March 8, 2005 City Council awarded the contract to the current provider of the Las Canchas Tennis facility.

Commissioner Tookey stated that he enjoyed tonight's presentation and the retirement dinner for Dean Mayeda.

Commissioner Guyton stated that he also enjoyed the retirement dinner and commended the City for the way they honored Commissioners.

Commissioner Robbins stated that he enjoyed Dean Mayeda's retirement dinner and thanked Park Services Administrator Wilson for installing the backflow device at the Marsh.

Commissioner Taniguchi echoed fellow Commissioners in commending tonight's presentation and the retirement dinner.

Commissioner Smoot noted that a member of the Torrance Youth Council was present at tonight's meeting until 8:00 p.m.

Commissioner Cook also stated how much he enjoyed the retirement party.

Chairperson McGee stated that he enjoyed the Special Olympics dinner and the retirement party, and that he was impressed with the Madrona Marsh Management Plan. He extended his appreciation of Barbara Barker for her assistance with the retirement party.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 8:47 p.m., the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting was adjourned to April 13, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Written April 13, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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