

**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 7:03 p.m. on Wednesday, September 12, 2007, in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Cook, Gilbert, Hazell, McGee, Ning, Orpe, Robbins, Taniguchi, and Chairperson Smoot.

Absent: Commissioner Numark.

Also Present: Councilmember Nowatka, Acting Community Services Director Jones, Senior Business Manager Minter, Park Services Manager Wilson, Acting Cultural Services Manager Kelso, and Acting Recreation Services Manager Wand.

MOTION: Commissioner Cook moved to grant an excused absence to Commissioner Numark for the September 12, 2007 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. Commissioner Taniguchi seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner McGee, moved to grant an excused absence to Commissioner Robbins for the August 8, 2007 Commission meeting; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Councilmember Nowatka 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 Gilbert seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5A. MINUTES OF AUGUST 8, 2007

MOTION: Commissioner Gilbert moved for the approval of the August 8, 2007 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner McGee seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Numark and with Commissioners Robbins and Taniguchi abstaining).

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC #1

Dino D'Emilia, Steveann Street, representing West Torrance Little League, stated that a proposal to install batting cages at Entradero Park has been submitted to staff. He requested that a formal item be placed on the October 10, 2007 Commission agenda.

MOTION: Chairperson Smoot moved to place an item regarding the installation of batting cages at Entradero Park on the October 10, 2007 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robbins; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Numark).

7. NEW BUSINESS

7A. APPROVAL OF THE BENSTEAD PLUNGE USAGE POLICY

Commissioner Cook, Chairperson of the Programs Committee, provided background and analysis on the item included in the material of record. He noted that the biggest issue that came out of public input was the lack of a clearly defined application process for usage of the Plunge. He stated that the Committee tried to define criteria and priorities regarding usage and reviewed the Mission Statement for the aquatics program. He noted that the goal of the Policy is to maximize pool time in order to satisfy the needs of as many participants as possible. He stated that the biggest hurdle was that there was not enough time, and that it would be staff's responsibility to take the Policy and give times to appropriate applicants. He requested that the Commission approve the proposed Plunge Usage Policy and forward it to City Council for their review and approval.

Chairperson Smoot initiated a brief discussion regarding a timeline for resolution for the appeal process.

In response to inquiries by Commissioner Hazell, Acting Community Services Director Jones explained that the Plunge Usage Policy pertains to long-term usage and that a fee structure for long and short term usage was previously approved by City Council.

Chairperson Smoot, with concurrence by Commissioner Taniguchi, suggested that the Plunge Usage Policy be kept on the agenda for the next few meetings to review its implementation.

Commissioner Taniguchi received clarification from Commissioner Cook that the Usage Policy was developed from considerable input from the public at three public meetings on July 10, August 6, and September 4, 2007.

Commissioner Robbins pointed out that this was the first time there has been a Usage Policy and that the process could be amended if it did not meet the needs of the public, the Plunge, or the City.

Commissioner Ning noted that this was a policy, not day-to-day instructions. He stated that the Parks and Recreation Director would determine how the Policy is interpreted and recommended an evaluation process in six months.

Chairperson Smoot welcomed public comment.

Jeff Zabrudoff, West Gaucho Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes, thanked everyone who has been involved in the development of the Usage Policy. He expressed hope that creative ways would be implemented to maximize use of the Plunge and noted that pools needed to be built for Torrance schools.

Connie Begovich, Dorset Drive, representing Swim Torrance, pointed out that the development of the proposed Usage Policy has taken a summer away from swimmers. She thanked the Committee and staff for their efforts and stated that needs of the current tenant of the pool should be considered. She stated that the City needs another pool and questioned if most appeals are actually valid.

Candice Matsui, Wilma Street, thanked the Committee and stated that there were other dedicated swim families in the City other than Swim Torrance. She stated that she is glad there is now a Usage Policy and hopes that the City will better serve Torrance residents as well as residents living outside the City.

Senior Business Manager Minter clarified that information regarding who is responsible for submitting applications and the distinction between giving priority to non-profit organizations over private organizations was in the item but not in the Usage Policy. He recommended that this information be added to the Usage Policy for clarification purposes.

Commissioner Hazell expressed concern that an organization that has good standing would be given priority over new groups that may want to start up a program. He suggested the possibility of setting term limits for long-term usage.

Acting Community Services Director Jones responded that prime time would always be a challenge but that following the Mission Statement and keeping a balanced, equitable opportunity for the community was their priority.

Commissioner Ning stated that Commissioner Hazell's concern was also a concern of the Committee and stressed the importance of having a review process to make sure the Community Services Director was interpreting the spirit of the policy. He noted that two checks and balances were integrated into the policy to specifically disallow the scenario that Commissioner Hazell mentioned.

Commissioner Robbins noted that setting term limits could effectively set a date for the extinction of a program.

Tina Maltz, Southfield Drive, Rolling Hills Estates, stated that stability is the key to success of a swim program and expressed concern that setting term limits would be unfair and detrimental to the program.

Commissioner Cook thanked the public, Commission, and staff.

MOTION: Chairperson Smoot moved to recommend that the proposed Plunge Usage Policy, with amendments noted by Senior Business Manager Minter, and to include a six-month review process, be forwarded to City Council for review and approval. Commissioner Ning seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Numark).

Acting Community Services Director Jones advised that the item was scheduled to go to City Council on September 25, 2007.

7B. APPROVAL OF THE PORTABLE STAGE USAGE POLICY

Acting Community Services Director Jones provided background and analysis of the item included in the material of record and recommended that the Commission approve the proposed Portable Stage Usage Policy, to be forwarded to City Council for review and approval. He noted that fees identified in the Fee Schedule average between \$500 and \$800 and would be charged to offset existing staff costs. He noted that fees could be waived by City Council with submittal of a letter of proposal.

Responding to Commissioner Ning's inquiry, he explained that fees vary depending on distance, set-up, and break-down of the stage.

MOTION: Commissioner Orpe, seconded by Commissioner Taniguchi, moved to approve the proposed Portable Stage Usage Policy as submitted and to forward the policy to City Council for their review and approval; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Numark).

7C. INFORMATION ON THE CAPRCBM AND AN UPCOMING COMMISSIONER TRAINING WORKSHOP

Acting Community Services Director Jones presented information about benefits through the California Association of Parks and Recreation Commissioners and Board Members (CAPRCBM) established in 1968. He noted that the Commission has been a member of CPRS for several years and has the opportunity to take advantage of specific training and education that is relevant to Commissioners.

He provided information and encouraged Commissioners to attend a Commissioner Training on October 27, 2007 at the Costa Mesa Neighborhood Community Center. He advised that staff would coordinate the registration process for interested Commissioners and that there would be another conference in Long Beach in March 2008.

7D. STATUS OF E-MAILING REMINDERS FOR REGISTRATION DATES

In response to Commissioner Numark's inquiry at the August 8, 2007 Commission meeting, Senior Business Manager Minter shared information about an online calendar that could be used for registration purposes and publicity of City sponsored events. He recommended that the Commission allow staff to explore the use of the online calendar as a means of sending reminder e-mails, noting that the calendar should be operational by the end of the year.

Chairperson Smoot requested that staff keep the Commission informed about the status of the online calendar.

MOTION: Commissioner Ning moved to allow staff to explore the use of the online calendar as a means of distributing e-mails reminding participants of registration dates and City sponsored events. Chairperson Smoot seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Numark).

8. STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATES

8A. FACILITIES COMMITTEE – YOUTH SPORTS HONOR WALL

Commissioner McGee reported that the Facilities Committee met on September 12, 2007 to discuss what the wall will look like, noting that it would probably be located at the Wilson Park Sports Center.

Commissioner Robbins advised that the Committee has asked for a budget to be developed for the project.

8B. OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE – DOG PARK

Chairperson Smoot reported that the Open Space committee met on September 12, 2007 and determined that the Southern California Edison easement at Columbia Park is the only area large enough to accommodate a divided area for both large and small dogs. She stated that some concerns include if it should be for residents only, if Southern California Edison would approve the project, and if the dog park would inhibit Columbia Park from further growth in other opportunities. She stated that start-up costs would be at least \$50,000. She requested that the Commission approve that the Committee bring their questions and concerns to City Council to gauge their interest in moving forward with the proposal.

Acting Community Services Director Jones suggested that the Committee develop the item and bring it back next month for Commission approval to proceed to City Council.

Chairperson Smoot relayed Commissioner Numark's request to be on the Open Space Committee.

Following background provided by Acting Community Services Director Jones and a brief discussion, it was determined by general consensus to maintain the same subcommittee assignments.

8C. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE – BENSTEAD PLUNGE USAGE POLICY

Previously considered at this meeting.

8D. GRANTS COMMITTEE – GRANT PROGRAM

Acting Cultural Services Manager Kelso stated that 21 grant applications were received by September 10, 2007 and suggested that the Grants committee meet with

him after tonight's Commission meeting to establish meeting, hearings, and deliberation dates.

Commissioner Taniguchi reported that she has met with three of the four organizations that she was assigned to monitor and was satisfied with their reports.

9. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY

9A. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

Senior Business Manager Minter reported that registration began for winter programs and that registration numbers were included in the agenda packets.

9B. PARK SERVICES DIVISION

Park Services Manager Wilson reported that it was a very busy summer and discussed some of the events that his staff supports.

Responding to Commissioner McGee's inquiry, he stated that vandalism reports come from General Services and would find out why they have not submitted recent reports. He noted that the City spends approximately \$250,000 a year on graffiti abatement.

9C. RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION

Acting Community Services Director Jones introduced Acting Recreation Services Manager Wand who provided a brief overview of her responsibilities.

Chairperson Smoot congratulated her on the success of the Lago Seco community gardens.

10. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC #2

10A. Commissioners and staff expressed appreciation to the Programs Committee for their efforts in developing a Benstead Plunge Usage Policy and Program Committee members thanked staff for their assistance.

10B. Acting Community Services Director Jones distributed photographs taken at the Awards Banquet.

10C. Acting Community Services Director Jones informed Commissioners that an item would be coming forward regarding a Riviera Little League request to amend its lease to include amplified sound.

10D. Commissioner Orpe encouraged Commissioners to attend the Constitution Day observance at Arnold Elementary School on September 17, 2007.

10E. Commissioner Taniguchi stated that she would be going to Kashiwa, Japan with the Sister City Association in October 2007, noting that all City Council members would also be attending as 35th anniversary delegates.

10F. Commissioner Cook shared information about plans for an upcoming school reunion with his graduating class from Ohio beginning in Columbia, California and proceeding on to Lake Tahoe and San Francisco.

10G. Commissioner Hazell stated that his son attended the Michigan game and that Commissioner Orpe's grandson was scoring lots of goals at El Camino College.

10H. Commissioner McGee stated that he enjoyed attending the Aquacade and Torrance Theatre Company's "Proof."

10I. Commissioner Gilbert stated that she also enjoyed "Proof" and announced the Cultural Arts Center Foundation's gala on September 28, 2007 and beach clean-up day at Torrance Beach on September 15, 2007.

10J. Chairperson Smoot thanked her father Councilmember Nowatka for attending this meeting and the Sister City Association for providing her with its agenda and minutes.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 9:10 p.m., Commissioner Hazell moved to adjourn the meeting to October 10, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Smoot so ordered.

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| Approved as Amended October 10, 2007 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk |
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