

Unapproved Meeting Minutes

PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

November 29, 2021

MEMBERS Arce, Best, Burke, Cary, Chang, Claxton, Corkin, Deschambault, Dieter, Ho, Lacy,
REMOTE: Mahadevan, Nason, Obringer, Rickard, Robinson, Sanwong, Skaredoff, Tsutsui, Williams.
ABSENT: Gregory.
STAFF: Ciaburro, Auker, Johnson, Spaulding, Crosby, Clary, James, Brede, Love, Pfuehler, Csontos
and Kennedy (PrimeGov).
BOARD: Coffey, Rosario, Waespi.
PUBLIC: Members of the public were able to access the meeting via live video stream.

The November 29, 2021, Park Advisory Committee meeting was held via video conference pursuant to EBPRD Resolution 2021-09-277 and the Brown Act, as amended by AB 361. PAC Chair Rick Rickard called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

1. **Roll call** Flora Csontos, Recording Secretary, conducted a roll call of the Park Advisory Committee members and staff.
2. **PAC Member Recognition** Rickard expressed the entire Committee's appreciation for the years of service that PAC Members Ho, Best and Gregory have each dedicated to the PAC. Members made remarks. Framed park photos will be sent to each member as a thank you.
3. **Approval of Minutes – September 27 and October 25, 2021** The motion to approve the minutes was made by PAC Member Williams and seconded by PAC Member Mahadevan. The motion passed unanimously. PAC Member Dieter offered minor edits to the October 25th minutes.
4. **Board Member Comments** Board Member Waespi thanked the members finishing their service. He provided an update regarding: recent Park District wildlife successes, a Walk and Talk with Fremont Mayor Lily Mei, the District's annual Green Friday and ongoing tree mortality management efforts. Waespi also highlighted a number of 2021 events: the Tilden 85th Anniversary Celebration, Dumbarton Quarry Campground ribbon cutting, Del Valle Interpretive Center opening and the UN International Day of World Peace at Lake Chabot. Lifeguard services returned in 2021 and marked the 13th year without a drowning. Park namings were also mentioned including the Thurgood Marshall Regional Park District – Home of Port Chicago 50 and plans to honor former Park District Board Director Doug Siden with the naming of a site. Waespi concluded with an update regarding the Park District's robust, progressive and forward-looking budget.

Waespi thanked his appointees Board Members Claxton and Mahadevan and Rickard for his work as chair.

5. **Foundation Update:** Carol Johnson, Executive Director provided an update about the Regional Parks Foundation. She gave an overview of the Foundation's 2020 report, the year's record revenue and a clean audit. Membership numbers have rebounded to over 11,000 members as compared to 9,500 last year. This is the 10th year of consecutive growth. The Foundation's Diversity Committee continues to provide free park membership passes to low-income and to families of color. This year, indigenous groups and senior communities will also be included. Donor Circle membership has also increased 14% in the last year.

Judge John Sutter left two major legacy gifts - \$2 million for closing the gap in the Bay Trail at the Crowley location in Oakland and an additional \$1 million for funding Oakland projects. Johnson concluded by indicating that the family of naturalist Tim Gordon, who passed away this year, reached out to the Foundation to start the Tim Gordon Fund to support park access for underserved children. The year is closing out with total value of \$15 million of which \$4.5 million is revenue from this year.

Claxton shared her appreciation for the outreach to disabled and aging communities. Dieter celebrated Judge Sutter’s donation and leadership.

6. **Public Comments** - No public comments.

7. **Presentations:**

(R) **a. 2022 Proposed Budget – Debra Auker, Chief Financial Officer**

Debra Auker, Chief Financial Officer provided an overview of the budget process and cycle. Auker highlighted several major components, capital projects, performance plan and workforce efforts. The 2022 budget totals \$290.4 million and is balanced. The Board of Directors will be briefed at a live-streamed meeting next week and will discuss adoption on December 21st.

Williams inquired if the pension trust was new. Auker indicated it was created in 2017 and approximately \$11 million has been contributed. Williams asked about the District’s unfunded liability. Auker will follow up after consulting the District’s financial report. Williams asked about the vacancy rate and how positions are budgeted. Auker and Deb Spaulding, Assistant Finance Officer indicated the District starts with the actual position. Salary step increases are built into the budget. New positions are budgeted at Step B. There is currently a 4% vacancy rate.

PAC Member Skaredoff asked about the employee bar chart and information about the post-Covid increase. Auker indicated many new Full-Time Employees (FTEs) have been budgeted. Covid uncertainty did complicate projections with economic uncertainty. 36 new positions have been added this year. Skaredoff asked about donated property and bringing these properties up to standard. Auker indicated the Borel Property was donated to the District to develop a historical park paid for by the land. The sold-off property in Danville will be used for multi-family housing.

Recommendation: Best made a motion to recommend the proposed budget to the Board of Directors. PAC Member Arce seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

(R) **b. Ordinance 38 Update- Alan Love, Support Services Captain**

Alan Love, Support Services Captain shared an update about the rules and regulations specific to the Park District as an important tool to monitor parks and report issues. Requests are collected and reviewed by a team of District staff. Revisions are adopted by the Board of Directors. Love discussed several sections of the ordinance pertaining to campsites, personal cooking appliances, alcohol beverage sales, float tubes, animal feeding restrictions, slacklines, administrative edits and alcohol restrictions,

Ho inquired whether an exception would be made to the animal feeding section if a volunteer group program was feeding feral cats to trap them. Love indicated police and park operations have collaborated to implement similar programs in the past. Jim O’Connor, Assistant General Manager of Operations clarified there is a difference between feeding to trap feral cats and a feeding program to maintain the feral cat colony. An exception is made to allow feeding in order to trap. Board Member Rosario mentioned according to District policy, all such volunteer programs are required to coordinate with the Oakland Animal Services Program.

PAC Member Tsutsui inquired whether alcoholic beverages are permitted to be sold or consumed at Crown Beach and events hosted there. Love indicated permits at the picnic area allow for sale and consumption through the special event permit process.

Williams asked whether 410.1(c) section meant to intentionally include beer and wine as the definition of “alcohol”. Love confirmed beer and wine, as well as champagne, are specifically listed in the ordinance to differentiate from hard alcohol which is only permitted at certain sites. Williams asked for further information about fraternities and sororities specifically being listed as entities with alcohol restrictions. Love explained this is the current language in Ordinance 38.

Ho indicated the subsections in 410.1 pertaining to alcoholic beverages seemed confusing. Suggested “spirits”

as a potential term to cover the explanation. Love clarified each section is divided by type of alcohol and permit for ease of reference.

PAC Member Cary asked how hard ciders are categorized. He recommended categorizing by percent of alcohol instead. Love indicated he will take this information back to the team to further clarify.

Skaredoff inquired whether the current language still applies. Love indicated that, pending board approval, only the proposed language would apply.

Recommendation: Mahadevan made a motion to recommend the proposal to the Board of Directors. PAC Vice-Chair Obringer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

(R) c. 2022 PAC Election – Rick Rickard, PAC Chair and Erich Pfuehler, Chief of Government and Legislative Affairs

Rickard indicated the PAC Executive Committee met to discuss a slate of candidates that will also be taken to the Board Executive Committee. Additionally, operating guideline recommendations include decreasing term length from two years to one for officers. Rickard recommended electing chair and vice-chair for the next term with the understanding term length definitions will change in the future. Obringer was recommended as chair and Tsutsui as vice-chair. The floor was opened for other nominations. None were made.

Recommendation: Williams moved to accept the slate as proposed by the Executive Committee. Best second. Motion passed unanimously.

(D) d. PAC Future Goals – Rick Rickard, PAC Chair and Erich Pfuehler, Chief of Government and Legislative Affairs

Rickard shared an update regarding a meeting with Rosario, General Manager Sabrina Landreth, Erich Pfuehler, Chief of Government and Legislative Affairs and Obringer where PAC goals and guidelines were discussed. It was determined the work plan would be reviewed to allow full use of this volunteer asset while not overloading Park District staff. Obringer and Rickard are scheduled to meet with the Board Executive Committee to present ideas PAC members have brought up to-date regarding Board guidelines.

Pfuehler provided an update about the work plan and the new General Manager's recognition and support of the PAC's value. The best structure to utilize the PAC's talent will be developed over the coming weeks. Pfuehler welcomed feedback or email follow-up. Main goals include: inclusive representation of the public, participating in a transparent process to provide community input on District policies and programs, and act as a valuable advocacy group for ballot measures, grants and external public affairs. Understanding PAC members' roles in relation to their nominating authority. For the purpose of organizing how to accomplish these goals, five main focuses were proposed: District policy input, advocacy, big picture topics, community engagement and board-public interaction support. Pfuehler will proceed by asking the Board, General Manager and staff for further proposed objectives for the PAC. This item will come back to the PAC before any final decisions are made.

PAC Member Sanwong applauded the effort and suggested a subcommittee to assist with each of the five topics. She indicated her interest in the big picture topic as related to drought, flood and impacts of extreme weather on the Tri-Valley.

PAC Member Burke also expressed appreciation for this topic and suggested preparing questions beforehand for how the PAC can be helpful when a certain topic is brought before the committee.

Williams applauded efforts to refine the purpose of the PAC. Suggested dissecting PAC vision as well and offering the PAC as a focus group for future needs.

Ho supported the previously shared statements. She encouraged the PAC to continue representing the community and appreciates the wide-range of expertise of this group. The PAC could assist with

development of land use plans and new properties, for example. The PAC should be involved earlier in the process for input solicitation.

PAC Member Nason echoed support and highlighted PAC's ability to serve as a conduit to the community. The PAC could offer support with legislative objectives and obtaining letters of support.

Dieter indicated big picture items or controversial items will be really important for PAC to work on and help influence. The Board and staff should be soliciting influence from the PAC rather than informing.

Recommendation: This item will return to the Park Advisory Committee for a recommendation.

8. **PAC Member Comments**

Nason commented that the City of Albany entered into an MOU with the Park District five years to work toward a transition of the Albany Bulb to McLaughlin East Shore Park, including several thousand dollars and environmental documentation. The five-year mark has ended and the City Council will not pursue renewal of the MOU.

Skaredoff applauded the exercise stretching sessions the Park District offers and recommended participation.

Public Comment

Kelly Abreu commented about the complexities of making laws regarding feral cats. He mentioned a recent article about controlling feral cats and lack of veterinarians.

9. **Report from Chair** – None.

10. **Board Committee Reports** – None.

11. **Old Business** – None.

12. **New Business** – None.

13. **Adjournment** – PAC Committee Chair Rickard adjourned the meeting at 6:21 p.m.