



MINUTES - DRAFT

Hall of Justice

Thursday, August 1, 2019

4:00 PM

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Present 5 - Barbara Bonilla, Heather Green, Neil Merrilees, Meda O. Okelo, and Basem Manneh

Absent 1 - Eeshan Bhat, Youth Commissioner

Staff Present: Peggy Jensen, Interim Parks Director; Matthew Sanders, Deputy County Counsel; Scott Lombardi, Parks Superintendent; and Lori Mrizek, Commission Clerk.

3. Public Comment

4. Action to Set the Agenda

Motion: Bonilla / Second: Green

Yes: 5 - Bonilla, Green, Merrilees, Okelo, and Manneh

No: 0

5. Parks Foundation Executive Director's Report

Presentation by Peggy Jensen, in Michele Beasley's absence.

6. Department Report

6.1 Director's Report

7. Presentations

7.1 Parks Department Fuel Reduction Program

Commissioner Bonilla had a question for CAL FIRE: What is the percentage of inmates that get hired after this program? Chief Cox didn't know off-hand. It is a state-wide program. At the end of the Brown

administration, CAL FIRE was directed to set up an academy for transition out of incarceration and into public life again. That facility has opened in Ventura County and has had successful graduates come out of it.

Commissioner Green asked: How many man hours of CDCR labor does the County use? Answer: 20-30 days per year free labor to the County. There are 12-17 workers per event, and a minimum of 12 people.

Commissioner Green: Nicholas mentioned the importance of going back. What is the ideal cycle? Sarah Collamer, a forester with CAL FIRE said that the idea is that you go in once and do a really heavy thinning and reduce the density significantly, and then in 5 or 10 years you can go back and do maintenance. However, things on the coast grow more quickly than other places.

Commissioner Green asked the Department: Are we tracking the places that have been cleared and how long it's been for all of them? Assistant Director Calderon responded that we are and we are doing a vegetation mapping project which ties into a GIS system which will give us better data going forward as to where we've treated it, when we've treated it and it will give us an ability to go back and assess when it needs to be treated. Scott Lombardi, his team, and the Rangers, they really deserve a lot of credit for making sure that they are following up and assessing these areas and knowing if we've had a lot of wet seasons, it's going to require more treatment sooner and if we haven't, that's going to change the situation. The Rangers deserve a lot of credit for staying on top of it and making sure it's getting done.

Commissioner Green thanked the Assistant Director and thanked the Rangers. She expressed interest in seeing the mapping system when it is ready and see where we are on the cycles schedule and see where we want to focus next. The Assistant Director responded that we are looking at early 2022 and it's a huge project that provides a lot of different opportunities and we will bring it to the Commission.

Commissioner Manneh had a question for Chief Cox: Does CAL FIRE have a fire prevention program? Do you train volunteers or do you prepare neighborhoods? Chief Cox responded, yes, CAL FIRE covers 56 of 58 counties in California. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program is very strong in unincorporated areas like La Honda, Kings Mountain, the Highlands, as well as the cities in the area have the CERT program. They also have four localized evacuation maps for neighborhoods and information for home owners. Currently they have plans for Palomar Park, Kings Mountain, La Honda, and El Granada. These are the focal points because of the risk that is there. CAL FIRE has

just signed a 6-year contract with the County to fully fund an Outreach and Education Officer for the Fire Department. We are at the pinnacle of awareness of when it comes to wildfires in the state of California and we want to leverage that. Lastly, in March, the Board of Supervisors allocated \$75K for a standardized evacuation map with evacuation zones across all jurisdictions. This will probably be implemented by the end of the year.

Commissioner Okelo had a question for the Assistant Director: There are a lot of Eucalyptus trees at Wunderlich. Is there a plan to remove all of them over a period of time?

Assistant Director Calderon said no, there is no plan at this time to remove all the Eucalyptus trees from Wunderlich. The amount of resources that would go into doing that make it something that is not feasible as one project. It's not really about how we address Eucalyptus trees, but how do we address all non-native trees throughout the entire park system. We have a lot of Eucalyptus throughout the park system, as well as other vegetation issues. We will treat as much as we can over time.

Commissioner Okelo: Are there any plans to remove young Eucalyptus trees? Are they being uprooted?

Assistant Director Calderon: We are not going in and removing just the young Eucalyptus, but we will go in and remove them as part of shaded fuel break removal, or if we are doing restoration work in an area where we are trying to remove all non-native vegetation, to allow the native vegetation to grow back and thrive, then we will remove them.

Commissioner Okelo: On the evacuation of the public, for people that live in communities, it's very easy to implement an evacuation plan, but for people that are visiting a park, and they just happen to be in the park when something happens, what kind of evacuation plans are being thought about? You mentioned that you are clearing evacuation routes. Has thought been given to establishing meeting points in parks?

Superintendent Lombardi: We have emergency protocol plans for all of our parks, we have laminated copies in every park in the gatehouses or in the shops. They range from missing persons, to evacuations, to lost children, emergency shut-offs of all the valves that are mapped in the parks, and it the Ranger's duty to know where that information is. As a matter of fact, there was a lost child in Huddart Park last weekend. We went right to the gatehouse and shut the park down, went on a search, and they found the child within two hours, just from that protocol. The protocol is written, it's self-explanatory, they know exactly what to do, who to call, who to notify, and we work very closely with other agencies. If it is a fire, we will set up an

incident command immediately, and we will start moving people out of the park. Everyone has been trained on it and the information is provided.

Commissioner Okelo: Regarding the homes on the hill that we saw in the picture, in terms of property lines, where is the property line and who is responsible for clearing the fire fuel around it?

Forester Collamer answered: This particular property has been cleared before, so we are using that footprint as a guide for clearing. We use a parcel boundary on a digital map. We don't do any work on private property. This is all on County Park property.

8. Regular Agenda

8.1 Approval of the June 6, 2019 Commission Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

Motion: Bonilla / Second: Merrilees

Yes: 5 - Bonilla, Green, Merrilees, Okelo, and Manneh

No: 0

8.2 Approval of the July 11, 2019 Special Commission Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

8.2 Approval of the July 11, 2019 Special Commission meeting Minutes
Bonilla motioned, Merrilees seconded.

Commissioner Green had a comment: There are various Commissioner comments in these minutes. She didn't see hers reflected. She asked about the existing structure on the Tunitas Creek property. What about preserving this housing on the site? There was consensus amongst everyone in the audience that we strive for that, but it was not recorded in the document, nor were her comments of encouragement reflected that we not lose the opportunity for housing, in a site that's already zoned for it. Could we please modify the minutes to reflect those comments?

Commissioner Bonilla said she would change her motion to approve the minutes once they reflect the comments from Commissioner Green.

Commissioner Merrilees seconded the motion. **Vote: Unanimous approval.**

Motion: Bonilla / Second: Merrilees

Yes: 5 - Bonilla, Green, Merrilees, Okelo, and Manneh

No: 0

8.3 FY 2019-2020 Work Plan Discussion (ACTION)

Commissioners Green and Manneh worked on revisions for this which have been provided in the Agenda Packet. Commissioner Green will take a moment to walk through the document since this is something we're agreeing to and it involves some commitments or potential commitments on the part of the Commissioners.

First of all, thank you to the Commissioners who put together the previous work plan and for establishing such a nice model to work off of.

Commissioner Green made a draft of this and then had the opportunity to discuss it with Director Jensen and Assistant Director Calderon. This is really in draft form and open for comment, so if there is something that you see that you think isn't a good idea, or something you don't see that should be included, this is our opportunity to discuss that and modify, so she really wants to emphasize that this is for discussion, and not a dictation.

They tried to align objectives and activities of the Commissions work with the goals and bylaws, and there are a couple that are outside the bylaws as well.

The first mandate is to advise and make recommendations to the Board regarding the management and operation of the Parks and associated components. There are a couple of key objectives:

- 1) To understand and support the Parks Department management and operational priorities which were clarified for the Commission as Major Maintenance, Capital Infrastructure Improvements, Resource Protection, and Equity and Accessibility through the IDEA Initiative. There are a couple of activities there that relate to Strategic Planning that they would expect to take place once a Director is hired. Once a new Director is in place, to hear those priorities from that person, and contribute as helpful through this body to the Strategic Planning that he or she chooses to lead.
- 2) To promote Parks programs and efforts to promote the health, well-being, and safety of County residents, as well as equitable and diverse access to the County Parks. Our Parks are in and of themselves wonderful resources and valuable assets for recreation, but they also help us to achieve other public benefits, as we've been hearing - like the Parks Rx initiative, and so we align our work with those co-benefits because anytime we're doing anything for the Parks, we're helping Parks. Health, well-being, and safety. Safety in the terms we've heard today - fuel reduction, public safety, fire prevention. Requesting a presentation on fuel reduction and other mitigation like we heard today, a couple of similar things to follow on the IDEA initiative to go with the equitability and diverse access, and presentation on programs that promote health and well-being. We just heard Parks Rx recently, but maybe asking for a department

presentation for any other programs that do that and, once we've heard that information we can work with Parks staff to develop a standard set of information regarding population served. We often have these questions about who are we serving, and how can we get to that information. If we can at least standardize our own questions then staff can know to anticipate and work towards collecting that information. With the new Director in place, request the consideration of performance targets and metrics development so that we can begin to hear things more on a performance basis than we do, and support the development of those metrics. Once we get to budget season, request a presentation that shows how the budget is aligned into these co-benefits, goals and targets.

Subject Matter Objectives:

Dog Management Policy - Continuing participation in that.
Supporting feasible and strategic park property acquisitions and open space development.

Specific Parks Liaising: Bay to Coast Connection, Tunitas Creek Beach

Commissioner Green suggested two subcommittees: 1) Budget and Performance, which would align with the things on Part 1.2. 2) Land Use and Programs and these people would be representing to the Dog group, Bay to Sea, and Tunitas Creek.

Acknowledge that our central bylaw mandate is to advise the Board, developing and delivering an update to the Board of Supervisors, and the responsible entity for that is supposed to be the Chair of the Parks Commission.

Bylaws: Develop recommendations regarding fees to be charged - develop a comprehensive fee strategy so that things are holistic and aligned across the County. There is a consultant's project in process on this so it doesn't make a whole lot of sense for Commissioners to get out in front of that. The first step would be to request a presentation on those recommendations once they are completed and to support the execution of recommendations.

There were two goals per the bylaws where there were no objectives or activities identified. One is regarding the advising regarding Fish, Game, and Wildlife Policy and Programs. We heard from a member of the public that perhaps there is work here

to do, so we could leave that to Commission if we want to amend that to reflect what we heard. To amend the bylaws as necessary. We did not see that this was necessary so there is no work to do there at this time.

Increase awareness of the San Mateo County Parks Foundation. Strengthen the relationship between the Foundation and the Commission. This is a place where we could possibly appoint a liaison. Incorporating notes from the liaison as part of the Foundations standing item.

Increase publicity and support attendance for our Parks events. We could commit to publicizing the event, following the Parks Department on social media, promoting events as they come through, and attending events. Something quantitative so we can agree to a level of Commissioner participation service.

Proposed subcommittees: 1) Budget and Performance that would address activities associate; 2) Land Use and Programs, that would deal with some of the liaising, 3) Do we want a Parks Foundation liaison?

Commissioner Merrilees's comments for the two ideas regarding subcommittees, Land Use and Budget are so large that it seems overwhelming. The Dog Management group would be a part of Land Use, but that's a lot just on its own. There are probably a bunch more that could fit into Land Use that we might want to spread out across the Commission a little bit. The same with Budget. Neil is very interested the way budget interacts with charging fees and whether we're getting enough money and whether we're getting enough visitors. You can charge more and get fewer visitors, or you can charge less and get more visitors. Neil is really interested in that interaction. Maybe we could each take on little chunks that we think we could handle on something that big.

Commissioner Green: A subcommittee can only be two people, so it's limited in its ability just right there, so I think if those are the kinds of questions - her understanding of a subcommittee is that it enables some kind of formal way for the department to provide extra information. If you have particular questions, it could be handled in a call, or in a meeting with the two sub-commissioners and the department, so you would have a venue to ask those questions outside of the main Commission meetings. We wouldn't have to have subcommittees but it might help us to create some structure for activities here but perhaps we need to add an activity on this interest. Although it is kind of embedded in the fees development one -

developing a comprehensive fee strategy would be about the balances between revenues and uses.

Commissioner Merrilees said that's a narrow thing he thinks they could take on and accomplish.

Commissioner Green: I think for those components of the work plan that do require work outside of hearing a presentation and asking questions, then we should self-assign.

Commissioner Bonilla: 1) I am part of the dog committee, along with Commissioner Merrilees. I think some of the struggle with this is if it's not assigned to a subcommittee, things didn't happen. We need structure somehow to do the work outside of the Commission, we should all be doing work outside of the Commission, to help further the goal and mission of Parks. I think there either has to be subcommittees or we do what we did last time which wasn't very effective. We got some of the things done from the last work plan but not near what we should have.

Commissioner Okelo: This is a wonderful report. He applauds the committee for the work done on this. Thank you Commissioner Green for such a presentation. I think one of the mistakes we made last time was that we tried to assign people to the various activities or objectives. So we had people assigned to things but it really didn't constitute a committee. There was really no working together. I would hate for us to do that. But we still need a mechanism as a body where we can work on our tasks outside of these meetings. I would like to make some comments and then suggest a few things.

Regarding Goal 1.5: Develop and deliver Commission updates to the Board. We need to attend two Board meetings. The Chair needs to attend two Board meetings. The first one is just to present our work plan after we agree on it. Tell them what the Commission will be working on over the next year, and get their feedback. At the end of that time period, we go back to the Board of Supervisors and report on what we've done. Tell the Board if we need more money for additional staff to get more done. Modify the report to say we need two reports. Perhaps we can try to figure out when in the course of the year would be the most appropriate time to do it.

Addressing Commissioner Green, Commissioner Okelo says: You've indicated you'd like to go to them before budget decisions are made.

On goal #6: Increasing publicity and support attendance for County Park events in all five districts. I'd like to amend that language and we can talk about what the language should be, and for this primary reason: earlier in the meeting I asked for a spreadsheet to tell us what all the activities are that the Department has been involved in in the course of the month. So we can see a list of activities, location, numbers, what part of the County are attendees from? So we can make a commitment as Commissioners that we're going to go to the cities...either go to the City Council meetings,

once every quarter or once every two months or whatever it is that's convenient to us. Or also go to the cities that have a Parks and Recreation Commission and just share that information with them. So Commissioner Okelo would like to put some language there so that it becomes that specific.

And then finally, Commissioner Okelo's suggestion is this: Let's look at our goal. Let's assign committees to the goals. Goal #1 we'll assign two people.

Commissioner Green: Goal 1 is heavy, it encompasses multiple objectives, whereas the others have a maximum of two objectives, so she's not sure that will work.

Commissioner Okelo: If we assign a committee, the committee will prioritize we can't do all of this. Then (they: someone?) can provide a recommendation on how we restructure ourselves to be able to do that. But we do not want to violate the Brown Act in that process.

Commissioner Green: 1.2 and 2.1 belong together and 1.3 and 1.4 belong together. It does seem to be assigned more at the activity level but we could adjust it to the objective level.

Modifications suggested by Commissioner Green:

Adjust who is responsible to align by objective in addition to the Commissioners sharing Parks Events with neighboring City Councils.

Add Commissioner Bonilla to the dog committee.

Modifying 1.5 to say that the Commission wants to make two presentations to the Boards of Supervisors.

Commissioner Okelo: Try to have each Commissioner on two committees but be cognizant of not violating the Brown Act.

Commissioner Green: It seems there are rules for committees and rules for individual liaisons, so that may be the way to accomplish what you're talking about. Have each person be on one committee and also be in a liaison role.

Commissioner Okelo: We also need a liaison for the Youth Commission.

Interim Director Jensen: Youth Commissioner Bhat was not able to attend the meeting today, but he will be at the next meeting and will be with us for the rest of the year. This is his third year.

Commissioner Green: We need to self-assign to the various liaison roles then have an action to adopt this as amended with the roles. So, who would like to volunteer for what?

Commissioner Bonilla volunteered for Program and Planning. She also thinks that Goal 3 the Fish, Game, and Wildlife programs, if we are going to bring that one back on, then she is interested in that one as well. Although the Fish Game and Wildlife would probably go under the Program and Planning sub-committee. Reminder, Commissioner Bonilla is liaison to the dog committee already.

Commissioner Okelo asked for clarification: Are we using the objectives for what we want to get involved with, they may have to combine certain objectives.

Commissioner Green: I need to edit where I have assigned subcommittee-I'll change the structure of the grid so it lines up with the objectives.

Commissioner Okelo: Can we do that before we make those commitments?

Commissioner Green: I think it's important since we only meet every two months, and it's already August, and if we want to do anything by the spring, that we self-assign at least into areas of interest and liaising responsibilities today.

Commissioner Okelo: Is there anything that precludes us from having a special meeting to talk about this? Is this something that the Commission would be willing to consider? I don't want to have to rush through this due to the time right now.

Commissioner Green: I don't think that much is going to change between the concepts of budget and performance and the concepts of planning and projects, I don't think there is that much discussion there, so if we could just pick between those two then that would help me modify the document in a way that is productive.

Commissioner Okelo: I personally don't think we need a committee to discuss the budget.

Commissioner Green: I really want to do that.

Commissioner Okelo: We're getting into the detail of staff work. We are a policy body. We don't direct the details of the budget. But we direct the details of the budget by coming up with programs and activities.

Commissioner Green: That is a budget. To me that work is very important.

Commissioner Okelo: If there is a programs and activities committee, then that's essentially what the budget committee is. So we cannot have a programs and activities and a budget committee. We cannot have both.

Commissioner Bonilla: If you look at the activities and you look at the fee strategies that would fall under budget and performance subcommittee in my mind. I don't think they mean they are going to be doing the budget but helping to support ideas around the budget that will help staff, is my understanding of this committee. Another activity of support that is helpful is - the development of targets and metrics. If you look under activities under the objectives I think they do align under two separate groups. It could be three if you want.

Chair Manneh: He echoes what Commissioner Okelo said and would like to attend the December meeting of the Board of Supervisors. He will give a heads up to his District V Supervisor, David Canepa. I also don't see any reason why we shouldn't have a separate meeting to discuss this

because this is going to be a lengthy discussion and it's going to take up much more time to see who is going to do what.

Chief Deputy John Nibbelin: Certainly it's within the Chair's and the Commission's discretion to direct staff to arrange for a special meeting if that is the instruction to staff.

Commissioner Green: Before we do that I'd like to self-assign to what committee I would like to participate in which is the Budget and Performance one. And we don't have to adopt this today but I would appreciate any guidance. Commissioner Merrilees, if you think you are leaning towards an interest in budget or planning it would be helpful if you could specify it, or Commissioner Okelo, because that will just help me to make modification for that meeting, because we can't talk about this in between, for Brown Act reasons. So I need as much input as I can get today so I can give you a better document next time.

Commissioner Merrilees: Planning and Projects and the Dog Committee.

Commissioner Manneh: I will take on 6.1 and 6.2 and would like to be the liaison to the Parks Foundation.

Commissioner Bonilla: If we are presenting at a Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting, she would be willing to go with Commissioner Manneh, and she could present what she worked on and Commissioner Manneh could do the work plan going forward.

Commissioner Manneh: Absolutely. Commissioner Bonilla, would you like to do Oct or Dec?

Commissioner Bonilla: I think that's up to what the BOS calendar looks like. I'd let staff decide what we are doing.

Interim Director Jensen: We will look at the calendar. What I would recommend is that it be one presentation. You would talk about what you've accomplished and what you plan to do. I can also advise you that the direction we've been getting on presentations is that it's no more than five minutes, with five minutes for Q&A. 10 minutes total.

Commissioner Green: Commissioner Okelo did you have any areas of interest?

Commissioner Okelo: No I need to think about it.

Commissioner Manneh: Can we close out this segment 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3?

Commissioner Bonilla: May I suggest if we are going to do a special meeting that we set a date now or try to set a date now and see if that works for staff?

Commissioner Manneh: Either after Labor Day or the end of August?

Commissioner Green: I don't have a way to commit at this time, so you guys set a date and I'll do my best to make it and if not, you'll have the materials to discuss at least.

Chief Deputy Nibbelin: We could have one of our Assistants perhaps work with you through a doodle poll or some such thing.

Commissioners: That would be great.

Interim Director Jensen: We could devote the majority of the October meeting to this work if that's something you chose to do.

Commissioner Green: Makes a motion to continue this item to the next meeting of this commission, date to be determined.

Commissioner Bonilla: Second

Commissioner Okelo: He thinks they can take action on adopting this plan.

Motion: Bonilla / Second: Manneh

Yes: 5 - Bonilla, Green, Merrilees, Okelo, and Manneh

No: 0

9. Commissioners Reports*

No Commissioner Reports.

10. Items for Future Agenda

Chair Manneh asked Interim Director Jensen if there were any items for the next agenda. She replied that she understands they would like to have a special meeting to discuss the work plan. We will survey the commissioners to find a mutually agreeable date for all. The agenda for that meeting will be further discussion of the work plan.

Commissioner Manneh stated that a Thursday or Friday will work better for him.

Commissioner Okelo: We are still trying to work to get the arborist here.

Interim Director Jensen: He was not available to come to the August Commission meeting.

Commissioner Okelo: Maybe he could come to the October meeting.

Interim Director Jensen: My understanding is that you wanted to devote the entire special meeting to the work plan, so that the arborist could come to the October Commission meeting if he is available.

Commissioner Bonilla said that if all the Commissioners cannot attend the special meeting, then they should discuss the work plan in October.

They've already adopted the work plan, there's people that could start work on the areas that they've assigned, and this would just be further self-assigning. And in fact, it might be a good idea to just have further discussion at the October meeting and not take up extra staff time for a special meeting.

Commissioners Manneh and Green agreed with her.

Commissioner Manneh commented on "No more 10 point meetings"

11. Adjournment

Commissioner Manneh asked for a moment of silence before adjournment, in honor of the shooting victims in Gilroy, CA this past weekend.

Commissioner Bonilla motioned that the meeting be adjourned in their honor.

Commissioner Manneh called for a motion to adjourn the meeting 6:07 pm. Unanimous vote to adjourn.

Yes: 5 - Bonilla, Green, Merrilees, Okelo, and Manneh

No: 0

** Indicates that reports are verbal only.*

County of San Mateo Parks and Recreation Commission:

Barbara Bonilla, District 1

Heather Green, District 2 (Vice-Chair)

Neil Merrilees, District 3

Meda O. Okelo, District 4

Basem Manneh, District 5 (Chair)

Eeshan Bhat, Youth Commissioner

County of San Mateo Parks Department:

Peggy Jensen, Interim Parks Director

Nicholas Calderon, Parks Assistant Director

Lori Mrizek, Executive Secretary

Meeting Rules and Procedures

