



# MINUTES - DRAFT

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Hall of Justice

**Thursday, October 3, 2019**

**4:00 PM**

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*Meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m.*

## **1. Pledge of Allegiance**

## **2. Roll Call**

**Present** 3 - Barbara Bonilla, Neil Merrilees, and Basem Manneh

**Absent** 2 - Heather Green, and Meda O. Okelo

## **3. Public Comment**

Mr. Steve Kennedy was called to speak

## **4. Action to Set the Agenda**

**Motion: Bonilla / Second: Merrilees**

**Yes:** 3 - Bonilla, Merrilees, and Manneh

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 2 - Green, and Okelo

## **5. Parks Foundation Executive Director's Report**

Commissioner Green arrived at 4:14 p.m.

Parks Foundation Executive Director, Michele Beasley presented report to Commission.

## **6. Department Report**

6.1 Introduce new Parks Counsel, Deputy County Counsel Craig Baumgartner

6.2 Director's Report (including Parks Department Budget and Performance Measures)

Interim Director Peggy Jensen addressed Commission.

Commissioner Green had a question about Measure K funding. From a County Wide perspective, what are competing uses there and what possibility do you think there will be to get 2021 fiscal money?

Interim Director Jensen answered that there is \$80 million in funding allocated already. The Parks Department receives a very generous amount of funding, significantly greater than other departments. The money we get is primarily for maintenance and capital projects. She does not anticipate getting more. Interim Director Jensen explained that \$2.5 million is ongoing Measure K money that we anticipate getting every year, and we also have \$3 million in one-time funds. Our opportunity is to demonstrate to the County Manager and the Board that we have projects worthy of that one-time money.

Commissioner Green asked if that planning is going on in the Department right now to identify the next tranche of capital project?

Interim Director Jenen answered: We are on a two-year budget cycle. Our assignment now is to get the work done and to make sure we are planning appropriately for the maintenance work that needs to be done in the future and to make sure that given the rising costs of construction, we have enough money to do the work we currently have on the books.

Commissioner Green also asked if the two authorized positions mentioned in the Fiscal Year 2019-21 Budget Update were permanent positions. Interim Director Jensen answered, yes they are.

Commissioner Bonilla had a question about the seals. In 2017-2018, there was a large increase but a decrease in maximum breed adults. Why do we get larger numbers some years and it goes down in other years?

Ranger Matt Del Carlo answered that in 2017 there was Domoic acid in the water that killed quite a few seals.

## **7. Regular Agenda**

### **7.1 Approval of the August 1, 2019 Commission meeting minutes (ACTION)**

Approval of the August 1, 2019 Minutes has been moved to the December Agenda.

### **7.2 Dog Work Group Update**

Ellie Dallman gave an update on the Dog Work Group.

### **7.3 Land Acquisition and Management Policy (ACTION)**

Assistant Director Nicholas Calderon presented the Department's Draft Land Acquisition and Management Policy and accompanying Power Point to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Manneh: how quickly are you looking for the Commission to make a decision?

Assistant Director Calderon answered that we are taking this to the Board of Supervisors on October 22, so we would like a decision from you today.

Commissioner Merrilees: How is this different from the process we have right now?

Assistant Director Calderon: There is no formal, written policy for the process that we have right now. We have one for the Mini-Park Policy. This new policy will only apply to parcels that are over 5-acres in size.

Commissioner Merrilees: When you are doing a cost-benefit analysis I think it's easy to come up with the costs but sometimes it's hard to talk about the benefit. A lot of our park land is used by hikers and walkers and equestrians and it's hard to put a number on the benefit. There's going to have to be something else--either the desire by a Supervisor or a community group that's interested. I'm not exactly sure how this will work. It's a decision often made from the heart and not the balance sheet.

Assistant Director Calderon answered that this policy is not being proposed to stop anyone from wanting to purchase or transfer or acquire or manage property. The intent of the policy is to make sure that we are doing it with both eyes open. When it comes to Parks there's always that x factor--that factor that you can't necessarily put in dollars and cents. If you go out to Tunitas Creek Beach, that's a perfect example. That view is something you can't put a dollar value on. That's why we want to assess things like regional trail connection opportunities through County ownership or management. Are we able to close the gap in the Coastal Trail or the Ohlone Portola Heritage Trail? That's why we want to understand the ecological condition of the property, the potential of the property because being able to restore high value property is something that has a certain value that you can't necessarily put in dollars and cents. We want to make sure we are capturing that in the narrative and the assessment of the value of that property.

Commissioner Green: Are you saying that the costs in the cost-benefit analysis are quantitative, and the benefits largely qualitative?

Assistant Director Calderon: That's correct. We would also want to look at

the potential revenues as well. Are there reservation sites? Are there potential campgrounds? Can you charge parking there?

Commissioner Merrilees: We have a lot of property now and never enough Rangers. Is there a way to consolidate or get rid of property that is no longer beneficial. Is this a one way direction - acquisition only? Do we accept a property and then get stuck with it forever? Whereas if a better property comes up in the future, like a beach, and you can't take that because you're extended with a property that nobody is visiting?

Assistant Director Calderon said he thinks this is something that the Department has never discussed - selling property - and it's not a conversation I've ever heard a Board member discuss in open session either.

Commissioner Merrilees: There's a property that the Sheriff's Office has, Honor Camp, and they were talking about transferring it to the Parks Department. It's no longer valuable to them, would it be valuable for another use? Not all land is equal. In the future we will be under pressure not to accept land that comes our way. We may not always be funded as well as we are now. Is there some way to talk about this on a cost-benefit analysis that you would do on property you already have if it was no longer beneficial.

Assistant Director Calderon: The purchase and sale of property is strictly a Board action. The Department has not had any conversations with them regarding the sale of property. Our focus right now is on how we better manage what we have right now. It's no longer good enough to buy it, own it, and hold it. We have to be actively managing it for the ecological resources and make sure that we are reducing the fuel loads and opening up new opportunities for not just wildlife but for recreationalists as well. That's what this policy does is give us the resources to actively steward our land instead of just hold it and let it sit.

Commissioner Green: Is there a Department-neutral real estate function in the County?

Interim Director Jensen answered we have a real property division and we would work closely with them on this process- due diligence, appropriate comparisons, so there are resources available to us.

Commissioner Bonilla moved to recommend acceptance of this policy. Commissioner Merrilees seconded the motion.

Commissioner Bonilla withdrew her motion.

Commissioner Green moved to recommend the Land Acquisition and Policy to the Board with two revisions: 1) Modify instances where it discusses cost benefit analysis to also incorporate acknowledgement of qualitative analysis. 2) To acknowledge the role of the Real Property function within the County for land to be considered under this policy.

Commissioner Bonilla seconded Commissioner Green's motion.

Commissioners voted unanimously to approve Commissioner Green's motion.

**Motion: Green/ Second: Bonilla**

**Yes:** 4 - Bonilla, Green, Merrilees, and Manneh

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Okelo

#### 7.4 FY 2019-2020 Work Plan: Self-assignment to subcommittees and activities (ACTION)

Commissioner Green spoke at our last meeting we had an initial of the Commission's work plan and there were many comments documented. Heather made the changes. The most changes were realigning the structure so that the subcommittees were aligned with the goals and objectives and the activities underneath them would be to the discretion and judgement and priorities of subcommittee members.

We had a couple of self-assignments at the meeting last time. Commissioners Bonilla and Merrilees continuing on the Dogs group and Commissioner Bonilla interested in the Planning and Project Subcommittee.

Commissioner Green interested in Budget and Performance.

Chair Manneh is interested in the Parks Foundation work. They added a position to liaison with the Youth Commission. If the Commissioners all want to self-assign to the work groups, we can contact Commissioner Okelo through email and let him know what is available, or he can possibly be an alternate.

Commissioner Bonilla asked about public comment speaker, Steve Kennedy, the topic is on the agenda in Winter of 2020. We should let him know when we will address that.

Interim Director Jensen said that the Department will prepare a memo for the Commission on how those funds can be used. We will have to go back and research the legal requirements around that. At this point, Interim Director Jensen is not sure that the uses Mr. Kennedy is suggesting is something that we can do. We will come back to you in December with a recommendation and if it can be used in a certain way, we'll come forward with the process.

Commissioner Bonilla would like to volunteer for 3.0, and Commissioner Merrilees as well. If the CAC is re-formed, Commissioners Bonilla and Merrilees would both like to do that as well.

Commissioners Bonilla and Merrilees both on Tunitas Creek and Bay to Coast work.

Staff please ask Commissioner Okelo what he would like to work on.

Commissioner Bonilla asked us to please put the work group on the ongoing agenda so they can report back anything that needs to be reported.

#### 7.5 Letter of Support for CuriOdyssey's proposed Physics Play Area

Interim Jensen explained that included in packet is draft Letter of Support for CuriOdyssey, that was requested by the Commission in August.

Commissioner Merrilees made a motion to accept the letter. Commissioner Manneh seconded the motion. Unanimous approval of the Letter of Support.

**This Miscellaneous was approved.**

#### 7.6 2020 Parks Commission Regular Meetings Date Change

Interim Director Jensen addressed the Commission and explained that we are having time conflicts with scheduling Board Chambers for our meetings in 2020. She asked what other days might be possible for the Commissioners to attend. There was discussion and the result was that Thursdays were preferred for the Commissioners and they would like to keep the meeting on that day.

Interim Director Jensen suggested that we can keep it on Thursdays but it won't consistently be on the first Thursday of the even months. The Commissioners agreed to that as long as they have sufficient notice of the dates.

### 8. Commissioners Reports\*

None of the Commissioners had a report at this time, however, Commissioner Bonilla welcomed County Counsel Baumgartner. Commissioner Bonilla also thanked Interim Director Jensen for all her support and leadership.

Commissioner Manneh thanked Commission Clerk, Lori Mrizek, for extending an invitation to him for a recent Youth Commission meeting on September 26. There were Commissioners from all over San Mateo County, including the Board of Education and Juvenile Justice. The event was sponsored by Supervisor Carole Groom's office. The youth are driven and innovative and have bright futures ahead of them, and Commissioner Manneh was very pleased to be a part of the event.

## **9. Items for Future Agenda**

In addition to items 9.1 and 9.2 that are already on the Agenda for next time, Commissioner Bonilla would like the workplan added to all future agendas so they can make reports at each meeting.

9.1 Nomination and Election of 2020 Commission Officers

9.2 Presentation on the IDEA initiative

## **10. Adjournment**

Commissioner Bonilla made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Manneh adjourned the meeting 5:15 p.m.

## **Meeting Rules and Procedures**

