



ALAMEDA RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING

DATE: Thursday, February 13, 2025
TIME: 7:00 p.m. Called to Order
PLACE: City Hall Council Chambers

A video recording of the meeting may be viewed at <https://alameda.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>
The following are action minutes in keeping with the Sunshine Ordinance 2-91.17.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Radez, Vice Chair Swartz, Commissioner Alexander, Commissioner Robbins

Absent: Commissioner Burney

Staff: Alameda Recreation and Park Department (ARPD) Park Manager (PM) Matt Nowlen, ARPD Office Assistant Donna Conde

Chair Radez stated the following: Members of the public may speak for three minutes regarding any matter not on the agenda. Commissioners, however, will not respond to comment or answer questions. The City welcomes speakers providing public comment, but please be advised this is a limited public forum. As such, speakers must stay on topic if speaking to a particular agenda item, and if speaking during non-agenda public comment, they must address matters within the subject matter jurisdiction of the City. If speakers fail to follow these rules, they will be warned, and if they continue to disregard the rules, their opportunity to speak will be ended.

2. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

- Speaker Jimmy Song: Alameda resident, MEOW master swimmer. Provided context to a letter he sent to the Recreation and Park Commission regarding swim times and fees at Encinal Swim Center.
- Speaker Gabriel Duncan: Founder of Native History Project. Thanked ARPD for hosting upcoming culinary series, "Acorns!", at Mastick Senior Center in April and invited the community to attend the series and acorn harvesting, September – December. Mentioned his organization will build a new acorn grainery at Alameda Point Collaborative Farm2Market in July.
- Speaker Abdulla Alexander (online): Alameda resident and skateboarder. Asked about the possibility of the skate park getting lights. Park is open 24/7, however, there are no lights to skateboard at night.

3. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

PM Matt Nowlen gave the Director Report. See Exhibit 1.

4. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

- Chair Radez: Appreciated park staff for maintaining the fields throughout the winter. Shared that his lost jacket was returned to him after a few days which reflects the care of ARPD staff at the Alameda Point Gym. Noted that it was difficult to find a phone number to the gym and suggested providing an accessible directory of facility contact information. Attended the Urban Forest Plan (UFP) community meeting on January 29 in preparation for the presentation to the Recreation and Park Commission. Observed the UFP workshop had great community involvement and

interaction and was pleased to see Mayor Ashcraft in attendance. Thanked Director Long and Office Assistant Donna Conde for the warm welcome he received when visiting the ARPD Office on February 12. Thanked ARPD staff for incredible work, program offerings, and public service.

- Vice Chair Swartz: Asked if the fence at Bohol Circle Immigrant Circle Park will remain. PM Nowlen responded that the community meeting on Saturday, February 22, will seek alternatives to the fencing, specifically around the dock ramp. Thanked lifeguards for keeping swimmers safe during inclement weather. Attended and appreciated the educational rose pruning demonstration at Lincoln Park on January 18.
- Commissioner Alexander: Requested an update on Mastick Senior Center roof repairs. PM Nowlen stated that scheduled completion is March 2025. Commissioner Alexander visited the Mobile Rec program trial with Daria Nyberg, ARPD Recreation Assistant, at Jean Sweeney Open Space Park (JSOSP) and looks forward to ARPD's plans to bring back mobile rec programs. She was heartened to see kids participating in crafts and sports at the park. Attended the Family Snowball Dance Party at the O' Club on February 7. Stated that everyone was dressed up and had a great time at the "Mardi Gras" themed occasion. Enjoyed seeing Recreation Manager Pat Russi welcome partygoers, many of whom were repeat participants. Congratulated Recreation Supervisor Christina Bailey and staff for a wonderful community event. Stopped by Tillman Park playground, Alameda Point Gym, and Main St. Linear Park. Looks forward to dry weather and scoreboard installation, purchased with the help of Alameda Friends of the Park, at Estuary Park.
- Commissioner Robbins: Shared that over 155 students provided input for the initial skate park survey and hopes their feedback is considered, such as the need for lights during winter months when there is not much daylight after school. Commissioner Robbins gave special recognition to ARPD staff who manage and maintain the indoor basketball afterschool youth program.

5. MINUTES

Chair Radez moved to accept the minutes of the January 9, 2025 Regular Meeting as presented.

M/S Chair Radez / Commissioner Robbins. All who were present at the January 9, 2025 meeting were in favor with four ayes via roll call vote.

6. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

6-A To Review and Comment on the Urban Forest Plan and Implementation

Public Works Coordinator Liz Accord and Dudek Urban Forestry Practice Leader Ryan Allen presented an update to the City of Alameda Urban Forest Plan with the following information: Project Team (City of Alameda – Sustainability and Resilience, Recreation and Parks Department, Public Works, Alameda Municipal Power, and Consultant Team – Dudek, Aim Consulting), project background, purpose of the Urban Forest Plan, benefits of trees, community engagement to date, structure of the Urban Forest Plan, draft plan preview – vision, key themes, goals and strategies, canopy cover and priority planting score, age and health of the tree inventory, threats and risks - high groundwater and drought, updated tree species list for public trees, canopy increase analysis, funding and staffing scenarios, next steps, comment on the draft plan, and recommendation.

Public Comment

- Speaker Gabriel Duncan: Remarked that the census tracts maps in the presentation are statistically misleading, and there is an aberration in the data in reference to the Alameda Point area. Commented that the numbers need to be realistic in order to make effective decisions.
- Speaker Alex Spehr (online): Commented that she would we like Coast Live Oak trees and native shrubs planted in the parks. Stated that the newly planted trees at Portola Triangle Park are not native and thriving.
- Speaker Christopher Buckley (online): Alameda resident, UFP working group member and tree advocate who has donated approximately 300 trees to the City over the past 15 years. Authored the letter that Commissioner Alexander referred to and responded to her comments concerning utility lines and the 25' tree limit. Stated that the current UFP plan restricts the treatment of trees relative to utility lines in comparison with the current master street tree plan, and explained the distinction between high voltage lines vs. secondary lines or tree wires. He shared the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) tree standards require 4' clearance from high voltage lines and no clearance from secondary lines. Under the existing master street tree plan, the 25' limit applies only to trees not on major streets and having high voltage lines. He remarked that best practices can be applied, so that trees are pruned to spread and adapt to high voltage lines. Recommended that the existing master street tree plan be continued.

Commissioner Comment

- Chair Radez: Asked presenters to highlight notable factors about Alameda's local environment. Presenter Allen cited special considerations are groundwater and sea level rise, otherwise, environmental conditions are consistent with the bay area region as a whole. Chair Radez mentioned Oakland having a UFP and asked how does Alameda's UFP relate and interact to neighboring and adjacent communities. Presenter Allen answered that some aspects of urban forestry are regional and important for adjacent cities to work in coordination such as managing invasive pests, however, city budgets are unique and separate conditions. Chair Radez asked what are the top quantifiable benefits of the plan to the community. Presenter Allen responded that they are in the form of jobs and supporting local economies. He stated the importance of shading and cooling benefits in day-to-day lives and the ability to comfortably walk or ride down a street on a hot day. He elaborated how trees help reduce stormwater management needs by filtering water through leaves and branches and storing that water in the ground. Chair Radez asked if the City has its own professional arborist and if the UFP calls for the installation of a coordinating party to manage plan implementation. Presenter Accord answered the UFP, housed within Environmental Services, Public Works, has a project manager with some arborist training but there is no designated official arborist. In the fully-funded plan, a city-wide credentialed urban forester would coordinate the efforts and involvement of all city departments and community organizations. Chair Radez viewed the proposal favorably as it presents many positives for the community, and provided comments oriented towards improving the proposal's effectiveness. Suggested that focus be placed on the City's specific and unique needs, quantifiable in economic and environmental terms in order to track effectiveness over time. Recommended increasing confidence in the plan through staffing, emphasizing the need for a certified arborist to direct implementation. Agreed with Commissioner Robbins and public comment to revisit the equity data to ensure trees are planted where they have the highest benefit. Thanked the presenters and wished them well.

- Commissioner Alexander: Asked who is responsible to fix a sidewalk if it is damaged by a tree's roots planted by the City. Presenter Accord responded that the City, not the homeowner, is responsible for deficiencies to the sidewalk caused by tree roots. Also, Public Works is working with the ADA-transition plan to trim hazardous sidewalk trees. Commissioner Alexander inquired where the funds are coming from to plant and maintain trees. Presenter Accord replied that the bulk of program funding is a combination of construction improvement, tax and gas tax dollars; also, the City can seek additional grants for supplemental funding as program needs expand. Commissioner Alexander referred to a public comment letter and asked for clarification on the height of tree canopies. Presenter Allen responded that the UFP recommends specific tree species with a maximum height of 25' be planted under electrical lines only, and the goal is to plant the largest trees possible in the spaces provided to maximize the benefits of the trees.
- Commissioner Robbins: Thanked the presenters and public comment. Asked what will be done to ensure equitable tree planting for low-income areas. Presenter Allen answered that tree planting would first focus on communities with lower canopy cover and a higher priority planting score. Commissioner Robbins concurred with public comment that the priority planting score map is exaggerated and inaccurate. He recommended a closer look at the metrics.

7. NEXT MEETING

7-A Next Regular Meeting is March 13, 2025

7-B Possible Agenda Items for the Next Meeting:

- Skate Park Updates
- Program Updates from Recreation Supervisor Christina Bailey

8. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Swartz motioned to adjourn the meeting.

M/S Vice Chair Swartz / Commissioner Alexander
All present in favor with four ayes via roll call vote.

Chair Radez adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

**2/13/2025 ARPD Director's Report
Presented by Recreation and Park Director Justin Long**

Upcoming Citywide Community Events:

- **Bay Area Polar Plunge**, Saturday, **March 1**, 7:45 AM at Crown Memorial Beach. Join the Alameda Police Department team and plunge into the Bay's cold waters for a great cause! This exciting event supports Special Olympic athletes and celebrates community, inclusivity, and fun! You can participate in the Plunge, the 5K scenic run along the beach, or both! For more information and to register or donate, visit the city website.
- **Alameda Restaurant Week** will take place from **March 14 – 23**. This 10-day event celebrates the culinary delights of our island city. Enjoy Alameda's dining scene by visiting over 30 participating restaurants and bars offering prix fixe menus and special dishes.
- **Alameda Youth Career & Job Fair**, Wednesday, **March 26**, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM at Encinal Jr. Sr. High School (EHS) Gym (210 Central Ave.). This annual event connects Alameda high school students with local organizations who may have career opportunities, internships or summer positions.
 - The City of Alameda will provide teens transportation to and from the Job Fair. Participants will meet in front of the Veteran's Building, 2203 Central Ave. (by 2:40 PM), and be transported to EHS. Participants, if needed, will be transported back to the Veteran's Building and leave EHS (by 4:00 PM). The deadline to register for transportation is Tuesday, March 25. Seats are limited.
 - The Job Fair is supported by AUSD, Alameda Collaborative for Children, Youth, and Their Families (ACCYF), the City of Alameda, Alameda County Supervisor Lena Tam, and the Alameda Chamber & Economic Alliance.

Upcoming Recreation Events and Activities:

- **President's Week Camp** will be held Tuesday – Friday, **February 18 – 21**, during AUSD non-school days. Camps will be provided at Leydecker Park for STEAM, AP Gym for Sports, and Harrison Center/Lincoln Park for Recreational Care. Camps are designed for kindergarten – 5th graders and will include arts, crafts, games, cooking, and walking excursions, dependent on weather. Visit our website for details and to register!
- **Mobile Recreation Series:**
 - Wednesday, **February 19**, 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM. Enjoy games and crafts at Lincoln Park, 1450 High St., Rain or shine! All ages welcome!
 - Wednesday, **February 26**, 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM. Meet at the Independence Plaza Lobby, enjoy light refreshments, and learn about senior programs offered at Mastick Senior Center.

Recap of Recreation Events and Activities:

- The **Annual Rose Pruning** held on Saturday, **January 18** at Lincoln Park was a wonderful and educational community event. East Bay Rose Society members provided a rose pruning demonstration and answered rose-care questions to approximately 30 attendees. We appreciate the East Bay Rose Society for their ongoing dedication and support of the Lincoln Park rose garden.
- The **3rd Annual Family Snowball Dance Party** took place on Friday, **February 7**, from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM at the Albert H. DeWitt O' Club. This year's theme was "Mardi Gras Masquerade," bringing vibrant colors and festive flair to the event! Children ages 5-12 and their favorite adults came together for an evening of fun. Approximately 160 guests

enjoyed lively dancing, arts and crafts activities, and a variety of delicious hors d'oeuvres (including beignets). Additionally, teens from Alameda Youth Committee (AYC) generously volunteered their time, creating wrist corsages for attendees.

Aquatics (all programs take place at Encinal Swim Center):

- Encinal Swim Center is **closed** for pool maintenance, Monday – Friday, **February 17-21**.
- **Lap Swim** and **Water Walking** are available during the day and weekend evenings, visit our website to view the schedule.
- All summer camps and special classes such as **Triathlon** and **Intro to Swim** are open for registration on Wednesday, **February 19**.
- All **summer lessons** are open for registration Saturday, **April 19**.
- **Totally Rad Retro Edition at the Pool** (ages 6-15), Monday – Friday, **April 7 – 11**, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Get ready to dive into a blast from the past at our '80s and '90s Day Camp! This camp is held during AUSD non-school days. Spaces available, visit our website to register!

Youth:

- The popular **Wee Play** Program held at the Veteran's Building on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, enjoys consistent participation from over 100 families weekly. The program is offered to toddlers (ages 18 months - 3) and their caregivers. Drop-in Fee: \$6 per day per child or purchase a Drop-in Pass for \$60 for 12 classes. Volunteers who help with setup and clean up receive FREE entrance for the day.
- **Parks & Playground Program** returns this Summer 2025, Monday – Friday, 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM, **June 16 - August 8** at park sites including Lincoln, Sweeney, Tillman, and Washington. The program provides FREE drop-in activities such as arts and crafts, cooking, drama, games, nature and special events for kindergarten - 5th graders. It is not a childcare service. Visit our website for more details.

Teen/Tween:

- The Alameda Youth Committee (AYC) met with the Alameda Free Library Teen Advisory Board, Alameda Collaborative for Children, Youth, and their Families (ACCYF), and various teen programs for the **2025 Youth Summit** on Wednesday, **January 15** at City Hall Council Chambers. High school and middle school students from across the island met and are determined to work together towards hosting a teens-focused event.
- **The LGBTQ+ Teen Center** is open every second Friday of the month at the Underground Teen Center, Veterans Memorial Building, 2203 Central Ave. The next gatherings are on Fridays, **February 14** and **March 14**, 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM for 6th - 8th graders, 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM for 9th – 12th graders. The Center provides a safe, enjoyable space for LGBTQ+ youth to make new friends, access information, and share peer support. For more information, visit www.alamedapride.com and www.accyf.org

Sports:

- **After School Pickleball Program** for 6th – 8th graders. Classes are held on Tuesdays of each month, 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM. ARPD provides all necessary equipment and transportation from the Underground Teen Center to the Alameda Point Gym. To register, visit our website.
- **Homeschool PE Program** is offered to homeschool elementary aged children (grades K-5th) Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM at the Alameda Point Gym. This program is perfect for homeschooled children looking to be active and have

fun. Children will be taught games such as basketball, soccer, dodgeball, pickleball, capture the flag, and many other fun activities. To register, visit our website.

- **Jr. Warriors Youth Basketball Games and Clinics** occur Saturday mornings through March 29, at the Alameda Point Gym, 1101 West Redline Ave. This exciting and popular program offers elementary school aged children an organized environment where they can learn basketball fundamentals, teamwork, and grow their love for the game.
- **Open Gym** has returned to Alameda Point Gym, 1101 West Redline Ave. on Sundays, 6:00 PM – 10:00 PM, through April, for participants, age 18+. Enjoy casual hoop shoots, skill development, and friendly games. Cost: \$8 per person per visit. Registration required, visit our website!
- **Tennis Lessons** are being offered for youth and adults. Please check our website for more information about group and private lessons taking place this winter and spring!
- **Indoor Drop-in Pickleball** is offered at the Alameda Point Gym, 1101 West Redline Ave. on Friday mornings.
- ARPD offers a variety of **Adult Pickleball Classes** at The Hub Sports Club, 800 W. Tower Ave. Whether you are new to the game or would like to improve your skills and technique, join us! Visit our website to register!

Staff Recognition:

- We would like to recognize **Willie Terrell**, Maintenance Assistant II, for his invaluable role with ARPD. Willie oversees and maintains the restrooms across all city parks, making sure they are clean, well-stocked and securely locked each night. These tasks are “behind the scenes” yet essential in keeping park operations running smoothly. He is hardworking and professional in handling the challenges of this position and often goes above and beyond by reporting issues such as graffiti, broken windows and any concerns requiring immediate attention. We appreciate Willie’s dependability and positive attitude. Thank you, Willie, for keeping our parks facilities in excellent condition day after day!
- **Heather Demarest**, Recreation Specialist, has worked for ARPD for almost 20 years and consistently delivers excellent customer service with a smile. She ensures that various ARPD programs and rentals run smoothly, specializing in making sure that both customers and fellow staff have what they need for a successful event. Her genuine attitude and reliability make her a key part of the team. We appreciate you, Heather!

Mastick Upcoming Events and Programs:

- The **AARP Tax-Aide Program** phone line is open for appointments through Tuesday, April 15. To schedule an appointment, call (510) 747-7501.
- **New Education and Recreation Classes** (visit our website to register):
 - **Texting Scams**, Wednesday, **February 19**, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, FREE. Learn how to identify text scams and what to do if you fall victim.
 - **Alexander Technique: Your Solution to Back Trouble**, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, **February 25 – 27**, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM. Learn techniques to relieve lower back tension and pain.
 - **Senior Soul Hustle Dance Class, Tuesdays, 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM**. Learn vintage and current popular dances. Don’t be shy, everyone welcome!

Recap of Mastick Senior Center Highlights:

- On Thursday, **January 23**, Mastick members enjoyed a trip to **Glowfari**, a family-friendly event featuring larger-than-life animal lanterns throughout the Oakland Zoo. Participants

enjoyed dinner at Reina's Restaurant then visited the Zoo to view the illuminated displays. It was an unforgettable and beautiful experience for all who attended!

- On Wednesday, **January 29**, Mastick facilitated **CHP Age Well/Drive Smart**, a seminar for older drivers to help improve safety. 30 Mastick members attended.
- The **4th Annual Storytelling & Drumming Festival** took place on Saturday, **February 1**, 12:00 PM – 3:30 PM. Highlights included Taiko Drumming, a Hula Dance performance accompanied by narratives of the music, storytelling through puppetry and song, and a ceramics workshop in which participants were able to bring home their creations. ARPD volunteers and staff provided an information table with current program offerings, and snacks were available for purchase with proceeds going towards teen programs. Despite the rainy weather, over 100 community members of all ages came out to enjoy the festivities!

Facility Notes:

- Mastick Senior Center roof construction and replacement continues. Once the roof is fixed, interior renovation will begin in rooms such as the lobby, game room, office and sewing room where operations have been affected. The facility has been tested for mold, and results are clean. This will continue to be monitored. We greatly appreciate the patience of the Mastick community.

Leisure Club:

- Leisure Club members celebrated the Year of the Snake and **Chinese New Year** with a delicious dinner on Thursday, **January 23** at Harrison Center. Everyone had a great time!

Parks:

- The Tillman Park Playground (ages 2-5) has been replaced and is ready for play. The new structure and play area are up to code and ADA-compliant.
- Grass fields have been restored and are open for use.
- Two enclosed landscape trailers have been added to provide equipment accessibility for park staff. The trailers have the ability to charge electrical equipment and will improve efficiency and service to our parks' community.
- An irrigation system is being installed on Main St. between Atlantic and Singleton Aves. to specifically support 56 newly planted trees from our Volunteer Tree Planting event at Main St. Linear Park.
- There will be a community input meeting on Saturday, **February 22**, regarding the dock entrance at **Bohol Circle Immigrant Park**. The meeting will be held on site at 11:00 AM.
- We are processing and reviewing community input for the design and layout of the City View Skate Park. We will reach out to the community again for further feedback. In addition, ARPD is meeting with a focus group to discuss the skate park expansion and feasibility.
- Renovation and ADA compliance of the Washington Park restrooms are complete.
- We are aware of the eroded areas along the north shore of Bay Farm Island adjacent to the San Leandro Channel. The Public Works Department is pursuing a permit amendment to allow installation of temporary measures (gabion rock walls) to protect these areas against further damage while a permanent, nature-based solution is pursued.