



ALAMEDA RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING

DATE: Thursday, March 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 Burney

Absent: Commissioner Robbins

Staff: Alameda Recreation and Park Department (ARPD) Director Justin Long, ARPD Acting Assistant Director 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 Jennifer Rakowski: Represented the community organization, Transform Alameda. Advocated for a permanent memorial bench for Mario Gonzalez at Scout Park (Otis Dr./Park St.)
- Speaker Jon Pecson: Spoke on behalf of Bay Farm Island and East End residents/dog owners and offered assistance with keeping track of and raising funds for the planned off-leash dog park at Tilden Way/Clement Ave. Stated that he met with Gail Payne, Project Manager, and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and learned there are toxins in the soil. He shared that Director Long and Project Manager Payne communicated about soil remediation. Gave special thanks to Acting Assistant Director Nowlen for providing guidance.
- Speaker Jay Garfinkle (online): Expressed safety concerns regarding the protection of spectators and vehicles from foul balls at the Lincoln Park baseball diamond. Stated that spectators sitting in the bleachers and vehicles in the parking lot are at risk of being hit by balls. Suggested the installation of additional fencing or baffle netting.

3. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Director Justin Long gave the Director Report. See Exhibit 1.

4. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

- Chair Radez: Emphasized how youth development opportunities such as volunteer and counselor-in-training programs, Operation Green Sweep, and Little League offered through ARPD and the community, help younger kids develop into mature older kids. Thanked the adults who mentor and create learning spaces to teach kids valuable skills, responsibility, community

engagement, and confidence. Encouraged all families to explore these types of experiences.

- Vice Chair Swartz: Asked if the Main St. Linear Park volunteer tree planting on March 29 is kid-friendly. Acting Assistant Director Nowlen answered yes, all ages will be able to contribute. Thanked ARPD for collaborating with AUSD to resolve maintenance challenges and minimize disruption at Encinal Swim Center. Looks forward to nice weather and long days in the parks.
- Commissioner Alexander: Visited Leydecker, Krusi, Rittler, Washington, Estuary and Longfellow Parks and observed that they were full of activities such as pickleball, Little League baseball and softball, soccer, tennis, basketball and La Crosse. Enjoyed meeting Sam Bowman, Recreation Leader, in charge of the Jr. Warriors Program at the Alameda Point Gym and seeing the kids play basketball. Stopped by the ARPD Office and brought “Mardi Gras” themed treats for staff. Shared positive comments from a friend’s Facebook post that summed up the value and importance of parks and playgrounds to the Alameda community.
- Commissioner Burney: Thanked ARPD for upholding a standard of excellence in park maintenance. Strongly encouraged young individuals to participate and prepare for the future by attending the Youth Career and Job Fair on March 26.

5. MINUTES

Chair Radez moved to accept the minutes of the February 13, 2025 Regular Meeting as presented.

M/S Vice Chair Swartz / Commissioner Alexander. All who were present at the February 13, 2025 meeting were in favor with three ayes via roll call vote.

6. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

6-A Update on Skatepark Improvements

Acting Assistant Director Matt Nowlen presented an update on Skatepark Improvements for the skatepark located at Alameda Point. The presentation included information about the Project Overview, Community Involvement – onsite input meeting, two online surveys, focus group, Areas of Improvements, Proposed Options, and Next Steps – community input conclusion, cost estimate, construction drawings, permit submission, request for proposal for construction.

Public Comment

- Speaker Scott Ramos: Longtime skater. Thanked ARPD for working with the skater community. Commented that the world-renowned skatepark is a special, historic place enjoyed by skaters of all ages, it has been featured on the cover of Thrasher magazine and recognized as one the oldest skateparks in Northern California. Preferred option #2 of the designs proposed by American Ramp Company. Director Long stated that there will be more discussion as designs are not finalized. Speaker Ramos appreciated the careful process in ensuring design details are taken into consideration. Suggested designating a space for an additional skatepark in Alameda.

Commissioner Comment

- Chair Radez: Expressed enthusiasm for future skatepark updates.
- Vice Chair Swartz: Asked about lighting at the skatepark and tennis courts. Director Long

responded that the skatepark and all Alameda parks without lighting close at dusk, but he and Acting Assistant Director Nowlen can look into the requirements for utilities to run to the skatepark facility. All tennis court lights are set on a timer.

- Commissioner Alexander: Asked about the skatepark improvements project budget. Acting Assistant Director Nowlen replied \$200,000 was appropriated in the initial project summary and efforts are underway to secure additional funding. Commissioner Alexander visited the skatepark and first community input meeting. Noticed that the skateboarders take ownership of the property and keep it clean, however, was concerned about graffiti and wood pallet fires. Discussed issues with Scott Ramos and suggested possible ideas such as the construction of a blank wall to allow free expression but discourage tagging and damage to other surfaces, a firepit to ensure a safe place for burning, and new garbage cans to decorate and refresh the space. She observed that families would like another skatepark, however, location and funds need to be considered. She shared that the Alameda Friends of the Parks has \$26,612 assigned to the skatepark renovation.
- Commissioner Burney: Asked about the skatepark design option pros and cons, timeline, and next steps. Acting Assistant Director Nowlen replied that based on community feedback, there is support for option #1 for the seating and option #2 for the complex skate features. He is in the process of working with the consultant on a proposal for construction drawings and talking with the building department. Commissioner Burney encouraged the skateboard community to advocate for the design they are passionate about and communicate this with the public.

6-B Update on Pre-K and Youth Programs

Recreation Supervisor I (RSI) Christina Bailey presented an update on ARPD Pre-K and Youth Programs. The presentation included information about Wee Play (6 months – 3 years), Preschool Programs (3 years - TK), Summer Camps (3 years - TK) – Tenderfoot Camp, Tiny Tot Art Camp, Cooking for Tots, School Year Programs, Recreational Afterschool Program (RAP) (kindergarten – 5th grade), Non-School Day Programs, Summer Programs (TK – 5th grade) - World of Wonder (WOW), Summer Day Camp – Hidden Cove, Trails End, Trail Blazers, Field Trips, Parks & Playgrounds Program, Special Events – Family Dance Party, Breakfast with Santa, and Santa's Visits.

Public Comment

- None

Commissioner Comment

- Chair Radez: Shared that his family has been a thrilled customer of ARPD youth programs for several years. Asked what can be done within ARPD and at home to introduce kids graduating from the RAP Program to new programs that are available to them as slightly older kids. RSI Bailey explained that Recreation Assistant Ashley Cendejas oversees teen programs and will be introducing teen center open houses over the next few months. To make the transition easier, ARPD will present information to 5th grade RAP participants and their families to familiarize them with the teen center, tween adventure camps, and trips.
- Vice Chair Swartz: Excited for his family to participate in ARPD youth programs and expressed appreciation for non-school day programs. Asked if RAP has before-school care and if Wee Play is open during spring break. RSI Bailey answered that ARPD does not have staff available to offer morning care and Wee Play is closed during break.

- Commissioner Alexander: Thanked RSI Bailey for her presentation. Asked if additional sites and more kids could participate if ARPD had more staff and inquired about the RAP Program waitlist. RSI Bailey replied that the WOW sites have adjusted participants' ages and grades for the first time this summer, so program needs have yet to be determined, and modifications will be made accordingly. Two RAP sites have waitlists, and registration is ongoing. Commissioner Alexander acknowledged the hard work of Recreation Manager Patrick Russi and staff and was thrilled to learn of the return of the Parks & Playgrounds Program. She reminded the community that donations towards scholarships can be made to ARPD and Alameda Friends of the Parks.
- Commissioner Burney: Asked RSI Bailey if she has all the resources needed. She replied ARPD is always looking for staff, particularly through the school year due to retention and turnover.

7. NEXT MEETING

7-A Next Regular Meeting is April 10, 2025

7-B Possible Agenda Items for the Next Meeting:

- Recreation Program Updates
- Budget Proposals Update

8. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Swartz motioned to adjourn the meeting.

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

Chair Radez adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

3/13/2025 ARPD Director's Report
Presented by Recreation and Park Director Justin Long

Upcoming Citywide Community Events:

- **Alameda Restaurant Week** takes place **March 14–23**. Enjoy Alameda's dining scene and visit select 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 Gym (EHS), 210 Central Ave. This annual event connects Alameda high school students with local organizations, career opportunities, and internships.
 - Transportation is available to and from the Job Fair. Teens meet at and return to the Veteran's Building, 2203 Central Ave. 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.
- **Asian & Pacific Islander Arts & Culture Festival**, Saturday, **April 26**, 12:00 PM–5:00 PM at Bohol Circle Immigrant Park. This FREE event, in partnership with ARPD, is a celebration of music, dance, food and art from Hawaii, Korea, the Philippines, and India.
- **Alameda Walks: Encinal Beach – Wildlife and History Walk**, Saturday, May 17, 9:00 AM–11:15 AM. Led by East Bay Regional Park Naturalist, Michael Charnofsky.
- **11th Annual Play for the Parks Golf Tournament**, Monday, **May 19**, 12:30 PM tournament at Corica Park, 6:00 PM dinner and auction at Harrison Center, Lincoln Park.

Upcoming Recreation Events and Activities:

- Join us for a FREE concert by the **Alameda Community Band** featuring music selections from around the world! Friday, **March 14**, 7:30 PM, Mastick Senior Center Social Hall.
- ARPD is currently soliciting vendors for Alameda's **Spring Shindig!** Saturday, **April 19**, 12:00 PM–3:00 PM, Alameda Point Gym & Multi-purpose Field. Celebrate Earth Day, enjoy community vendors, a petting zoo, bounce houses, crafts, food & more!
- **Starlight Movies in the Park** kick off Friday, **May 16** at the Alameda Multi-purpose Field. Event begins at 6:30 PM with kids' games and crafts, movie starts at approximately 8:15 PM–8:45 PM. The first movie in the series is *Moana 2*.
- **57th Annual Sandcastle & Sand Sculpture Contest**, Saturday, **June 21**, 9:00 AM–1:00 PM, Robert Crown Memorial State Beach. Join us for this wonderful community event! Sponsored by ARPD, EBRPD, AYC, and Bayview Women's Club.
- **48th Annual July 4th Parade**, Friday, 10:00 AM. Currently seeking sponsors, parade participants, volunteers, cars and drivers!

Upcoming Recreation Programs:

The **Summer Activity Guide** is now available in the community, and registration is well underway! Be sure to sign up early, as some activities have already filled up. With a wide variety of programs covering many exciting topics, there's something for every young person to enjoy this summer. To register for programs, or if you'd like more information, please visit our website! Don't miss out!

- **Mobile Recreation Series**, Wednesdays, 3:30 PM–5:00 PM:
 - **March 19** - Franklin Park, 1432 San Antonio Ave.
 - **April 2** - Jean Sweeney Open Space Park, 1100 Atlantic Ave.
 - **April 16** - Bohol Circle Immigrant Park, 2901 Fifth St.

- Please note: Parents and caregivers are required to stay with their children throughout the activity.
- **Spring Break Camps**, Monday – Friday, **April 7–11** (AUSD non-school days) at various park locations. Sign up now for Skateboard camp, LEGO camp, and Storytelling and Arts camp! Designed for kindergarten – 5th graders.

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

- **Drop-in Lap Swim/Water Walking**, visit our website to view the schedule.
- **Totally Rad Retro Edition at the Pool Camp** (for ages 6-15), Monday–Friday, **April 7–11**, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Dive into the '80s and '90s! Spots available!
- All summer CAMPS and SPECIAL CLASSES such as Triathlon and Intro to Swim are open for registration.
- All summer LESSONS will open for registration Saturday, **April 19** online and in-person at the **Spring Shindig!**

Youth:

- Tiny Tots Spring and Summer STEAM and Art Camps are open for registration. Hidden Cove, Trails End, and WOW (World of Wonder) Summer Camps are filling up, visit our website for details and to register!
- **Parks & Playground Program** returns this summer! Monday–Friday, 12:00 PM-5:00 PM, **June 16 - August 8** at park sites including Lincoln, Sweeney, Tillman, and Washington. This FREE drop-in program provides arts, crafts, cooking, drama, games, and special activities for kindergarten - 5th graders. Please note: Parents and caregivers are required to stay with their children throughout the activity.

Tween/Teen:

- We are accepting volunteers for the **Summer Teen Volunteer Program** (for ages 11–18, incoming 6th–12th graders for Fall 2025). Completed applications must be submitted by Friday, **May 9**. Applications are available online and at the ARPD Office.
- **The LGBTQ+ Teen Center** is open every second Friday of the month at the Underground Teen Center, Veterans Memorial Building, 2203 Central Ave. 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 to make friends and share support. More information at www.alamedapride.com

Sports:

- Adult Softball Spring/Summer League will begin in April for COED, Men's, and Women's Leagues.
- Women's Flag Football Leagues are underway at Estuary Field. League is at capacity. Check out the website for more information. Registration begins this month of March.
- **After School Pickleball Classes** held Tuesdays of each month, 4:00 PM–5:30 PM, Alameda Point Gym. ARPD provides equipment and transportation from the Underground Teen Center for 6th–8th graders.
- **Homeschool PE Program** is offered to children (grades K-5th) Wednesday and Friday mornings, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM at the Alameda Point Gym. This program teaches basketball, soccer, dodgeball, pickleball, and various fun activities.
- **Open Gym**, Alameda Point Gym, 1101 West Redline Ave. Sundays, 6:00 PM–10:00 PM, continues through April. Enjoy casual hoop shoots, skill development, and friendly games. Cost: \$8 per adult per visit.
- **Youth and Adult Tennis Group Lessons** begin on **March 29**.

- Friday morning **Drop-in Pickleball** continues at Alameda Point Gym, 1101 West Redline Ave.
- **ARPD Adult Pickleball Classes** continue at The Hub Sports Club, 800 W. Tower Ave. All skill levels welcome!

Staff Recognition:

- **Brooke Taylor**, Recreation Leader, has gone above and beyond this year by taking on additional responsibilities. Alongside her work in the STEAM program, she ensures the Alameda Point Gym is prepared and cleaned daily before any user group arrives for practice, and makes sure courts are set up for the appropriate sport each day. She has stepped up in every way and exceeded expectations. Thank you, Brooke!

Mastick Upcoming Events and Programs:

- **Day Trips:**
 - **Shopping at Livermore Premium Outlets**, Saturday, **March 15**, 10:00 AM–2:00 PM.
 - **Diablo Ballet's Swan Lake** at Leshner Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek, Saturday, **March 29**, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- **ACORNS! Culinary Series** led by Alameda Native History Project, Sundays, **April 6, 13, 20 & 27**, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM. Learn to harvest, process and cook delicious acorn dishes.
- **Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon**, Thursday, **April 17**, 10:00 AM, Social Hall.

Recap of Mastick Senior Center Highlights:

- Mastick facilitated an **Acorn Processing Workshop** on Sunday, **March 9**. The program, led by the Alameda Native History Project, was a huge success with 20 participants.
- The **AARP Tax-Aide Program** is FULL. To join the waitlist, call (510) 747-7501. You will be contacted should a spot become available.

Mastick Statistics (February):

- Total number of volunteers: **99**
- Total number of volunteers hours: **1,080**
- Number of greeting cards sent (for March Birthdays): **368**
- Number of new members: **145**
- Total lunch meals served: **1,046**
- Mastick Garden number of produce bags: **97**

Leisure Club:

- Leisure Club members look forward to a fun trip to the **Jelly Belly Factory** in Fairfield on Wednesday, **March 19**. Participants will enjoy a facility tour, interactive exhibits, the Jelly Belly Art Gallery, candy store, and café.

Parks:

- The **Estuary Park scoreboards installation** has resumed following delays caused by compaction issues and adverse weather conditions.

- Bay Farm Branch Library, Friends of the Library, and ARPD worked together to renovate the landscape surrounding the library on Saturday, **March 8**. Volunteers helped plant native plants and spread mulch.
- Join 100K Trees for Humanity and ARPD to plant trees at **Main Street Linear Park** (between Atlantic and Singleton Aves.), Saturday, **March 29**, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Volunteers should bring water bottles and wear closed-toe shoes and gloves. All other equipment will be provided. Email Joyce Mercado, jlmercado246@gmail.com to volunteer.
- Join ARPD at the **Spring Shindig** and help plant 10 trees in commemoration of Earth Day! Saturday, **April 19**, 10:00 AM, Alameda Point Multi-Purpose Field. If interested, contact Eric Vlnar, evlnar@alamedaca.gov
- **O' Club** and **Lincoln Park** grass areas have been aerated, reseeded and top dressed.
- Park Staff are diligently working on preparing data to implement a computerized work order system aimed at streamlining operations.

Staff Acknowledgement:

It is with deep sadness that we share the news of the passing of Drake Swanson, Parks Maintenance Worker II. Drake joined the City of Alameda on September 7, 2021. He was a valued member of our team. Our heartfelt condolences go out to Drake's family during this difficult time.