



ALAMEDA RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING

DATE: Thursday, May 9, 2019
TIME: 7:02 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.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Limoges, Vice Chair Alexander and Commissioner Barnes
Absent: Commissioner Chen and Commissioner Robbins
Staff: Alameda Recreation and Park Department (ARPD) Director Amy Wooldridge

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Limoges moved to accept the minutes of April 11, 2019 Regular Meeting as presented.
M/S Vice Chair Alexander / Commissioner Barnes. All in favor with a 3 – 0 vote.

WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

- o Written Communication: April 27, 2019 email to Director Amy Wooldridge from Courtney Shepler, Resident of Alameda Landing, regarding the Estuary Park homeless encampment and legal rights for residents of Alameda Landing. (See Exhibit 1)
- o Oral Communication: none

REPORTS FROM THE RECREATION AND PARK DIRECTOR (See Exhibit 2)

ARPD Director Amy Wooldridge gave the report and answered questions regarding the homeless in the parks. Potential solutions such as putting a dog park at Estuary Park if funding is identified to remove the large dirt mound that homeless people are living behind.

- Chair Limoges: Commented the homeless problem is ongoing. Requested the Commission be informed about the responses and updates with Courtney Shepard. Inquired about why we cannot move the contaminated, class 2 dirt pile since we created it. Answer: It will cost over \$350,000 to dispose of the dirt and due to the low level contamination, it can't be simply moved to another site.
- Vice Chair Alexander: Will there still be enough space for a new playground. Answer: Yes, the original design has a dog park and a playground. This dog park will be temporary. Vice Chair requested to have someone from the Alameda Police Department or Social Services come to give their opinion on the homeless situation.
- Commissioner Barnes: Is there any concern about exposure to the homeless population regarding the contaminants in the soil? Answer: No, it is all grassed over. The Department of Toxic Substance Control highly regulates it and the dirt is not considered a threat.

REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

- Chair Limoges: Attended Earth Day representing the non-profit Alameda Backyard Growers and

applauded the ARPD staff for a job well done. Made a few trips to Sweeney Park to watch removal of the granite blocks. Would like to agendize the idea for an Adventure Park. Went to Estuary Park to see the homeless encampments and said there is a great deal to discuss about this issue. Also would like to have someone from the new Carnegie Hall Innovation come and share about the project; how do we get a speaker on the agenda? Answer: Provide Director Wooldridge information so she can agendize it.

- Vice Chair Alexander: Thanked Park Manager John Mc Donald for painting Krusi softball diamond #3. Inquired whether the T-ball, t-shirt league banner would be going up soon? Answer: Will look into it. Went to Golf Course to have breakfast, course looks great. There are a lot of people waiting to play. Is construction on target? Answer: The North course is about 4 months behind due to all the rain but will be closing another 3 holes soon which will speed up the overall completion timeline. Suggested having an ongoing article in the Alameda Journal for Recreation and Park to talk about what is going on in the parks.
- Commissioner Barnes: Attended Earth Day Celebration and said it was impressive. Asked what the power source was for the bounce houses. Answer: Either generator or electricity from the building and will confirm. Her daughter attends Wee Play and was curious how the information was getting out for the Wee Play which changed temporary location. Answer: The building was closed due to a mold issue and signs were posted outside Veterans' Building, social media and email blast were all used to communicate to the public. Has been posting on Facebook and social media groups to introduce herself as a new commissioner. One feedback issue she received was regarding the Friends of the Library Alameda Book Sale which the complaint was that no ARPD staff was available to assist in the Library's book set up this year. Shared an idea and possibility of having an adventure park where kids can build and play. Reviewed climate plan and said there was little information of the impact to parks which could eventually bring implications to parks. Participated in Big Truck events which she enjoyed.

NEW BUSINESS

7-A Report on the Recreation and Parks Department Requests for Fiscal Year 2019- 2021 Operating and Capital Improvement Budgets.

ARPD Director Amy Wooldridge gave the report on the 2019-2021 budget which included operating budget for recreation programs and park maintenance and Capitol Improvement Programs: general park maintenance replacement, playground replacement and Mastick HVAC replacement. Increase includes city wide wage increase adopted in 2018, MOU mandated staff cost increases and annual 2% increases that was established in 2013. In addition is requesting two additional Gardeners to help maintain additional the 33 park acres plus two more parks being taken over from Public Works.

Speaker Misha Chellam, City of Alameda resident: Made suggestion to add a small neighborhood playground at Jackson Park. There are reported 250 interested parents who are excited about the possibility. Requesting the Commission to allocate provisional funding for the new playground.

Speaker Tara Navarro, City of Alameda Resident who uses the Recreation Services frequently for her children and said the Jackson Park playground would be a great addition for the community.

Commissioner Discussion

- Chair Limoges: Agreed that Jackson Park is a Park that seems to be under-utilized. Might be a great idea if the playground orientation is towards tots. Inquired if there is any training for the staff when they encounter the homeless or any aggressive person. Answer: We discuss the issue at staff meetings and staff are encouraged to call the police for any aggressive behaviors but no formal training.
- Vice Chair Alexander: Wants to consider the possibility of a playground at Jackson Park. How much would the playground cost? Answer: Approximately \$100,000. It would be less expensive if it was a small tot park.
- Commissioner Barnes: Agrees that the playground at Jackson Park is a good idea. Short term fix by creating a fence and sandbox to start making use of it. Asked if funds are set aside for the campground area at Alameda Point? Answer: Campground is within Enterprise Park Master Plan, which is still open for discussion and there is no funding for it presently.

Vice Chair Alexander made a motion to accept the 2019 - 2021 Operating and Capital Improvement Budgets with the recommendation to council to set aside funds for a playground at Jackson Park. M/S Vice Chair Alexander / Chair Limoges / All in favor with a 3 – 0 vote.

7-B Review and Recommend List of Park Names Policy for Naming City Facilities

ARPD Director Amy Wooldridge gave report which included the City of Alameda policy for naming city facilities and park naming data from social media.

Commissioner Discussion

- Chair Limoges: Suggested that all Commissioners research and identify a dozen names they would like for a list and revisit the collective lists at the July meeting.
- Commissioner Barnes: Suggested to prioritize honoring people from Alameda such as Neil Tam, Vickie Smith, Jim Morrison and Larry Schulz, an Alameda minister who also did a lot of work on base replanning. Also consider including names of indigenous historical tribes such as Ohlone.
- All Commissioners agreed to remove off the list: Donut Park, Pirate Park, Parky McParkface, Hibbardsvikke, Arizona, Tree Park, Climbers Park, New Peoples Park, Neptune Park, Haight Park, Raccoon Park, Snow Cone Park, Popcycle Park, Apology Park, Playful Pup Paddock, Oak Dell Park, Sporting Green and Circle of Love.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA:

- Climate Action Plan presentation by PW
- Review and Recommendation on Public Pathways on Fernside and Eastshore

SET NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday, June 13, 2019

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Limoges adjourned the meeting at 9:22 PM.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

EXTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE

ITEM 3-A

ESTUARY PARK HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT
AND LEGAL RIGHTS FOR RESIDENTS OF
ALAMEDA LANDING

RECEIVED 4/27/19

From: Courtney Shepler [mailto:c_shepler@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, April 27, 2019 6:10 PM
To: Amy Wooldridge <AWooldridge@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Questions around Estuary Park homeless encampment/legal rights

Hi Amy,

Can I ask you to forward this to the Commissioners as well?

Thanks,

Courtney

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Courtney Shepler <c_shepler@hotmail.com>
Date: April 27, 2019 at 12:08:04 PM PDT
To: "mroush@alamedacityattorney.org" <mroush@alamedacityattorney.org>, "mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov" <mezzyashcraft@alamedaca.gov>, "joddie@alamedaca.gov" <joddie@alamedaca.gov>, "tdaysog@alamedaca.gov" <tdaysog@alamedaca.gov>, "mvella@alamedaca.gov" <mvella@alamedaca.gov>, "jknoxwhite@alamedaca.gov" <jknoxwhite@alamedaca.gov>
Cc: Amy Wooldridge <AWooldridge@alamedaca.gov>, "prolleri@alamedaca.gov" <prolleri@alamedaca.gov>, Darin Tsujimoto <DTsujimo@alamedaca.gov>
Subject: Questions around Estuary Park homeless encampment/legal rights

Dear Mr. Roush, Mayor, and Council members,

I am a resident of Alameda Landing. As I trust you are aware, we have a tremendous problem with the growing homeless encampment at Estuary Park. Myself and other community members have spent a significant amount of time communicating with APD, and we are at a point where APD's hands are tied and we need to explore other options to ensure our community remains livable and that we do not suffer undue economic loss from this issue. APD has been a great partner and we clearly sense their frustration about their options for dealing with this problem.

These individuals at the encampment are lawless, mentally ill, and drug addicted/abusing. They steal packages from our homes. They defecate-literally- on our front porches. They try our front door handles to see if we left them unlocked. They walk down our streets and sidewalks, public and private, ranting and screaming at all hours, sometimes death threats at our residents. This has prevented residents from being able to sleep at night. We find used syringes in our private parks. They allow their dogs- in particular a Pit Bull- to roam free- the dog follows us on private HOA property and public street as we try to walk our own dogs lawfully on leash. At our community easter egg hunt, APD had to be called as a homeless

woman was screaming profanities at the children. Our community is a young community, with many first time home buyers who came to Alameda to start their families. There are nearly 100 young children who live here. These families thought Alameda was safe, and they chose to make one of the biggest investments of their lives in choosing to plant roots here. Instead, our community is becoming unlivable and without a change, some residents may face serious financial harm as their property values plummet. We are trying hard to build a healthy and vibrant community but hope is waning. **We need help from our city government desperately.**

By all accounts, APD has indicated that these particular individuals would not go to a shelter even if beds were available (though I recognize that is not the case for all homeless). Clearly they have had every offer of support extended to them from Operation Dignity, etc, and they have chosen THIS life.

I am not a lawyer but I am trying hard to understand the legal angles here. While I understand that the 9th Circuit's ruling is the reason that APD no longer believes they can force these homeless to move off of city property or our parks, I have additional questions.

1. Are the homeless allowed to select any real estate that appeals to them or does the City have the ability to find more suitable city property for them to camp on? With the number of parks and parcels of public land in Alameda, I don't think it is fair or reasonable to burden one park or neighborhood with all of this blight and terror. My recommendation is that these homeless individuals should rotate to all parts of Alameda, equitably and fairly. There are well over a dozen parks in Alameda. What prevents us from requiring the homeless encampment to move to a new park or public space each month? That way, the residents nearby will know that they have to bear the disturbances for only a month each year and we can all equally share in this as a community. The community has recently demonstrated great compassion for the homeless with the "Yes" vote on Measure A, so I am confident that all parts of Alameda would welcome the opportunity to share fairly in this.
2. What are our rights as law-abiding, tax-paying property owners in Alameda? Can you recommend any particular law sections that we should be exploring to help us understand our rights? The California constitution and bill of rights are fairly vague on this, so I'm hoping to understand this better. I suppose our HOA or a group of residents could hire our own legal counsel to explore options here, but we certainly would prefer that as a last resort, and we hope that the City government can assist in protecting our rights as they do the rights of these individuals. Incidentally, the Alameda Landing community pays significantly MORE in taxes than any other community in Alameda due to special CFD's for infrastructure AND city services but I know that doesn't give us any extra anything, other than sting and disappointment from this problem.
3. Based on what you're hearing, do you expect a Supreme Court challenge to this ruling?
4. If shelter beds are available and the homeless refuse to go, then what?
5. Why would a community invest in parks if they can't be used and enjoyed for the purposes they were created for? Without resolution on this issue, perhaps the city should consider selling off parks for private development where laws around trespassing

Written Communication

on private property could be enforced. It might help the city's budget as well. It's hard to believe I am even typing up such an idea because I am such a huge supporter of parks and open spaces, as they are intended to be enjoyed.

Please let me know of any other recommendations you have for engagement on this issue, escalation paths, etc. I look forward to your responses and recommendations.

Best regards,

Courtney Shepler
431 Mosley Avenue
510-393-0306

EXHIBIT 2

05/09/19 ARPD Director's Report – Presented by Interim Assistant City Manager Amy Wooldridge

Mastick Senior Center

- Mastick's annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon thanking 227 volunteers for 27,601 hours of service in 2018 took place on April 11.
- In an effort to ensure that all Alamedans are counted in the 2020 Census, the Mayor has established the Alameda Complete Count Committee. Ed Kallas, Recreation Supervisor I, will serve as Sub-Committee Chair for senior citizens. Over the next 11 months, there will be a variety of events, outreach and incentives to get everyone to participate in the Census.
- Over the next month internet-capable monitors will be mounted on the walls of Mastick senior center classrooms to support presentations and meetings.
- From May 14 – 16, 38 Mastick members will travel to Mendocino and Ft. Bragg in the first overnight tour since 2013.
- New Fitness Classes: "Balance and Mobility" (BaM) and "Preventing and Recovering from Injuries/Falls through Movement and Exercise" (PRIME) fitness classes, designed to appeal to younger and different members of the senior population.

Parks Maintenance

- We moved the granite blocks that were next to the slide at Sweeney Park and scattered them throughout the park as seating. Replaced with a poured in place pad and will add a climbing component such as a heavy rope soon. It was moved due to safety reasons.
- The dock was re-installed at the Encinal Boat Launch Facility after repairs and the annual pull out. It is expected that the docks in the new renovation will be able to remain in place all year.
- Replaced rotted wooden picnic tables Shoreline Park with donated cement tables.
- Moved the irrigation clock and wiring at Krusi Park to new pedestal near the tennis courts and upgraded with a new clock in anticipation for the new building construction.
- Replaced all pathway lights with new shoe box LED lights at Littlejohn Park. This project was managed by Public Works.
- Painted all backstops at Krusi Park
- Renovated sports fields at Harrington and Woodstock Parks

Recreation Services

- All Tiny Tot sites are hosting Graduations at the end of May
- Alameda Youth Committee is celebrating another successful year with an end of year kayaking trip in May
- Hired a new part-time coordinator for the Friends Connect program to begin developing next year's program.
- Teen Summer Volunteer Program is off again to another successful summer with over 70 teens volunteering in the various ARPD summer programs
- The 16th season of Alameda Walks kicked off last Saturday with over 45 walkers. Make sure to check the schedule for upcoming Walks and hope to see you all out for at least one this season.
- Register now for Summer Baseball Program for k-2 and 3-5 grades which is FREE and sponsored by the ELKS Lodge 1015

- Free Drop-in Recreation Programs at Bayport, Franklin, Lincoln, Tillman and Washington Parks from 12pm – 5pm, Monday – Friday.
- Day Camp, Teen Adventure Camp, WOW, Tiny Tot Programs and summer specialty camps open for registration. Register early as many programs will sell out.
- Take the ARPD Scavenger Hunt Challenge and keep play alive in Alameda! The Challenge is located on ARPD website. Make sure to send in pictures of your fun experiences at Alameda Parks.

Administration

- Estuary Park homeless encampment
 - o Existing encampment behind dirt pile with approximately 7 – 9 people.
 - o “Boise Decision” is a federal decision that states that it is unconstitutional and considered cruel and unusual punishment to criminally penalize people for sleeping on public property when there is no shelter space available. Alameda only has a shelter for women and children escaping domestic violence. Therefore, the City cannot move people out of Estuary Park without a shelter bed to move them to.
 - o Dirt pile is contaminated and estimated to cost \$350,000 to remove. Looking at options for brownfield grant funding and then activate the park with a dog park.
- Emma Hood Swim Center update
 - o The Ad-Hoc Committee, comprised of AUSD Board members, Councilmembers, community and staff, is meeting weekly to develop a long-term plan.
 - o Repair funding request to City Council on May 7 and AUSD Board on May 14. Scope of repair work is pending final authorization for the Alameda County Department of Environmental Health.
 - o Council discussed the new City Aquatic Facility on May 7 and will discuss again on May 21.
- The Veteran’s Building was closed due to mold on the first floor and in one other room. All recreation programs were re-located in addition to the Alameda Library Adult Reading program and Veterans meetings. Public Works staff is working on having the mold remediated and the building re-opened as quickly as possible.
- Recent challenge with resignation of Account Tech during the busiest registration season of the year. This full-time position is now open for qualified candidates.

Upcoming Events

- Tuesday, May 21 at 7:30pm: Alameda Community Band will perform at the Mastick Senior Center Social Hall
- Friday, May 31 at 1:00pm: 7th Annual Play for the Parks. A shotgun golf tournament at Corica Park’s South Course with proceeds supporting Alameda Parks. Register at www.alamedaparks.org
- Saturday, June 8 from 9:00am–1:00pm: 53rd Annual Sand Castle & Sand Sculpture Contest at Crown Beach.
- Friday, June 21 at 6:30pm: Starlight Movies in the Park, showing “Trolls” at Alameda Point Multi-Purpose Field. Sponsored by the Alameda Friends of the Parks Foundation.