



ALAMEDA RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING

DATE: Thursday, May 14, 2026
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: Director Justin Long, Assistant Director Matt Nowlen, Office Assistant Donna Conde

Chair Radez read a farewell statement on behalf of Commissioner Robbins and 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 Adam Garfinkle: Alameda Little League (ALL) Director of Fields. Appreciated efforts put into Littlejohn Field for ALL majors division. Based on his observations, does not think the park is suitable. Looks forward to working together to find a new location for the division.
- Speaker Jay Ingram: Former Recreation and Parks Commission Chair. Agreed with Speaker Garfinkle. Commented that the park is too small to accommodate ALL majors division. Mentioned park changes and impacts on neighborhood. Stated that ALL should go through field allocation process and not have exclusive use. Requested that an MOU not be approved should it come before the commission. Provided infrastructure pictures of the park (attached).
- Speaker Jill Ingram: Agreed with previous speakers that ALL majors division is not a good fit and noted no issue when ALL little kids' used the field. Commented on public open space, parking, and safety of the park. Asked that notifications to the neighborhood continue via flyers.

3. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Director Long gave the Director Report (attached).

4. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

- Chair Radez: Asked about program registration trends compared to last year and inquired about scholarship funds. Director Long replied it is busier as summer nears; however, competition is growing. ARPD is working on a recreation assessment, evaluating past and current programs, and determining future proposals that best align with the community. He responded that all funds are used yearly and consumption is at 50%. Chair Radez praised the aquatics staff and shared that he and his son had an overall positive experience with the program. Noted using the El

Cerrito pool during an unexpected closure increased his enthusiasm for the proposed aquatic center. Recommended the Encinal Swim Center have a direct phone line for visitors to verify schedule. Director Long appreciated the feedback, stated there is no phone at the swim center but will work on a more user-friendly way of providing information to the public. Assistant Director Nowlen shared the standby number, 510-775-5459. Chair Radez observed games and the neighborhood at Littlejohn Park and will share his perspective for the future agenda item.

- Vice Chair Swartz: Commented that his visiting parents participated in the Aqua Warrior Class and lap swim. Suggested expanding drop-in one-time classes at Mastick.
- Commissioner Alexander: Thanked Commissioner Robbins for his farewell letter. Visited Krusi, Rittler, Franklin and Littlejohn Parks. Observed excellent condition of dugout and field, dogs on leash, and available parking. Commended aquatic staff for the Mother's Day swim event and enjoyed festive décor and flowers. Mentioned the Friends of the Parks Golf Tournament sold out but anyone can participate in the raffle or donate on the website.
- Commissioner Burney: Asked about the office hours survey and community outreach. Director Long announced that it will be available on the website, email blast, and at the ARPD office. Thanked ARPD for excellent parks in which he has been training for the Boston Marathon.

5. MINUTES

Vice Chair Swartz motioned to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2026 Regular Meeting as presented.

M/S Vice Chair Swartz / Commissioner Burney. All who were present at the April 9, 2026 meeting were in favor with four ayes via roll call vote.

6. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

6-A 2026 Recreation and Parks Department Project Updates

Director Long presented an overview of Sweeney Trail Connectors, City View Skate Park, Aquatic Center, Community Garden, Franklin Basketball Court, Longfellow Basketball Court, Lincoln Baseball Field and Pickleball Courts, Estuary Park Phase 2, East End Dog Park, and Leydecker Playground.

Public Comment

- Speaker Liz Warmerdam: Alameda Backyard Growers President. Excited to work with ARPD, grateful for continued support of Community Garden. Acknowledged amazing park system.
- Speaker Birgitt Evans: Thanked Director Long and Assistant Director Nowlen for walking tour of Community Garden site. Excited for an educational space. Stated the garden would likely be governed by a board responsible for establishing bylaws and plot management. Staff would be needed to assist with fee collection and gardeners would help oversee garden operations.

Commissioner Comment

- Chair Radez: Thanked Director Long and Assistant Director Nowlen for the comprehensive update and project management. Asked about contingency plan if aquatic center construction extends two-year duration. Director Long stated it is written in the contract. Chair Radez inquired about aquatic center parking. Director Long reported that at Council's direction, additional

analysis was conducted regarding parking options and capacity needs with programming. He reported ongoing coordination with surrounding property owners, and two parking space layout options. The parking study will be brought to the June 2, 2026, City Council meeting. Chair Radez asked about the Community Garden governance model. Director Long recommended part-time City Staff in coordination with a board. Chair Radez asked about priority accessibility improvements beyond ADA requirements. Director Long stated that efforts extend beyond physical ADA improvements. The City's ADA Coordinator has been working with staff to develop accessible communication standards and reduce barriers to information. Focus is to ensure facilities and programs are adaptable to all users. Chair Radez asked Director Long's concerns about investment outpacing the sustainability of funding maintenance and operations. He replied that an aging park system requires ongoing capital investment to support assets' replacement and avoid increased strain on operations and staff. He noted that Estuary Park will increase maintenance responsibilities without corresponding full-time staff, requiring existing resources to be stretched further. Chair Radez emphasized the importance of community outreach and project impacts on neighborhoods and a balance between developed park amenities and passive open space. He asked about public feedback that is helpful. Director Long encouraged community participation in commission meetings and direct feedback to staff.

- Vice Chair Swartz: Appreciated prioritization of Community Garden and commented on updating the master plan sign at Jean Sweeney Park.
- Commissioner Alexander: Shared that she was deterred by the rainstorm so did not attend the onsite Community Garden meeting. Asked if the skateboard park will be closed during construction. Assistant Director Nowlen replied yes, and the skateboard community is aware. Asked about Estuary and Leydecker Park playground surfaces. Director Long explained that both are ADA accessible with "pour in place" and wood fiber.
- Commissioner Burney: Asked about construction impact on use of Jean Sweeney Park and Leydecker Playground. Director Long replied that Sweeney may be closed intermittently, and the community will be notified when we know the contractor schedule. There are private playgrounds and Tillman Park Playground not far from Leydecker for community use.

7. NEXT MEETING

7-A Next Regular Meeting is June 11, 2026

7-B Possible Agenda Items for the Next Meeting:

- Alameda Little League MOU, Longfellow Park ADA Access Project

8. ADJOURNMENT

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

Chair Radez adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

May 2026 ARPD Director's Report
Presented by Recreation and Parks Director Justin Long

Community Events & Engagement:

- **Volunteer Coastal Cleanup**, every second Saturday of the month (ongoing) 10:00 AM, Seaplane Lagoon. Organized by Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda (CASA)
- **Alameda Walks Series**, Saturdays, 9:00 AM. Visit our website for details.
 - **May 16** - Harbor Bay Business Parkway
 - **May 23** - Gold Coast Neighborhood
- **National Kids to Parks Day**, Sat., **May 16**, 9:30 AM-2:00 PM, Sweeney Park. Free community event with class demonstrations, crafts, and games!
- **12th Annual Play for the Parks GOLFUN & Dinner**, Mon., **May 18**, Corica Park. Our sincere gratitude goes to the Friends of the Parks for supporting Alameda parks!
- The **Alameda Community Band** will perform a free Jitterbug music concert, Fri., **May 22**, 7:30 PM, Mastick Social Hall. All are welcome!
- **Memorial Day Holiday**, Monday, **May 25** (City observed closure)
- **Unity Fest**, Sat., **June 13**, 12:00 PM-5:00 PM, Chochenyo Park. This free event is part of **Rhythmix in the Parks**, a celebration of diverse cultures, music, dance and art.
- **Sandcastle & Sculpture Contest**, Sat., **June 20**. Crown Memorial State Beach. Registration begins 9:00 AM. Join us for this fabulous event!
- **4th of July Events:**
 - **5k Race** starts at 8:30 AM, 1420 Park St. (benefits go to Midway Shelter)
 - **Parade** starts at 10:00 AM, Park St & Lincoln Ave. Sign up to participate and volunteer in this beloved community event!

Department Highlights:

- Harrison Center painting project was completed
- Lincoln Park was spruced up with additional hydrangea and rose plantings, decomposed granite added to the rose garden area, and irrigation system repaired and replaced
- Lincoln Park fitness equipment was installed
- 48 Mastick members took a day trip to Roaring Camp Railroads in Santa Cruz on May 4 which included a steam train journey through the redwoods and lunch
- On May 8, Mastick held a book signing for "The World Comes to ALAMEDA" (life stories by Mastick members). Authors read excerpts from the book. 90 people attended!
- Summer ARPD hiring process is almost complete
- A variety of programs are available for all ages (from tots to older adults) this summer, visit our website to learn about upcoming activities

Programs:

Youth:

- **After-School Pickleball** for middle schoolers, Tues & Thurs, 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM, AP Gym
- **Homeschool P.E.** for K-5th graders, Wed & Fri, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM, AP Gym
- **Special Interest Classes** - currently offering H2O Steam, Dance Fusion, Lego Robotics, Karate, Taiko Drums, and many more!
- **Summer Day Camps** – registration is open for Hidden Cove and Trails End sessions held at Crown Memorial Beach

Teens:

- ARPD facilitates the **Queer Teen Alameda Center (QTAC) Program** at the Underground Teen Center, Vet's Building, Fridays at 6:00 PM (alamedapride.com)

- **Summer Volunteer Programs:**
 - **Operation Green Sweep**, Mondays & Fridays, **June 22 - July 24**. Help make our community cleaner, greener, and more beautiful!
 - **Jr. Leader Program**, Monday - Friday, **July 6 - 31**, 8:00 AM–5:30 PM. Gain experience and prepare for future jobs with ARPD!
- **TWEEN/TEEN Adventure Camp** – summer field trips include Whitewater Rafting, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Discovery Kingdom, Paintball, Laser Tag, and many others!

Adults:

- **Open Gym**, Sundays, 6:00 PM-10:00 PM, AP Gym
- **Tennis** – Private and group instruction available
- **Indoor Pickleball** – Fridays, 9:30 AM-12:00 PM, AP Gym
- **Indoor Roller Skating** – Wednesdays, 9:00 PM-10:30 PM, AP Gym

Older Adults: (Mastick Senior Center)

- Learn about programs and services at our **New Member Orientation**. This guided tour takes place every second Thursday of the month, 10:30 AM. Call 510-747-7500 to enroll.
- **Mastick Website:** Explore the new look of our website! Stay informed with current updates on programs, trips, and monthly highlights.

Aquatics (Encinal Swim Center):

- Creative Aquatic Camps are available now! Choose Mermaid Camp, Pirate Camp, Star Wars Padawan Camp and many other special programs. Check it out!
- ARPD offers group and private swim lessons for all ages throughout the summer

Training & Staff Development:

- Park Staff attended a training at Delta Blue Grass hosted by Sports Field Maintenance Association (SFMA)
- Management Staff attended CPRS “Pro” Academy, a two-day program focused on key management practices
- Aquatic Leadership Team attended a mid-year training course by the Association of Aquatic Professionals as well as Total Guard Training sponsored by Jim Wheeler and the Bay Area Public Pool Operators Association (BAPPOA)
- Summer ARPD Lead Staff will attend the CPRS Training Institute on Sat., May 16

Staff Recognition:

- We held our “Summer Kickoff” on May 13 in recognition and appreciation of our entire department. The event included a special luncheon and team-building games at the park!

Project Updates:

- Will be covered in “Project Updates” presentation

Key Considerations/Concerns:

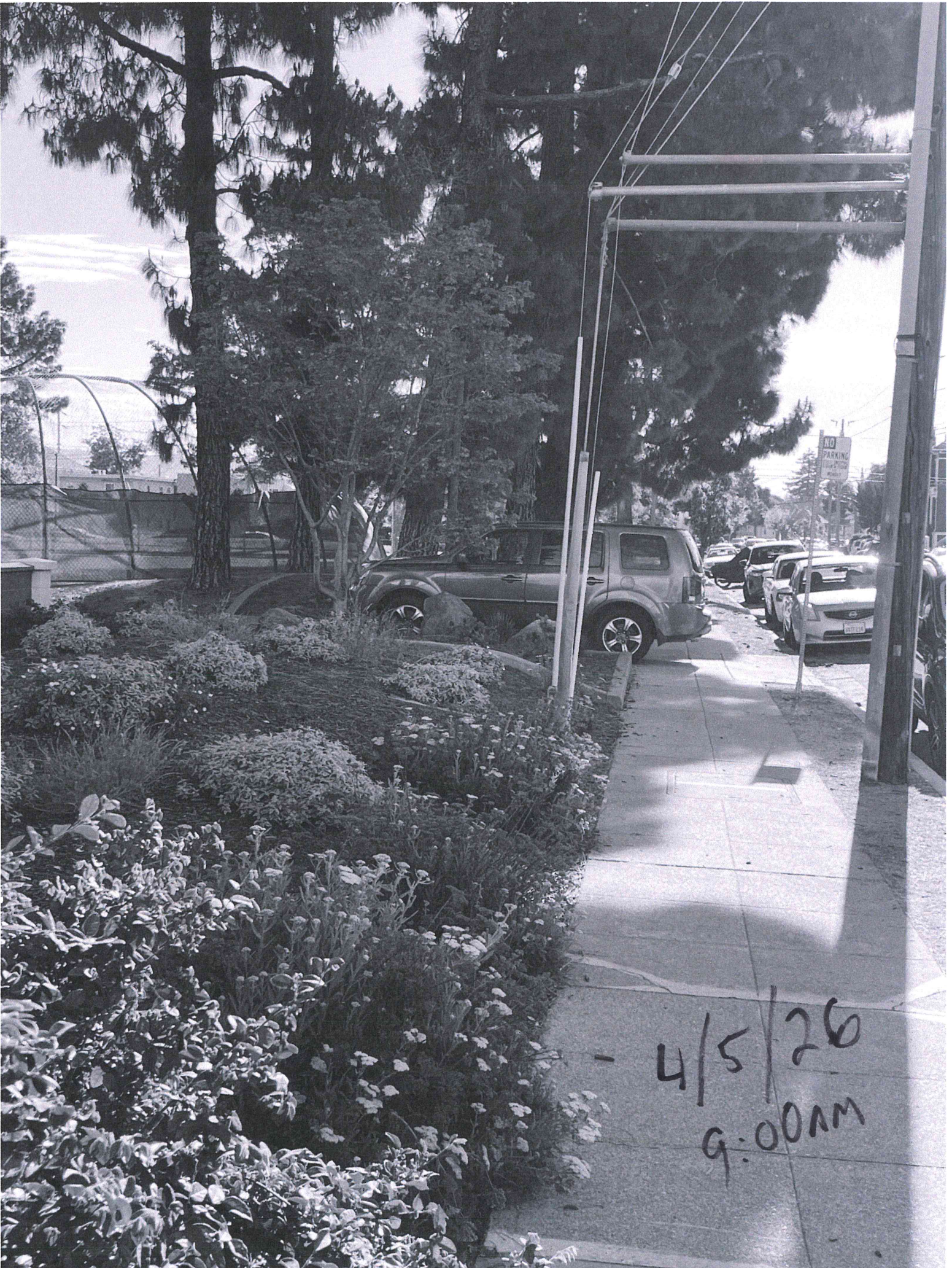
- ARPD is considering adjusting **public office hours** to Monday - Thursday (8:30 AM – 5:30 PM) with Fridays by appointment only. We will be sending out a survey to gather public feedback
- Starting discussion with AUSD in regard to our Joint Use Agreement
- Both Rock Spinners at Jean Sweeney Open Space Park are closed for maintenance
- The Godfrey Park pergola and a section of the picnic site area are closed for maintenance
- The Lincoln Park driveway, parking lot, and portions of the sports field will be closed beginning Mon., June 8 for approximately six weeks due to netting restoration

RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
5-14-2026

Item 2: Non-Agenda Public Comment



4/4/26



- 4/5/26
9:00AM