

**CITY OF COSTA MESA  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**June 23, 2004**

The Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of Costa Mesa met in regular session at 6:30 p.m., June 23, 2004, at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Harris followed by the Pledge of Allegiance by Commissioner Leece.

**ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners Present:

Mark Harris, Chairman  
Byron de Arakal, Vice Chairman  
Mirna Burciaga, Commissioner  
James Fisler, Commissioner  
Wendy Leece, Commissioner

Also Present:

Steven E. Hayman, Administrative Services Director  
Jana Ransom, Recreation Manager  
Bruce Hartley, Maintenance Services Manager  
Bart Mejia, Parks Project Manager  
Ruth Raheb, Recreation Supervisor

**MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Leece, seconded by Commissioner Burciaga, and carried 4 to 0 (Vice Chairman de Arakal abstained, not at last meeting) to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2004 meeting as received.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

No Oral Communications.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

No Consent Calendar items.

**OLD BUSINESS**

No Old Business items.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**TREE REMOVAL REQUEST –  
SOUTH COAST REPERTORY,**

Mr. Bruce Hartley made the presentation.

## 655 TOWN CENTER DRIVE

Responding to questions from Chairman Harris, Mr. Hartley stated that the landscape theme along Town Center with the Honey Locust trees stops at Park Center. The pallet designated for Town Center in the City's landscape standards is Liquid Amber, however there are only Honey Locust trees there at this time. Mr. Hartley confirmed that the Honey Locust and London Plane trees are often used together kind of riparian trees and they also make a very large shade area, which is why they are frequently planted together.

Alan Almeida, Operations Manager at South Coast Repertory, indicated that there are three motivations for their request. The first is to continue the theme of the Sunburst Honey Locust trees on Park Center. The second is that Town Center, East of Park Center, will be closed off and will become a pedestrian walkway connecting the Performing Arts Center to the new Rene and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall; which is under construction right now. The third motivation is the \$500,000 pylon sign that has been put up as part of the Repertory's renovation. The pylon sign is quite tall and their desire is that it will be a landmark or beacon for the Costa Mesa Regional Theater District. Currently, when looking from East to West the visibility to this pylon is completely obliterated by the trees. He added that their artistic director has offered to replace each tree with 36" box trees and additionally meet the three to one ratio.

Chairman Harris indicated that he had visited the site.

In response to questions from Commissioner Leece, Mr. Almeida stated that he is unaware of a current landscape master plan, but assured the Commission that there will be one to tie all these elements together. He also noted that the South Coast Repertory has been at this location for 30 plus years, which is right about the same time the trees were planted and in his opinion they have over-grown their location and there is some sign of disease.

Commissioner Leece noted that the Segerstroms have given so much to the community and in light of the great resource that the Center offers to people of all ages, she would be in favor of approving the request. Commissioner Leece thanked Mr. Almeida for coming forth tonight.

In response to questions from Commissioner Fisler, Mr. Almeida stated that the replacement trees will be positioned in the same location as the current two trees. However, the replacement trees will not block the pylon because the maximum height is much less than the current trees.

Responding to questions from Commissioner Fisler, Mr. Hartley informed the Commission that the existing trees are pruned on a regular cycle. However, the trees are not pruned in order to reduce the size of the trees or to negate their natural growth habit. The London Plane trees grow to be 50 to 60 feet tall. However, while the Honey Locust is a fast growing type of tree, they only grow to 30 to 40 feet. They also have a different growth form. They are a little more oval with a flatter top so they would not grow to be 50 to 60 feet tall even thirty years from now.

In response to questions from Chairman Harris, Mr. Almeida stated that a theme may not be achieved beyond Park Center and indicated that he is unaware of what the plan is for the landscape around the concert hall.

Chairman Harris informed clarified the City Council Policy requiring three trees be planted when one tree is removed. He also stated that more information should be presented before a decision can be made.

Commissioner Leece concurred with Chairman Harris and expressed a desire to continue this agenda item to another meeting allowing petitioner to gather and present more information to the Commission.

Vice Chairman de Arakal indicated that he would be content to allow them to remove the two trees and just wait and see what happens with the whole pedestrian area and respond to it then. He also stated that he is inclined to support the request because the long-term contributions that the Theater Arts District has made and will make is more important than the two trees.

Chairman Harris stated that he was uncomfortable taking out the two trees at this time without further information.

Commissioners Burciaga, Fisler and Leece agreed with Chairman Harris and requested the agenda item be agendaized for a future meeting allowing the petitioner to present more information and a landscape plan.

Responding to inquiry from Vice Chairman de Arakal, Mr. Hayman informed the Commissioners that both the Planning Commission and the City Council have had the matter of the Theater Arts District and the plan relative to the street closure and the pedestrian plaza before them. Mr. Hayman noted that there seemed to be two issues for the theater, 1) the blockage of the sign; and 2) creating that visual impact into what will be the new design relative to the Theater Arts District.

Mr. Almeida, responding to questions from Mr. Hayman and Chairman Harris, stated that this request is their first step and is not time sensitive. He also stated that he will see how far along the landscape design plan is, but his main concern is the blockage issue.

## **MOTION**

A motion was made by Commissioner Leece, seconded by Vice Chairman de Arakal, and carried 5 to 0 to: continue item to July meeting with information relating to landscape plan for Park Center Drive and requesting that the landscape architect give Commissioners an overview of what is planned so that they can see the whole Master Plan and how the tree plantings will fit in.

## **DONATION OF A BENCH AND MEMORIAL PLAQUE IN TEWINKLE PARK**

Mr. Hartley informed the Commission that he had received a letter from Wendy Stolins requesting to donate a bench and memorial plaque in memory of her mother and would like it placed in proximity to the lake.

Responding to questions from Commissioner Leece, Mr. Hartley stated that the benches mentioned in the "Approved Streetscape and Median Development Standards" are for buses and street furniture, not necessarily for the parks. There is a standardized bench utilized in the parks, except when recycled material is utilized. Currently the standardized bench is a web-coated bench that has proven to be durable and attractive.

Mr. Hartley also explained that the plaque would not go on the bench. The bench will be placed along the sidewalk so that it will be handicap accessible. Then they cut into the concrete and place the plaque into new concrete so that it is permanently there regardless of what happens to the bench because benches age, deteriorate, and sometimes get vandalized. This way the bench can be replaced in the future, but the recognition in honor of the person remains. Mr. Hartley indicated that this works very well. It is very difficult to incorpo-

rate the plaques into the production of benches in a way that they are not tempting to be torn off or damaged.

Chairman Harris confirmed with Mr. Hartley that the applicant is aware that they will be paying the cost of the bench and the initial installation and in the event the City changes the bench style the applicant is not going to have to pay the difference. The City will not pass that cost on to the applicant. Mr. Hartley stated that is one of the reasons that the monument is placed into the concrete in front of the bench so that if the decision is made to put in a different bench or down the road they are changed, then the memory is still honored. The bench there is not as material as the memory and the marker.

Ms. Wendy Stolins addressed the Commission expressing her mother's enjoyment of TeWinkle Park, the lake, the animals and just spending a lot of time at the park. Mrs. Paulie Stolins moved to Costa Mesa in 1960 and lived here until her death in 2003. She was very active in the community through her church and volunteering.

Mr. Robert Graham, Dakota Avenue, Costa Mesa, thanked the Commission for the work being done here and noted that the Commission brought up several important points earlier when discussing the trees. Mr. Graham asked the Commission for clarification regarding policy for placing memorial plaques in parks and made suggestions regarding the restrictions placed on donations. His suggested that in looking for ways to raise money and get funding for various items in the park, the City should not restrict the donation of money for public restrooms or something of that nature to only people who have a history with the City and doing public work with the City. It could be a great way for some fundraising.

Mr. Graham was thanked for his input and informed that Council Policy must be followed.

Mr. Keith Morrow, Santa Ana, requested the Commission consider accepting the park bench donation in the honor of Paulie Stolins, stating it would be a tremendous thing for her memory because she was the kindest, most caring person he had ever known. He also stated that in the end when she was not able to get around she could only stay for five or ten minutes because there was no place to sit. She wanted to be there, but just was not able to. He also stated that giving her this honor would be deeply appreciated.

Julie Gilmore, Menafee, California, expressed to the Commission that this donation was very important to their family and how it would be an ultimate honor to their mother's memory. TeWinkle was a special part of her mom's life. She and her sister used to play there and as they got older they would walk there. She stated that they would appreciate it if the Commission would consider placing a bench at TeWinkle and that she knew her mother would have appreciated it too. It will be the ultimate memorial and something in honor of her mom who was a good person like Keith said. It is a beautiful place to be and it would benefit all who would come.

Chairman Harris thanked the daughters of Mrs. Stolins for appearing and sharing their mother's love of TeWinkle Park with them. Now when they come down and visit their friends they will be able to have a place to hang out and sit on the nice bench and enjoy.

## **MOTION**

A motion was made by Vice Chairman de Arakal and seconded by Chairman Harris and carried 5 to 0 to accept donation of plaque and bench at TeWinkle Park.

**PRELIMINARY CONCEPT  
PLANS FOR THE FAIRVIEW  
PARK BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN  
BRIDGE**

Mr. Bart Mejia made the presentation.

In response to questions from Commissioner Fisler, Mr. Mejia explained that weathering steel means that the surface is not painted and is allowed to rust.

Mr. Mejia displayed slides of similar bridges for the Commissioners at their request to see samples of like bridges. He also noted that there is a similar style painted bridge at UCI.

Mr. Mejia noted several options available for pre-fabricated bridges, which included handrails, weathering steel, untreated - no paint, paint, chain link fencing for safety, wood decking and/or colored lightweight concrete decking.

Discussion ensued regarding the mass of the trusses, chain link fencing to protect pedestrians and bicyclists, handicap accessibility, 18-foot clearance from road to center of bridge, and aesthetics of the rustic look of the weathered steel in this natural passive use park.

In response to Commissioner Fisler's concerns about graffiti, Mr. Hartley stated that part of Parks and Parkways Maintenance includes a graffiti removal program and if a surface isn't painted water blasting sand blasting or chemicals are utilized so that the surface is not damaged. In this case water blasting would probably be used. While the area might be a cleaner section of the bridge, with the weather we have it would re-oxidize very quickly, making painting and/or re-paint unnecessary.

Responding to a question from Chairman Harris, Mr. Mejia stated that the bridge is designed to support lightweight vehicles such as maintenance trucks or police vehicles.

In response to Commissioner Burciaga, Mr. Mejia stated that the bridge would be virtually maintenance free if the weathered steel option is selected. The structural members will have to be checked to ensure that they are in good shape, but otherwise there should be minimal maintenance.

Mr. Robert Graham, Dakota Avenue, Costa Mesa expressed his excitement about the Fairview Park bridge and he wanted to come down and thank the Commissioners for all their efforts in getting this done. He said that it is a huge step for us in the park and that he agreed with the type of bridge the City has selected. He informed the Commissioners that there is a bridge at the end of Gisler Street across the Greenville Banning Channel that is very similar to the proposed bridge. He suggested putting up a sign that says, "Fairview Park, City of Costa Mesa" somewhere on the bridge and also that he could imagine it next fourth of July with flags all over it. He believes it will be quite spectacular. Another suggestion was to have a soapbox derby going down it. He reiterated his appreciation for all the effort put into this project and what a great choice staff has made for the Fairview Park Bridge.

Mr. Mejia, in response to a question from Commissioner Leece, indicated that construction documents should be finished within the next two months and go out to bid right after that with construction starting in the early part of next year.

Chairman Harris thanked Mr. Graham for all his hard work and continued efforts.

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Chairman Harris, seconded by Vice Chairman de Arakal and carried 5 to 0 to approve option 1 for the Fairview Park bicycle/pedestrian bridge.

**CIRCLE OF SERVICE  
NOMINATIONS CRITERIA  
REVIEW**

Ms. Jana Ransom made the presentation.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding length of consecutive years of service, number of years of residency in Costa Mesa and time since death. The Commissioners agreed that the time frame should be extended to enhance the significance and value of being inducted into the Circle of Service.

In response to questions from the Commissioners, Ms. Ransom explained that the existing circle has 48 total spaces available with 12 people memorialized there already. Additional circles, spokes or something to that effect could be considered if all spaces become occupied. However, considering that only two to four people are inducted annually, Ms. Ransom stated that it would take a long time before the available area is filled.

In response to questions from Commissioners, Ms. Ransom stated that the call for nominations has started and suggested that any nominations that are part of this recruitment be considered under the current nominating criteria, and that changes to this policy would take effect in January.

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Vice Chairman de Arakal, seconded by Commissioner Fisler and carried 5 to 0 to 1) extend length time of death to time of nomination from 6 months to 1 year; 2) extend length of residency in Costa Mesa from 8 years to 10 years; 3) extend length of community service from 5 years to 7 years. New policy recommendation will be submitted to City Council.

**NEW INSTRUCTIONAL  
CLASSES; FEE INCREASES**

Ms. Jana Ransom made the presentation.

In response to a question from Chairman Harris regarding what decides which classes are kept, Ms. Ransom stated that there are a couple of criteria that is used. The first one is whether or not a class meets the minimum enrollment. The minimum is jointly arrived at between the staff and instructor. The other criterion is whether or not a group size is appropriate for the space allocated.

Vice Chairman de Arakal voiced his opposition to “Tips for Tots” and “Simplify Your Life, Eliminate Debt” classes for philosophical reasons. He also stated that he did not believe the City should be in the business of providing personal debt management and financial improvement or parenting skills classes. He stated that he believes the public schools are adequately equipment to do a lot of these type of things on a lot of fronts. Mr. Fisler stated that the “Scottish Dancing” and “Landscape Painting for Kids” are probably really good ideas. Any type of artistic activity provided for the kids is good.

Commissioner Leece and Commissioner Burciaga stated that they disagreed with Vice Chairman de Arakal because the “Tot Class” is a great opportunity for parents to learn how to be better parents. It was also noted that these classes were not for school aged children, they are for 6 to 24 months of age.

In response to a question from Commissioner Fisler, Ms. Ransom

stated that the position as staff is to assess whether or not the program that is being brought forward will help the community to make positive uses of leisure time. It is not staff's policy to bump another program on the possibility that something else might be better. If a class is barely making the required minimums, then it might be moved to a better place or it might be cancelled in favor of something that might better meet the need of the community; however, Ms. Ransom noted that this is not the current situation.

Vice Chairman de Arakal stated his desire to vote on these class proposals individually. However, if that is not the case, he would not be able to support a motion to approve the agenda item for philosophical reasons.

## **MOTION**

A motion was made by Chairman Harris, seconded by Commissioner Burciaga and carried 4 to 1 to approve new instructional classes and suggested fee increases, with Vice Chairman de Arakal dissenting.

## **RECREATION MANAGER'S REPORT**

Ms. Ransom briefed the Commission on the following programs and activities: Camp Costa Mesa, Mobile Recreation, Playground Program, Mobile Skate Park, the Ranch After School Program, Youth Sports Program, Flag Football and Cheerleading early registration, Mobile Skate Park, Adult Sports Program, Historic Preservation Committee, Cultural Arts Committee, and Shakespeare by the Sea on Thursday July 22.

She reminded the Commission and the public of the following upcoming activities: Swim lessons at the Downtown Recreation Center and Costa Mesa High School pools for the summer, Swim Olympics in August, the first Chalk Arts Festival at Balearic Park on October 30, and Concerts in the Park every Tuesday through August 10, from 6:15 to 7:45 p.m. Also, the next Joint Use quarterly meeting between the City and the School District will be on August 25<sup>th</sup>.

In response to questions from Chairman Harris, Ms. Ransom stated that the Mobile Recreation Program attendance varies, but during the summer time it is about 20 to 35; which is about as many as the program can accommodate at one time. The staff ratio is 1 adult to about 15 or 20 children. The Mobile Recreation Program closes off a single block with various activities and activity tables in areas where park space or areas for kids to recreate are lacking. The Mobile Recreation Program can create a park for a while for them to recreate and enjoy themselves.

Chairperson Harris applauded staff's continuing effort with this very important program and stated his hope for its continuation.

Ms. Ransom, at the request of Commissioner Leece, explained that they try to go where the need is and if after six months it does not generate more than 15 or so kids they look at other sites to better serve the community. She also informed the Commission that program location and times are advertised via flyers in the neighborhoods and local schools.

Commissioner Leece commended Ms. Ransom and Ms. Raheb for the diligence that the Field Ambassadors and staff have shown regarding the enforcement of rules. She also noted that there are a lot fewer problems now than a year ago mainly due to problems being resolved and the efforts made by staff and Field Ambassadors.

## **MAINTENANCE SERVICES**

Mr. Hartley reported that the past several weeks have been very busy

## MANAGER'S REPORT

with the Fish Fry, Pilot Cup Soccer, and the DARE Fair, purchasing and planting the tree for the CostaMazing closing ceremonies. Mr. Hartley also reported on the following: re-award of the landscape project to provide services to the school district, the new roof installed at Balearic Community Center, weed abatement at Fairview Park, and the new signs posted at all the City parks informing the public that it is illegal to use fireworks.

Mr. Hartley informed the Commission of the first four biggest projects for the year; which are as follows:

- TeWinkle Park Tot Lot Improvement – this project will add some swings, rubber surfacing and greater accessibility. Work is going on right now and should be completed this summer.
- Lions Park – The airplane is being renovated. The grant was re-issued for the rubber surface so this project is moving forward and should be completed this summer.
- At the Neighborhood Community Center the carpet is scheduled to be replaced and is ready to go out to bid. It was noted that is something the building has needed for a long time.
- Senior Center funding is approved to re-paint the exterior.

The rest of the projects are in 04/05 and will be worked on as soon as possible.

- Concrete will be replaced at various parks where it is broken and unsafe. Three restrooms will be painted and have their roofs replaced.
- Balearic Center, in addition to the roof that was just put on, some ceiling improvements will be done on the inside and some new carpeting will be laid.
- The Senior Center will have some air conditioning units replaced and some will be renovated. There are quite a few on the roof so it will be a multi-year project.
- The Tennis Center is in the midst of a re-wiring and switching project. Fencing improvements and screening projects should begin with next year's budget.
- The Historical Society's portable building requires attention and will be painted so that it will look attractive for the next few years.
- In the capital improvement program there is about a \$90,000 improvement for one of the TeWinkle Park's restrooms. One of them is being torn down and re-built as part of the athletic complex project. Camp Costa Mesa was moved this year to the Balearic Center in anticipation of the construction. This renovation project will give them a new home in the future.

Chairman Harris commended Mr. Hartley and his staff for their hard work and for a job well done. He was also pleased with the work done at the Tennis Center.

## PARKS PROJECTS MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Mejia reported to the Commissioners the progress on the Multi Purpose Trail at Fairview Park, the Fairview Park Bridge, TeWinkle Park Softball Complex, TeWinkle Lake Improvement Project and the Gisler Park Slope Renovation Project.

In response to a question from Commissioner Leece, Mr. Mejia stated that the Median Improvement Project on 19<sup>th</sup> Street is going to begin in August and that at this time there are no plans to extend the street lamps past Whittier Avenue.

He also informed the Commission that the City in conjunction with Southern California Edison has a program for underground in different areas within the City. While he did not know which phase is next, he did know that it takes a long time to build enough funding to



build underground districts and each phase takes many years to complete.

## **COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS**

Commissioner Fisler said that there was a lot of talk about Fairview Park tonight with the trails, the bridge, Concerts in the Park, which starts on July 6 at 6:15 p.m. He also wanted to remind the public that on Saturday, July 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. Bob Graham will lead an evening walk through the park and then there will be a train ride by the model train engineers. Commissioner Fisler said for more information the public should call the Fairview Park Friends Hotline at (714) 754-5698.

Commissioner Burciaga reminded everyone that there are some very exciting things going on and there are many different activities that everyone can take advantage of. The mobile recreation program and the Mobile Skate Program will be providing some good activities for children who are disadvantaged. She also reminded everyone that this coming Sunday, June 27, the City of Costa Mesa Human Relations Committee is presenting a Community Picnic at Fairview Park from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. where you can join your neighbors for an afternoon of fun. The Mobile Recreation Van will provide children's activities and there will be there an hour of entertainment for everyone. Just bring your own picnic lunch and a blanket and be ready to have fun.

Vice Chairman de Arakal requested that the Commission agendaize the bench standard issue for either August or September to come up with other options that are economical but look a little more comfortable and aesthetically pleasing. The other issue he requested to be agendaized is regarding the May 27<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting where Don Lamm, Development Services Director presented an analysis of surplus land in the City. Vice Chairman de Arakal would like a master plan for parks created for these properties to demonstrate to a potential seller that we are eager to acquire some of this additional land for park space.

Vice Chairman de Arakal wanted to publicly recognize and congratulate the Estancia High School boys varsity volleyball team, which are the CIF Southern Section Champions for Volleyball. This is an outstanding accomplishment. These guys did yomen work and CIF Champs is wonderful and Mr. De Arakal stated that he just wanted to congratulate Tracy Ingram who is the coach, and the team is made up of Scott Markley, Taylor Hankens, Brad Larson, Alex Le Grand, Dallas Copp, Scott Sankee, Josh Cornea, Chris Hartwell, Trevor Holms, Sean Markley, Jacob Lawrence and Ian Lamm. Good job boys!

Chairman Harris agreed with Vice Chairman de Arakal, good job boys!

Chairman Harris stated that he too wanted to agendaize the park bench issue and expand it to include site furnishings within the parks, what we are currently doing and the direction we are currently going as far as standardization.

Chairman Harris would like to do an informational item regarding finding out if there are ways the City could recoup some of the costs associated with replacing parkway trees damaged by trucks and moving vans. He would like some research done (maybe find out values of trees and property involved in the damages and accidents) and then come back with a few ideas or suggestions to see if it's a worthwhile pursuit and then agendaize it.

Chairman Harris commended the Field Ambassador Program and noted what a big difference they have made. As Commissioner Leece noted earlier, she is not receiving those phone calls she used to in certain problem areas and he believes that it is definitely attributed to the Field Ambassador Program and our Park Range Program. He commented on how much he really likes the Field Ambassador's monthly report and how similar in style it is to what they receive from the Park Rangers.

Chairman Harris stated that Monday night he had the honor of accepting the Proclamation from Mayor Monahan for July being Parks and Recreation Month and that it was quite an honor to accept the award. Chairman Harris stated that he had the opportunity to tell them that a City without a good Parks and Recreation Program is basically kind of a dead city because you have to have things for people to do and for the kids to do things. He stated that he was very proud of our staff and what they do for us and how much he appreciates that.

Chairman Harris noted that the City's former Administrative Services Director, Steve Hayman, has been promoted to the City's new Assistant City Manager position. He said he could not think of anyone better for that spot. He is going to do an outstanding job. Chairman Harris also noted that the sad part is that we are not going to see him regularly. He will be missed, but the team of Allan Roeder and Steve Hayman will really be doing some awesome things for this City and we are all so fortunate to have both of them in the same City at one time.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at **9:40 p.m.** to the Study Session on Wednesday, July 28, 2004 at 5:15 p.m. in Conference Room 1A, followed by the regular Commission meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Submitted by:

---

William J. Morris  
Public Services Director