CITY OF FULLERTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

City Council Chamber Monday, July 14, 2008 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Russell called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE

Chair Russell led the flag salute.

ROLL CALL

Present: Shawna Adam, Sueling Chen, Kathleen Dasney, Craig Russell, Nancy

Spencer and Scott Stanford

Absent: Kathleen Shanfield

Staff: Parks and Recreation Director Joe Felz, Parks and Recreation Managers

Grace Carroll Lowe and Judy Peterson; Parks Project Manager Hugo Curiel; Parks and Recreation Supervisors Aaron Orozco and Eloisa Espinoza; Center Coordinator Eddie Burciaga; Museum Educator Aimee Aul; Landscape Superintendent Dennis Quinlivan; Building and Facilities

Superintendent Lyman Otley; Hye Jin Lee, Civil Engineer

PUBLIC COMMENT

CONSENT ITEMS (Items 1 - 3)

Vice-Chair Dasney requested a motion to approve the Consent Calendar items. Vice-Chair Dasney MADE A MOTION and Commissioner Stanford SECONDED the motion to approve the Consent Calendar items as clarified.

AYES: Adam, Chen, Dasney, Russell, Spencer, Stanford

NOES: None ABSENT: Shanfield

The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

1. MINUTES OF THE JUNE 9, 2008 COMMISSION MEETING

Recommendation to approve the Minutes of the June 9, 2008 Commission Meeting.

Vice-Chair Dasney said she wanted to clarify her statement on Page 9 regarding the percentage of Brea Community Center users from Fullerton, saying instead, that there is a high percentage of Brea Community Center users from Fullerton.

She also commented on Chair Russell's request on Page 9 regarding a mechanism for soliciting citizen input on a master plan, saying that the City Master Plan (General Plan) process was such a mechanism, and had already solicited and received input supporting a need for a community center.

2. LANDSCAPE DIVISION MONTHLY REPORT FOR JUNE 2008

Recommendation to receive and file the Landscape Division June 2008 Monthly Report.

Vice-Chair Dasney congratulated Superintendent Quinlivan on a recent award received from Fullerton Heritage.

Commissioner Spencer referred to a news article about a Commonwealth Avenue landscaping renovation project, and asked Landscape Superintendent Dennis Quinlivan if a contractor had been selected. He said no, and when asked for details, said it was sidewalk reconstruction with curbs and gutters and would be similar to the area at Commonwealth and Lemon.

3. BUILDING AND FACILITIES DIVISION MONTHLY REPORTS FOR JUNE 2008

Recommendation to receive and file the Building and Facilities Division June 2008 Monthly Report.

REGULAR BUSINESS (Items 4 – 10)

4. YOUTH / TEEN PROGRAMS AND MATRIX

Director Joe Felz provided a background on Fullerton's youth / teen programs and matrix, saying that both City Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission asked for an overview of youth and teen programming provided through the City as well as through its major partners, the School District, YMCA, and Boys and Girls Club. Thus, Parks and Recreation staff worked with these other entities to put together information which was presented to Council two meetings ago.

He noted that Parks and Recreation's Council presentation helped address Council's questions on gang diversion programs whereas Commission's request addressed a broader question, particularly with the Gilbert Center coming on line soon, of whether existing programs were meeting the needs of the community's youth, as efficiently and effectively as possible, and without duplication of services.

Director Felz then provided, through a Power Point presentation, an overview of the youth and teen issue, saying that essentially all of the nearly 14,000 children in Fullerton are atrisk for involvement in undesirable activities but that youth program staff is also targeting children who are in danger of getting into drug and gang activity. He said the information provided in the program matrix includes all activities for youth including sports, the arts, recreation, service learning, and leadership programs, conducted during non-school hours.

While the matrix included virtually all activities, the presentation tonight would focus on the very high-risk populations, Director Felz said, highlighting programs that focus on

intervention and prevention, and identifying youth and teens who have not responded to traditional approaches. He then introduced the first of three highlighted programs, "Gente Intelligente" and Garnet Community Center Coordinator, Eddie Burciaga.

Coordinator Burciaga provided information on the prevention program at Garnet Community Center, "Gente Intelligente," i.e., smart people, which helps children develop the skills needed to succeed. He said staff targets children kindergarten through sixth grade, especially those who need academic assistance in reading, math and science. Staff works with the local elementary school, Topaz Elementary, as well as parents to identify and assist students. Director Felz said Gente Intelligente is one of three program types, is probably the most traditional, and that Parks and Recreation staff works with the school staff to identify and work with at-risk children. He said this has been a very successful program and acknowledged Coordinator Burciaga's work.

Chair Russell asked why an academically-oriented program is part of City's programs instead of the school's. Commissioner Stanford asked the same question, saying those schools receive Title I funds for additional support services. Director Felz said the program is much broader with more activities such as recreation and training. He asked Manager Peterson to speak to this issue, and she said Director Felz was correct about the City's broader services, and that, additionally, the School District's grant requires partners such as the City. She said the City provides a recreation component for the school, but Gente is also academic because Coordinator Burciaga has developed the volunteer resources required for that program.

When Commissioner Spencer asked how many program hours a week were academic, she was told the student would be part of the general Garnet Center program, but would then receive more specialized assistance when referred: twice a week after school with three hours a week for academics. Commissioner Spencer asked about monitoring program success, and he said a graduate student working on a master's thesis will measure the success of the program, so this information should be available when she is finished. Coordinator Burciaga said comments from the principal and parents are that Gente and Garnet are making a major impact by improving behavior in the classroom, and that grades have also improved. He said the Center is providing a place and activities for kids so they will not get involved in gangs and drugs.

Manager Peterson said the traditional approach hasn't worked with these particular children, and that Coordinator Burciaga's approach works better where a relationship is developed and the academics are then introduced. Commissioner Adam asked about the Topaz Elementary students and was told that while the School District is Placentia-Yorba Linda, the students are Fullerton residents and the funding comes from a Placentia-Yorba Linda School District grant. Commissioner Stanford said this is a small corner of the City and the Fullerton residency with Placentia School District attendance has been the case for 30 or 40 years.

Chair Russell asked about the \$4,000 program costs, and Manager Peterson said Parks and Recreation receives funding for recreation programs through the Placentia School District, but there is separate funding for Gente only for Fullerton residents from the Placentia School District. Chair Russell reiterated his question as to why City funds are paying for an academic program, and Director Felz said it was a recreation program with academics as a part to help the program and kids become successful. He said that staff

is not providing a classroom-style program but school performance affects gang intervention rates.

Commissioner Stanford asked if the school district identifies the kids as at-risk, and provides specialized services during the school day, which are then supplemented with City recreational and some academic activities. Coordinator Burciaga said these Garnet children don't get extra help from the school. He confirmed that his program helps children with behavioral, not just academic issues, and that the children are not just referred by the school, but also by the Center, adding that the parents and the neighborhood also get involved in supporting the child. Director Felz also explained that the program is not designed for the child who is a model citizen with failing grades, but rather one who is failing and also has behavioral issues. Commissioner Stanford thanked him for the clarification.

Coordinator Burciaga estimated between 700 – 1,000 kids. When she asked, he clarified that the Monday through Friday hours of 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on the matrix reflect the hours the Center is open to provide both programming and staff support services for the parents, churches and school. Vice-Chair Dasney asked if there was a police substation there, and he said no, but that they meet with the patrol officer at least once a week to update each other on graffiti, gangs and other issues. Commissioner Stanford asked about parental involvement, and Coordinator Burciaga said it was about 90% or more, and agreed with Commissioner Stanford that this was a team effort.

Manager Peterson said Coordinator Burciaga has done a "fantastic job" of making the Garnet area of several blocks a real community with many parent volunteers who will get up at 5:00 in the morning to assist him. She added that he is able to make home visits and has established himself as an integral part of and resource for the community.

Commissioner Chen asked how long the program had been going on, and whether there was any data to prove program effectiveness as it almost sounded as if three hours weekly of academic programming through the City's programs were more effective than the school. Director Felz said that the data is difficult to really quantify, but there is anecdotal information from community members, community satisfaction surveys and police feedback that the area is safer, crime has gone down, and things are headed in the right direction. He also noted that the community relationships established were important, which was why the police were moving away from the substation concept of different officers showing up in the neighborhood. Instead, the same officers walk the same beat and get to know the community. Vice-Chair Dasney added that mentoring is also "huge" with Coordinator Burciaga's programs.

Commissioner Chen asked about the \$4,000 budget and was told that it covers the Gente Intelligente program from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., Monday and Wednesday, with another budget covering the recreational portion of Garnet's programs.

Museum Educator Aimee Aul spoke on the Museum's programs for youth and teens. She said the program, Project Safe, is a long-standing collaboration with the school district and is also a continuation of the 12-year Project CUFFS. She said the recent crate box art on irrigation blocks at State College Boulevard marks the ninth mural completed. She said

the murals are produced by the Museum with supervision by the artist, and utilizes at-risk students recruited from opportunity schools.

Educator Aul then reviewed the second art program under Project Safe for at-risk teens who are no longer in school. She said it's been a successful, long-running project which includes a self-portrait project involving student learning, discussion and introspection.

Commissioner Adam asked if the School District makes a contribution, and Educator Aul said the School District is the lead agency of the consortium that includes the City, Boys and Girls Club, and other entities, and that the City receives partial reimbursement. Commissioner Adam asked how the projects are identified and funded, and Director Felz said the Public Art Committee identifies and approves the projects. Commissioner Adam asked if the Museum identifies the students for the projects, and she said she goes to the students in the opportunity school classroom. When asked, Educator Aul, with input from the Commission, said "opportunity" students are youth who have fallen behind academically but who are not in continuation school, and attend regular schools but aren't part of the regular school population, undertaking independent studies instead. She added they are often exceptionally intelligent and artistic.

Chair Russell asked for clarification on whether the Museum programs are all grants or partially City money, and Director Felz said there is some funding through capital projects public art money but also some funding from a grant. He confirmed there was no Parks and Recreation funding going into those projects, just grants and perhaps some Redevelopment money. Commissioner Adam asked about employee time on the projects, and Director Felz said staff time and benefits are donated by the City, and were not reflected in the program costs, but that priorities can be changed during the budget process, if needed.

Director Felz introduced Recreation Supervisor Aaron Orozco who spoke on Richman Community Center's Youth Empowerment Program. He said staff is using a non-traditional approach by identifying and approaching kids who are vandalizing and causing trouble in the community. Staff meets with the kids and parents and brings them back into the fold and providing positive programs, recreation and excursions. Staff has been doing a good job of working with the kids who are very much at-risk for joining or are already in gangs. He said staff is documenting the behavior changes observed through individual folders.

Commissioner Adam asked if the police are aware of Parks and Recreation's activities. Supervisor Orozco said center coordinators Eddie Burciaga and Rosemary Castro meet with police weekly, and staff is also trained to do home visits. Commissioner Adam asked what program is being used for home visit trainings, and what the results were. Supervisor Orozco said Coordinator Burciaga brought a lot of experience with him on home visits, staff has received many hours of training on home visits, as well as other training through the County. He noted that staff returns for several home visits, not just one.

Commissioner Adam asked again about the type of program used for home visits, and Coordinator Burciaga replied that it is school-based home visit approach but they don't have a specific type of training program. He said they invite the parents to meet with them at the Center, and also, if needed, work with the Police Department and social

services for additional services, to develop a program for the kids. He further explained the approach is usually one-on-one and very interactive with and involving the family. He said staff is also trained in conflict resolution and mediation to assist parents, and they teach the children to deal with conflict as well. Supervisor Orozco said the type of visit depends on what the issue is.

Commissioner Adam asked how the City's program interfaces with the school district and social services, and Supervisor Orozco said staff Rosemary Castro and Eddie Burciaga both have had 10 years of social services experience and work closely with the schools, social services and police to provide the needed services. Commissioner Adam asked which schools this program serves, and Supervisor Orozco said it was mainly for the Richman community with perhaps some overlap from Woodcrest. Director Felz said no one is excluded, but due to geography and HUD Richman area funding, usually only Richman community families would be interested.

When Chair Russell asked about the ages served, he was told mostly elementary and junior high school with some high school students were being served. Chair Russell questioned the small service numbers versus the high dollar amount, and Supervisor Orozco said this is a pilot project and more could be expected. Director Felz said the dollar amount includes part-time staff costs whereas Garnet's program had very little staff funding, hence the lower costs. Chair Russell said he hoped the participant numbers would be higher next year. Director Felz confirmed that the grant funding had come before Commission three years ago, presented by the late Dr. Castro.

Commissioner Chen asked if Supervisor Orozco could summarize what the key was to changing behavior from negative to positive. He said Vice-Chair Dasney had mentioned mentoring, and he also felt that mentoring and building relationships was key.

Director Felz said staff is proposing several next steps including continuing working with partners the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club and the School District, and also expansion of the matrix to include other smaller organizations with similar goals to ensure non-duplication of services and cost-effectiveness. He noted the upcoming Gilbert Center and Richman Expansion should be on-line in a couple of months, and that staff would monitor and evaluate those programs as well per direction of Council. He said staff will be returning to Council sometime in fall with a final evaluation and full report on this comprehensive approach the City is taking. He added that they will also produce a youth programming guide to disseminate throughout the City.

Vice-Chair Dasney said the climate was right to expand programs with prevention and intervention goals but also, "community-wise," the collaborative element was also very important. She said in the past, everyone knew everyone else and parents heard from others what was going on with their children. This is not so much the case, but activities like those of Coordinator Burciaga are harkening back to those times. Hence, she said, the more collaboration and sharing of information, the better off we were as a community.

Chair Russell said when the issue of youth and teen programs first came up, he wanted to know about the programs the other organizations were doing, and to ensure non-duplication of services. He wanted to ensure that the City didn't end up doing everything because other agencies were not stepping up. Director Felz said staff and the major partners are headed in this direction with the proviso that Council's intent is slightly

different. He also noted the faith-based organizations will also be included, and noted said this was "a first stop in an evolving process."

Commissioner Chen asked if another column in the matrix could be added regarding the targeted students, e.g. at-risk. Director Felz said that was a good idea and would be incorporated.

5. IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Director Felz introduced Manager Grace Carroll Lowe who asked that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend approval of the Izaak Walton League of America Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to City Council. She stated that the City had had a rental agreement with the Izaak Walton League since 1999 when the Izaak Walton Cabin in Hillcrest Park was rebuilt, and that the partnership had been very successful. The key features of the agreement were reasonable no-fee use for the Boy Scout, Cub Scout and Izaak Walton League board meetings, and 40% of rental fees to the League for facilitating the Cabin rentals. She said the MOU would be in effect for five years with the City having an option to extend the agreement for two one-year extensions.

Manager Carroll reported that, aside from the periods where the reservoir was being rebuilt and the roads were inaccessible, there were about 25 to 30 rentals per year with an average of about \$100 per rental, or \$2800 per year.

Commissioner Spencer asked what type of rentals take place at the Cabin, and Manager Carroll Lowe said it was normally the same activities as at other facilities such as birthday parties and baby showers, although this week there would be a company retreat. She agreed with Commissioner Adam there was limited parking, but she pointed out that the cabin did not usually host large groups. Commissioner Spencer asked about the hours when the cabin is usually rented, and Manager Carroll Lowe said usually weekends in the afternoons, similar to other rentals. She clarified that the Cabin is opened by an Izaak Walton League member who also ensures the Cabin is locked and left in good condition, hence the 40% rental fee they receive.

Vice-Chair Dasney asked about overnight rentals, and Manager Carroll Lowe said, in recent memory, other than Boy Scout overnight events that aren't charged, there was only one overnight event (Indian Guides) where regular rental fees were charged. Vice-Chair Dasney asked about the bathrooms, and Manager Carroll Lowe said coincidentally, the bathrooms at Hillcrest would be shut down today due to a water main leak. However, the facilities were actually much better after a sewer line was replaced a few years ago.

Commissioner Chen asked what the square footage of the Cabin was, and was told it was about 2100 square feet. Chair Russell asked for comments, and the Izaak Walton League representatives present said they would like to have the agreement. Vice Chair Dasney asked the representatives if anyone from their group had applied for the Hillcrest Park Master Plan Committee, but they said they were not aware of the committee.

Commissioner Stanford MADE A MOTION to recommend approval of the Memorandum of Understand with the Izaak Walton League of America to City Council and Commissioner Spencer SECONDED the motion. Chair Russell called for the vote.

AYES: Adam, Chen, Dasney, Russell, Spencer, Stanford

NOES: None ABSENT: Shanfield

The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

6. APPROVAL OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS FOR AS-NEEDED SERVICES

Director Felz said the Parks and Recreation Department had many capital projects on the books, and getting capital projects completed was a major initiative and challenge for the Department. He said staff had gone through a process to add landscape architects to a roster of pre-approved companies for smaller projects. He said the firms have already have been screened and will be forwarded to Council for approval, but this item was being presented to Commission as an informational item. Director Felz said that the as-needed architects list will streamline the process and save time by waiving the bidding process, and will include companies with different specialties.

Vice-Chair Dasney asked why the as-needed list was going through Parks and Recreation rather than Maintenance. Director Felz said the list will be utilized for Parks and Recreation capital projects, and although Parks and Recreation will work alongside Engineering and Maintenance, Parks and Recreation will take the lead initially in determining the projects, getting community input and developing the plans. However, Engineering will then take over and bid the projects. He provided examples of parks such as Gilman Park and Rolling Hills where landscape as-needed services would be used.

Commissioner Spencer asked if the list would be used exclusively for Parks and Recreation projects or with Maintenance or Engineering projects also. Director Felz said the list would be primarily for Parks and Recreation although Engineering might utilize the list on occasion. However, he said, as this was mainly design work, Maintenance would not need to use this list. Commissioner Spencer said this looked like a good process for other departments as well and Director Felz agreed, saying there is a cap of \$100,000 for as-needed projects and that Redevelopment may develop a list, also.

7. SPORTS FIELD TURF ANALYSIS - NATURAL TURF VERSUS SYNTHETIC TURF

Director Felz introduced Hye-Jin Lee, Lead Engineer for the Lions Field Project, and Steve Cone of Pop Warner Football. He also introduced the natural turf versus synthetic turf issue by describing the management at-risk contract awarded to WEC which will be used for the Lions Field renovations. Director Felz said several decisions had to be made prior to WEC providing a dollar figure quote, a timeline and a project, and one was whether to install natural or synthetic turf at Lions Field. He added that WEC had provided a comprehensive report on the issue, and staff had also researched the issue in collaboration with Engineering and Maintenance, and with input from Pop Warner Football and Fullerton Hills Softball. Director Felz said both types of turf have pluses and minuses and staff could be characterized as "on the fence" with this issue. He then asked Parks Project Manager Hugo Curiel to make the presentation. Chair Russell asked if Commission was being asked to make a recommendation tonight, and Director Felz said it could make a recommendation tonight if it wanted to.

Manager Curiel provided a Power Point overview of natural versus synthetic turf, noting the issues related to turf such as materials, safety, health concerns, maintenance requirements and costs, environmental considerations, cost of the turf and life expectancy.

He described the synthetic turf components, noting that both synthetic and natural turf have improved and evolved. Regarding safety and turf softness, both types of turf are fairly comparable. Natural turf starts off softer but then becomes compacted whereas synthetic turf is a little harder but remains more consistent.

Manager Curiel addressed health concerns regarding lead content in synthetic turf sometimes noted on the internet, stating that the levels were insignificant and less than in kids' toys, and that there were no problems with or documentation regarding staph either. Natural turf has not generated any health concerns.

Regarding maintenance, Manager Curiel said that synthetic turf would make debris removal and decomposition more difficult, and one would need to monitor heavily-used areas, "fluff" or even out the rubber tire filling occasionally, and control weed growth at the perimeter. With synthetic turf, striping can be permanent or temporary, and irrigation is still required for cooling and cleaning the surface. With natural turf, mowing, irrigation, fertilizing, aerating, dethatching, etc. would be required, and striping will only be temporary.

Maintenance costs for synthetic grass would be less, about \$15,000 annually versus natural turf costs of approximately \$25,000 not including irrigation. Chair Russell asked for an estimate of irrigation costs and whether it would be different for the two turf types. Manager Curiel said it would be different and would be addressed later.

Regarding environmental considerations, synthetic turf would promote more water conservation, less energy consumption because lawn mowers, other equipment and fuel, which also release pollutants, would not be needed. Also, synthetic turf is made from recycled materials and is, itself, recyclable at the end of its life.

Due to the newness of synthetic turf, the life expectancy is an estimate of 10 - 15 years, with 12 years used for the purposes of the Parks and Recreation report. Costs are based on the frequency of use and decisions regarding the frequency of repairs, maintenance and replacement of turf.

Manager Curiel discussed the cost of synthetic turf at \$9.50/s.f. which includes grading, drainage materials and installation, whereas natural turf costs would be \$4.50/s.f. At the end of 12 years, the total cost difference of synthetic turf would be \$618,000 more than natural turf.

He noted other factors to consider regarding synthetic turf that were not in the report such as less field damage, repair and drainage times, more time for programming, but, on the other hand, there is also greater heat release and the need for more monitoring of sunflower seeds, gum, pets, food, vandalism - with no self-repair as in natural turf, and the visual impact of permanent lines.

Regarding natural turf, there is a tradition of grass, fewer use restrictions, and more playability for softball. The cons include maintenance, especially with football between the two 40-yard lines

Commissioner Stanford asked whether new equipment would need to be purchased for synthetic turf. Manager Curiel said there would be some small pieces of equipment and a brush would be needed and referred to Page 8 for the equipment and costs. Commissioner Stanford asked about costs the previous presentation on youth programs, there were questions about spending \$4,000 on a program at Garnet Center. Director Felz reviewed the water consumption rates, saying that there weren't a lot of savings to the City through reduced water usage from synthetic turf because the City owns the water supply, so water costs are very low.

Commissioner Chen asked why 12-years was used as a life span estimate and if that was really the life span of synthetic turf, and Manager Curiel said the industry figure was between 10 – 15 years so staff chose a mid-range between 10 and 15. Director Felz said it was a relatively new product so it was somewhat of a guess.

Commissioner Spencer asked how synthetic turf was going over with other cities. Manager Curiel said he's spoken with some cities, and the overall response is positive, but that the general public playing on it may require more monitoring.

Director Felz said the information provided was specific to Lions Field and a determination tonight would not affect turf issues on other fields, i.e., a decision to use or not use synthetic turf would not be precedent-setting. He noted that different fields have different types of play and different turf requirements, adding there is no way to mix natural and synthetic turf at Lions Field.

Vice Chair Dasney asked about striping with different sports, and Manager Curiel said you can achieve overlapping of field lines with different width lines and colors. She asked about scheduling, and if there would be opportunities for pick-up games. Manager Carroll Lowe said scheduling would be the same and was "pretty tight."

Director Felz noted that synthetic turf does seem to create more formal and controlled uses, with dogs banned. Commissioner Adam asked if carnivals would be disallowed for opening days. Director Felz said there would be no casual eating on the turf as it was akin to cleaning one's carpet after the game, and eating would be restricted to grandstands and non-turf areas. Commissioner Adam expressed concern that concession sales, which are critical income generators for the leagues, would be more difficult.

Chair Russell thought the maintenance costs for natural turf were too low because of football being so hard on the turf, particularly for safety reasons, and the lack of needed down time for turf recovery, and he predicted natural turf would need to be replaced every five years. Director Felz agreed, and said the maintenance costs were taken from current costs, but that the costs should probably be higher, though perhaps not as high as synthetic.

Chair Russell noted that maintenance becomes an issue when a new facility is built, and said with Lions Field, the City may have the capital funding for synthetic whereas maintenance costs for regular turf may be more difficult in the long run.

Commissioner Stanford had concerns about synthetic turf and the nature of it making the field less open to the public, and "catering" to only a small segment of the community. Commissioner Adam asked about public input. Director Felz said Council has asked for this review but that this was the first time it's been discussed in Fullerton. However, feedback from other cities does indicate use would be more restricted and monitored.

Commissioner Adam agreed with Commissioner Stanford that a lot of people would be excluded from using the field although she liked the synthetic turf for football because of low maintenance and football player preference. Chair Russell asked how that would affect Lions Field as it was generally used for softball and football. Director Felz said the proposed fields would not be characterized as a park, but rather a highly specialized field although it would still be open to the public. Chair Russell asked if someone could have a casual softball game, and Director Felz said, from what synthetic turf users say, it appears that the turf would create more of a "lock down" situation for the facility to protect it. Manager Curiel agreed.

Commissioner Spencer asked if synthetic turf was flammable, and Manager Curiel thought it would be because it was made of polypropylene; however, he didn't believe a dropped cigarette could create a fire and had not heard of any instance of the turf burning up. Chair Russell said there were many City properties with limited use, e.g., Boys and Girls Club, the YMCA, Kiwanis, etc., and Director Felz agreed.

Director Felz said the agenda letter fairly describes the position of the two user groups, with football preferring synthetic and softball preferring natural turf; however, they could work with either option. He then invited the league representatives to speak.

Steve Cone, Pop Warner Football, said Lions Field had been in the planning stage for 10 years, and that both Pop Warner and Softball don't want the turf issue to prolong the process, and would agree with Commission's recommendation.

Commissioner Chen asked what the goal was: to get everyone's opinion or to make a recommendation. Other commissioners said Commission could make a recommendation now or ask staff to return with more information. Commissioner Stanford asked Steve Cone how many Fullerton kids were playing in Pop Warner and was told 350, and Manager Carroll Lowe, when asked, said softball had about 700 girls on two fields.

Director Felz said a recommendation from Commission on the turf issue would be important and would be one part of the recommendations presented to Council on Lions Field. He said there was no easy recommendation, although the soft recommendation was natural turf, and a recommendation would help move the project along.

Commissioner Adam confirmed the recommendation wasn't precedent setting, but asked about other fields with baseball. Director Felz said even synthetic turf wouldn't be excluded as an option for other fields, but he and Chair Russell said baseball wouldn't want it. Chair Russell said Softball is only going along because of football's use of Lions

Field. Chair Russell said many football programs are using synthetic turf, questioned the cost estimates, and thought synthetic turf might pay for itself in 12 years.

Vice-Chair Dasney asked if more detailed maintenance costs for natural turf could be provided before taking this to Council, and Director Felz said this could be done including the financing.

Chair Russell had concerns that with natural turf at Lions Field, there would be a big price tag in five to six years due to use by football. Director Felz confirmed with Commissioner Stanford that staff would close a natural turf field due to rain, but synthetic turf would not need to be closed.

Commissioner Spencer asked if tonight's presentation was the one Council would get. Director Felz said Council's would include several other components including the design and final price tag, hence, Commission's input on turf would be important for Council to review and use in their decision-making.

Chair Russell asked about the timeline as he felt the Commission was divided. Director Felz, with input from Lead Engineer Lee, said it must go to Council in December, and the design needs to be finished by January, so it could return to Commission next month without a problem. Commissioner Spencer questioned the need to return the item to Commission next month, but Chair Russell said if, as it appears, a vote tonight would be a split vote, the Commission shouldn't go forward.

Commissioner Spencer asked how the others felt, and said she would vote for synthetic turf. A discussion ensued wherein some commissioners seemed to lean towards synthetic but were concerned about the cost. Commissioner Chen said she needed more concrete figures, but if the cost estimates were correct, she would prefer natural turf because of the big difference in price, plus natural was beautiful and she didn't want some users discouraged. Director Felz said staff could come back with more accurate figures and commissioners could have the opportunity to tour some artificial turf fields, noting there was sufficient time to return with the item.

Chair Russell said he had heard from many artificial turf users who were all football and "raved" about the cost savings. Thus, he questioned the numbers as he couldn't believe artificial turf was so much more expensive; otherwise, the current artificial turf users would have mentioned this as a problem. He believed synthetic turf was less expensive over the long run due to reduced wear and tear. However, he didn't want the Commission divided over this, and he did still like natural turf, and understood commissioners Chen and Stanford's concerns. He said he could be wrong and the numbers could be correct, but wanted to get confirmation. Director Felz said staff would return with the cost estimates in August if the Commission directed it to do so, but he also reminded Commission of the much lower water costs that Fullerton pays, e.g., an \$8,000 cost to use three million gallons of water.

Commissioner Chen asked if staff could ask the schools that have artificial turf why they chose it, and Director Felz said they certainly could. Chair Russell asked if the City's favorable water rate might change, and Director Felz said they could look into it.

Commissioner Stanford said synthetic looks better and can be used more, but he reiterated that cost is the issue with a \$50,000 annual differential. He said if the difference was found to be smaller, he could vote for synthetic.

The Commission agreed that the item would return in August and there would be a quorum.

8. REPORT ON CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

Director Felz reported on the following items brought before City Council since the last Commission meeting:

- The Youth / Teen Programs Overview, which was discussed at tonight's Commission meeting, was also presented at Council.
- Spring 2008 Adopt-A-Park Awards were presented.
- The Fullerton Community Center Concept Plan was approved unanimously with a very positive presentation and response from Council. The project can move forward with the Planning Commission and further City staff involvement, and will be integrated with the Library portion of the project. An ad hoc committee is anticipated, including members of the Parks and Recreation Commission. This item will return to Commission in the future.

9. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

- Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Updates:
 - ➤ Laguna Lake Grant The State offered \$120,000 in funds residual from another City for additional plantings and trail work. Staff will return to Commission regarding a later phase.
 - ➤ Gilman Park Work is on hold until staff is able to obtain more information on the flood control channel and a 1981 slope failure there.
 - ➤ Tri-City Park \$200,000 for the Master Planning has been received, and Fullerton is working with Placentia and Brea to get a Master Plan Committee in place. All three City commissions will be involved.
 - ➢ Gilbert Park The project is on target, so the facility should be in by late summer.
 - Neighborhood Centers The Richman building permits have been secured, and the building should be up by the end of September.
 - ➤ Summer Programs Update The summer programs such as FAST, the Market and youth programs are doing well with good attendance.
 - ➤ July Fourth Event Report The event was a big success with a "huge" crowd. One could see the impact of people staying home with an estimated 45,000 50,000 in the stadium and outlying areas.

10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Stanford said he was at a baseball season party a couple of weeks ago near Gilman Park and the subject of the slope failure came up with concerns expressed about installing a playground there. While he understood that staff was looking into it, Commissioner Stanford suggested Parks and Recreation continue to do its due diligence as there were continued concerns. He also commended the staff on the "outstanding, first rate" 4th of July event.

Commissioner Adam said July was Park and Rec Month as announced in a flyer she received. She said she also read about an annual meeting in Santa Clara which Chair Russell expressed interest in attending last year but didn't receive timely notice. Director Felz said it was a conference hosted by the California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS), and attended primarily by staff although some commissioners from other cities attend; however, Fullerton has not been as involved. Director Felz said if the commissioners are interested in attending the conference, he could keep them better apprised of this and Commissioner Adam acknowledged this.

Commissioner Adam then noted the "Rubber Sole" exhibit on tennis shoes opening this Saturday and invited the others to attend. She said she also attended the unveiling of the Fender Strat public mural which was very successful, tactile and kid-friendly. She agreed the 4th of July was a really great event and acknowledged Cultural and Events Specialist Ashley Glass and Manager Dannielle Mauk for the great job, saying it went very smoothly, even the exiting from parking.

Chair Russell said he really enjoyed 4th of July but he wasn't thrilled with the band's "groupies" in the VIP tent who took over all the chairs, including Chair Russell's. Director Felz apologized, saying this was not expected, and that he spoke with the artist who had performed there many years. As the artist never had guests until that night, no accommodations had been made for the guests.

Vice-Chair Dasney noted the CPRS newsletter contained a pooch park feature, and said it appears Fullerton is doing everything right, and staff should pass this onto the ad hoc committee. She humorously noted that, while there was discussion at the previous commission meeting about the dog park not being a playground, in the news article, there was actually play equipment for the dogs.

Director Felz also said he learned from staff that the newsletter Vice-Chair Dasney was referencing regarding the conference was actually for the California Association of Parks and Recreation Commission and Board Members (CAPRCBM), which is a branch of the CPRS and that he would look into this further.

Vice-Chair Dasney said she'd been on the trails lately, and considered the bicycles a serious threat with a high risk of injuries. Director Felz said staff just met last week to discuss short- and long-term planning for the trails, and that bicycle users were number one on the list. He noted that bike activity is increasing, that the activity is a positive one and the user group is a good one.

Due to an anxious dog, Vice-Chair Dasney said she went to the 4th of July event early. However, she said it took her quite a long time, going many blocks out of her way, to get

home due to the block parties all over the city. She wondered about the block party permit process and if there were any limitations placed to ensure emergency vehicles could get through. Director Felz said the City and Police Department weren't entirely pleased with the process either and would be looking into that and making some changes.

Chair Russell adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Felz, Director of Parks and Recreation pf