CITY OF FULLERTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

Fullerton Museum Center 301 N. Pomona Avenue, Fullerton Monday, May 1, 2006 5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Russell called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Kathleen Baier-Dalton Kathleen Dasney, George Miller, Craig Russell,

Nancy Spencer, Neil Swanson

Absent: None

Staff: Ron Molendyk, Parks and Recreation Director; Parks and Recreation

Managers Dave Alkema, Grace Carroll-Miranda, Alice Loya, Dannielle

Mauk, and Judy Peterson

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

1. WELCOME

Director Molendyk welcomed the commissioners, reviewed the topics of the previous April 17, 2006 workshop which focused on programming, recreation and cultural arts, and said tonight's meeting would focus on capital projects and priorities. He said the Lions Field project would be in the budget and will be started this year, and also said that maintenance, safety and repairs at the parks would be a priority also. He then introduced Parks Manager Alkema, saying that photos of some of the parks repairs would be circulated.

2. DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Manager Alkema pointed out the master plans for Richman, Adlena, Byerrum and Valencia parks which were posted on the wall, providing a status report on those on-going projects. He said the Adlena, Byerrum and Valencia Park renovations should be completed in four to six months.

Commissioner Miller asked why the Commission was rushed into voting on Richman Park due to a St. Jude June 30, 2005 deadline, and yet the project was still not completed. Manager Loya answered that the deadline was for the design phase which was met, and that construction is now underway. She also noted that the Master Plan is separate from St. Jude's clinic plan.

Manager Alkema said the Tennis Center Pavilion Renovation is currently 25% in the design phase, and described the completed Master Plan design for Lions Field, circulating photos, and noting the severe deficiencies in several areas.

3. PROPOSED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS 2006 - 2007

Director Molendyk said Lions Field renovations would come to the Commission on May 8th as a capital project along with prioritization of funding. He said the City Manager would recommend RDA funding for Lions Field. Manager Alkema answered commissioner questions on the restrooms.

Manager Alkema provided photos of West Hiltscher Park Trail, describing plans to eliminate the encroachments, and improve the trails and parking lot area. He then talked about the needs at Independence Park including sidewalks, a covered pool, graffiti cleanup, grading the front park for fields and a picnic area, spray pool, new roof and air conditioning.

Director Molendyk said the Department wants to repair what it already has before developing new projects, and also that maintenance was very much needed in all areas. When asked about the skate board project, Manager Alkema and Director Molendyk said some people want it eliminated altogether due to serious problems there; however, it could possibly be re-configured to attract and serve young families. Director Molendyk said the Department should probably listen to what the community wants and act accordingly. Commissioner Spencer noted the Union Pacific Park Trail, saying that also needed better policing.

Manager Alkema and Director Molendyk outlined the Amerige Park Master Plan, noting that the shuffle board courts were recently taken out as requested by the seniors and that the senior expansion was on hold due to a lack of funds. Athletic lighting on school district property was also discussed, with the priority at Richman Park. Manager Alkema also went over proposed projects and budgets at Tri-City, Gilman, Rolling Hills, and Fern Drive parks. He noted that and Hermosa Park was taken out of the proposed CIP by Engineering. Again, the deficiencies at the parks were noted and shown through photos, and Director Molendyk pointed out the need to advocate for more funds to improve parks and the quality of life in Fullerton. Commissioners Spencer and Dasney said the Maintenance Department needed to be supported because its staff is working hard but keeps getting more park space and buildings to maintain. It was also reported that the gate at Mountain View Park had been painted green, and there was general agreement that it looked nice.

4. REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOND FUNDING PRIORITIES

Manager Alkema went over the recommended funding from the RDA to Council for each project: Independence Park - \$3.75 million; Hillcrest Park - \$4 million; Lions Field - \$4.2 million; Amerige Park - \$3 million; Richman School Athletic Field Lighting - \$650,000. When asked how long the Richman Park project would take, Director Molendyk estimated two years and explained the budget approval process. There was also a discussion on how community input would impact the development of projects. Director Molendyk said there is a total of \$222 million in RDA funds, with \$57 million to give out. He also noted that it would cost closer to \$8 million to do all of the planned renovations at Independence Park which the Commission could request. Commissioner Dalton asked if the original Master Plans would be followed in completing the projects, or if new community input would be solicited. Staff said the original Master Plans would be utilized but that there would also need to be some changes, particularly since some of the plans are dated.

5. MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION ISSUES

Manager Alkema provided an overview of maintenance and operation issues at the parks, providing many color photos of safety issues at the parks. He said that the Department is placing a new emphasis on maintenance and safety, and pointed out that one of the Parks and Recreation staff has been designated to conduct park inspections and to notify Maintenance of any problems.

Commissioner Miller asked what the Commission could do, and Commissioner Dalton reiterated the need for Maintenance to get additional funding to support the growing workload Maintenance is expected to manage. Director Molendyk and Manager Alkema agreed but said there would also have to be the will to address, prioritize, and track safety issues such as live electrical wires in the park or a play area that has been boarded up for over a year, in order to protect children and protect against liability for the City. Director Molendyk added that any capital projects should include maintenance costs, or the project should not be built.

Manager Alkema continued with his overview, showing exposed electrical wiring, damaged fencing, graffiti, and dilapidated park monument and regulatory signs, park furniture and portapotties, the latter which are needed because City Council doesn't want to spend money on restrooms. Director Molendyk said some of the needed fixes would be costly, but many are just a matter of taking care of the task.

6. SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM FINANCING

Director Molendyk said that the City can't wait for voters to vote for bonds and other measures to improve the parks because they are very reluctant to vote for that type of funding. Thus, the Commission might have to figure out how to pass a park assessment fee and to bring the concerns regarding repairs and liability to the Council's attention. There ensued a discussion on how to get the parks attended to and repaired including meeting with the Council and emphasizing liability, and also focusing on better budgeting for maintenance and tracking of maintenance problems.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Ron Molendyk, Secretary
RM:pf