

**CITY OF DUARTE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

MINUTES

Regular Meeting
January 13, 2025

7 PM

ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:

PRESENT: Alex Streff, Jennifer Luna-Nguyen, Barbie Bylsma-Houghton, James Finlay, Anne Wilkins
STAFF LIAISON: Manuel Enriquez, Department Director
AUDIENCE: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Streff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Wilkins motioned, and Bylsma-Houghton seconded to approve the November 11, 2024, minutes. The motion passed 4-0, with Streff abstaining.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

- A. High Wind and Wildfire Emergency Response Update
Enriquez gave a recap of the high winds and wildfire emergency response the City provided due to the wildfires that affected the Los Angeles area starting on January 7. Some information included:
- The City's EOC opened immediately, and the Field Services division responded right away, overnight, to tend to down trees impeding Huntington Drive and other city streets.
 - The City lost power for about 4 days since the inception of the wildfires.
 - Given the Civic Center has an emergency generator that can power City Hall and the Community Center for about 7 days, the Recreation Department personnel staffed an evacuation site overnight on January 8 and then daily through Saturday, January 11 in the Community Center until the majority of the City's power was re-established. This allowed residents to come to the Community Center to power their devices, work, attain the latest evacuation information, and gather supplies that were donated for distribution (like water, food, clothing, toiletries).

- Enriquez also mentioned that showers in the Fitness Center were opened to members of the public who were unable to do so in their households.
- Enriquez concluded that the City is currently going through the process of reporting and estimating out damages through FEMA and part of the damages being reported is the Buena Vista Street Banner poles, which are utilized by the department to advertise upcoming community-wide special events.

B. Community Garden Update – Approval of Conceptual Design

Enriquez introduced Food Ed representatives who gave an overview of upcoming development of the Duarte Community Garden and again provided some background information pertaining to the process the City, in partnership with Food Ed, undertook to attain funding through the 2023 Urban Agriculture Grant Program. Some information provided included the following:

- Overview of Food Ed and personnel introductions.
- Scope of work the grant funding program covers.
- Detailing that multiple sites were considered during the process of writing for the grant funding.
- Enriquez shared again that due to the community feedback gathered during the Duarte Park Revitalization Project Community Meetings, the call for the garden at that location was cut. However, given the Commission's recommendation to explore Encanto and Paras-Caracci Parks, staff and Food Ed moved forward with the conceptual design at Para-Caracci Park given its layout, parking situation, and ADA accessibility.
- Two different options of garden fencing were shown to the Commissioners, with their associated price points.
- It was explained to the Commission that Option B would need a budget amendment approval from City Council, given that it is now coming in at a higher dollar amount than at the time the product was quoted for the grant submission.
- The Commission preferred Option B better, as that they felt it complemented the site already and would require less alternation than Option A, which had a larger gap from the base to the ground level.
- Bylsma-Houghton motioned to approve Option B, with the budget amendment being taken before City Council and Streff seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEMS FROM
STAFF:

1. Recreation Manager position will be going out for recruitment.
2. Winter classes began last week, but there's still time to register.
3. Employee and Commissioner Awards of Service Reception – reminder to RSVP to Kristen Petersen.

ITEMS FROM
COMMISSIONERS:

Luna-Nguyen:

- Acknowledged all the fun holiday related events the department offered, including being drenched by our snow mobile during Santa's Coming to Duarte event.
- She also inquired about Karate class mats and cancellation policy.

Enriquez replied that he'd investigate that with the Recreation Supervisor of fee-based classes.

Streff:

- He appreciates the department's offerings this holiday season and is looking forward to attending the Awards Recognition event.

Bylsma-Houghton:

- Expressed that she's excited about the Community Garden and announced that this would be her official last meeting, as she did not reapply to be a commissioner. Noting that 40 years is long enough.
- She expressed that she's available if ever needed and will be attending the department's future events as time permits.

Wilkins:

- Announced that this would be her official last meeting, as she did not reapply to be a commissioner again.
- She mentioned how happy she is with the Department and all the things we have to offer here in the City of Duarte.

Finlay:

- Shared that he's excited to be back on the Parks & Recreation Commission – the fun group!
- Shared that the DHS Gymnasium is almost complete, and he'll have more to share at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Luna-Nguyen motioned, and Wilkins seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 PM. The motion was carried unanimously.

Commissioner
Streff

ATTEST:



Pamela Romero, Secretary

