

**CITY OF DUARTE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

M I N U T E S

Regular Meeting
May 12, 2025

7 PM

ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:

PRESENT: Eddie Olague, James Finlay, Jennifer Luna-Nguyen, Alex Streff
ABSENT: Michael Powers
STAFF LIAISON: Manuel Enriquez, Department Director
STAFF: Albert Nunez, Management Aide; Alberto Castaneda-Salazar, Fitness Center Supervisor; Alyssa Rico, Parks and Recreation Manager, Pam Romero, Administrative Secretary
AUDIENCE: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Streff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Finlay motioned, and Luna-Nguyen seconded to approve the January 13, 2025, minutes. The motion passed 3-0, with Olague abstaining.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Enriquez introduced Alyssa Rico, the new Parks and Recreation Manager. Rico stated she was excited to be here and that everyone was very welcoming. Enriquez also introduced Alberto Castaneda-Salazar, Recreation Supervisor at the Fitness Center, who will be giving the presentation for Item 5B and Albert Nunez, Management Aide for the City Manager's Office, who will be speaking to us regarding the Strategic Plan Initiative.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

A. Overview: City of Duarte Strategic Plan

Enriquez introduced Albert Nunez, Management Aide for the City Manager's Office, who will be speaking regarding the Strategic Plan Initiative. Some information included:

- The City is currently developing the Duarte 2035 Strategic Plan, which will guide city services, programs, and initiatives for the next decade.

- The Plan will help establish the community's vision and provide a timeline for implementation.
- The City would like to hear from the Community on what the City should focus on.
- To achieve that, there is a short, anonymous, Community Questionnaire available in English and Spanish on the City's website.
- Encouraged commissioners to have their family, friends and neighbors, fill out the questionnaire.
- The questionnaire will be available until Saturday, May 31.
- A QR code is included on the ad.

Finlay asked how the questionnaire was being distributed.

Nunez replied that they started advertising last week on social media and the city's website. There will also be two pop-up events.

Streff asked what the final product would look like and if it would be distributed to the commission.

Nunez stated that once the questionnaire was closed, it would be brought to department heads and council to start a draft of the plan, which would then be brought to council where there would be an opportunity for public input.

Luna-Nguyen asked if the results would be made available to the public.

Nunez replied that the information would be in the draft.

Enriquez stated that Nunez and Rangel, from the City Manager's office, put in a lot of work to secure the right consultant for the project. He also gave a little overview of the behind-the-scenes work.

B. Updates: Duarte Fitness Center

Enriquez introduced Alberto Castaneda-Salazar who presented a PowerPoint of the Fitness Center. Some information provided included the following:

- Castañeda-Salazar stated he has the privilege of serving as the Fitness Center Supervisor overseeing all Fitness and Aquatic programs within our Parks and Recreation Department.
- Stated in a city as vibrant as Duarte, we are committed to ensuring our community has a place where wellness, connection, and opportunity come together.
- The Duarte Fitness Center is a comprehensive facility promoting health, wellness, and community involvement.

- The facility opened in 1982.
- Key features include:
 - A fully equipped exercise room and diverse group classes.
 - Personalized training and racquetball/wallyball courts for friendly competition.
 - Showers and locker amenities for member convenience.
 - An outdoor heated competition pool for swim lessons, lap swimming, and private rentals.
 - A set of American Red Cross certification courses for lifeguarding, swim instruction, First Aid, and CPR/AED.
 - Special events throughout the year to foster community connections and promote wellness.
- Exercise group classes are led throughout the week by a team of certified instructors.
- The aquatics programming is available year-round and serves the community from ages 6 months to seniors.
- As an authorized provider of the American Red Cross, we're proud to offer high-quality swim instruction, including private swim lessons and our internal competitive swim team.
- Throughout the summer, families can enjoy recreational swim in a safe, welcoming environment, while our year-round lap swim program provides consistent access to fitness and wellness opportunities for individuals 14 and older.
- We have a partnership with Duarte High School to help certify our young high school students as lifeguards.
- From an underwater egg hunt to our Splashtacular summer event or Dive-In Movie Night, we're proud to provide memorable moments that bring people of all ages together.
- Two upcoming events we'd like to invite you to are our Duarte Health and Fitness Day on Saturday, June 14 and the Summer Kick Off on Friday, June 20.
- The Fitness Center will be undergoing and overdue renovation beginning May 19 thru approximately mid-June, thanks to the help of the commission.
- There will be a cardio area and a strength area to get a full body workout, and an open area for stretching or lunges, etc.
- Announced that Commissioners have a free individual total facility membership available during their term and can add family for an additional fee.

Streff inquired as to how they will get the word out about the new equipment.

Castaneda-Salazar stated they would reach out through ActiveNet, social media, and the City's website and that there was an article in the Spring Newsletter.

Luna-Nguyen stated she felt that the Royal Oaks Park building where classes are held is a good place to post information.

Enriquez mentioned that it was originally going to be a two-step process with cardio one year and strength the next, but that it was more cost effective to do everything at once, with less risk management, and council agreed.

The goal is to make it great and strike a balance regarding attendance at the Fitness Center for our small community.

Finlay thanked Castaneda-Salazar for a great presentation and asked where the current exercise classes in the room will be held.

Castaneda-Salazar stated that the group classes will be held in racquetball court #1 since court reservations are down. It's a ventilated area with a drinking fountain right outside.

Finlay inquired about the echo in the court.

Castaneda-Salazar stated that they have held a few classes there to test it and it actually works well.

Luna-Nguyen inquired about offering classes a little later in the evening.

Castaneda-Salazar stated that he has been working on offering classes at different times and is open to suggestions.

Finlay asked for an update on the pool.

Castaneda-Salazar stated that they have found a few leaks after noticing a reduction of water. Technicians had already found a couple leaks. They were at the site today and think they found the main leak. Staff has been working collectively with pool contractors to try to address it as soon as possible.

Enriquez mentioned that after the fires, when the City lost power for a few days, they started noticing a significant increase in the water bill, which triggered the search for the problem. He also thanked Castaneda-Salazar for his dedication to finding the problem and working on a solution.

Olague asked if the small pool could be used while the competition pool is being worked on.

Enriquez replied that with all the work being done, such as grading or the need to cut power, it is unsafe to have the public walking around.

Luna-Nguyen thanked Castaneda-Salazar for his passion and is a great representation for Parks and Recreation.

C. Review: Community Garden Implementation Timeline

Enriquez gave an update on the progress of the garden and disseminated the Community Garden application to commissioners. Some information provided included:

- There is a social media post ready to go out and information is available on the City's website.
- The garden grant through Food Ed is good through October 2026.
- Staff will work with the commission and council to identify all the a-la-carte options available.
- The application is available online.
- The turf has been removed at the site.
- Construction fencing is up while work on actual fencing is being done.
- The main water line will be installed next for the beds.
- Part of the Scope of Work includes a volunteer day where community members, city officials, commissioners and their families, and DART program participants can come in and help with last minute labor to help get the garden ready for the grand opening.
- The volunteer day is scheduled for June 7 from 8 AM to 12 PM.
- Parks and Recreation Commissioners will be included on the invite email blast.
- Promotion has started with one of a few popup events scheduled being held during 3w2 the Eggfest at Encanto Park. A popup event will also be held at the Fitness Center on June 14.
- An interest list has already been started and applications have been sent out.
- The reason for the application process is to ensure equity across the board. The first round of applications will close June 25.
- A temporary sign announcing the garden, its story and partnership with Food Ed, a rendering, and a QR code, will be coming soon.
- The grand opening is tentatively set for July 26 at 10 AM.
- Enriquez asked commissioners to voice their thoughts on what we should be cognizant of, that is in line with the priorities mentioned. Some responses included:

- Finlay stated that he already noticed it on Google Maps.
- Luna Nguyen is excited at the progress she sees when passing by the park and that she really likes the logo the commission created.
- Finlay would like to see some reserved for families that would involve kids in the process.
- Streff is happy with the priorities set.
- Luna Nguyen stated that she has the space in her yard but wants to apply as she lacks the knowledge of keeping a garden.
- Enriquez announced that part of the agreement is that they hold four community workshops in the first year that will be open to everyone whether they are part of the garden or not.
- Luna Nguyen would also like the process to be mindful of having a variety of vegetables included.
- Enriquez stated that there is only a list of items that cannot be grown.
- A consideration is rental of beds will be staggered in order to consider applications from residents who didn't know about the garden prior to the grand opening.
- Finlay asked if the \$60 a year fee even touch the costs incurred to maintain it.
- Enriquez stated that the \$60 is for buy-in.
- Olague inquired as to whether there was any protocol for after the first year.
- Enriquez replied that once the garden reaches full capacity, they will assess the process.
- Finlay asked if the workshops would be recorded.
- Enriquez stated he will look into it and get back to him.

ITEMS FROM
STAFF:

1. Announced that the Budget Workshop was successful with some key CIP (Capital Improvement Projects) included such as roof replacement at the Teen Center, futsal and pickleball court resurfacing at Duarte Park, floor replacement at the Royal Oaks Park building, and PSA funds for phase two of the Duarte Park Revitalization project.

Finlay asked about the status of the multipurpose trail.

Enriquez replied that construction is set to begin next fiscal year and that the grant was secured by the Public Works/Community Development Department. Recommendations brought forward by commissioners has been presented to Public Works/Community Development.

Streff asked what the delay in funding was.

Enriquez replied that the information he's received has already been out there on social media. The funding is available, and they are now putting together a bid packet.

2. The Parks and Recreation Department received a \$25,000 grant from Wal Mart to help offset additional costs for the Teen Center boxing program, such as a new boxing ring and equipment, and to help offset costs for the CHYLL program, Mayor's Youth Council, Duarte Dance, and the DART program.

ITEMS FROM
COMMISSIONERS:

Luna-Nguyen:

- Announced that there was an incident with her child at Royal Oaks Park with an e-bike rider running into him. Stated she is interested in attending a Public Safety commission meeting to address the problem of e-bikes in the parks.

Finlay asked if the bikes are allowed on the walkways.

Enriquez replied that right now there is no code prohibiting the bikes on walkways.

- Stated that she gets asked a lot what the commissions do and suggested that maybe they could be featured in the City News.

Enriquez replied that it is something that can be looked into for upcoming issues.

Finlay:

- Announced that he recently was in Tennessee and was introduced to Geocaching in one of their parks. He explained the concept and thinks it would be a great, low-cost thing to bring to Duarte with all the parks in city.

Olague:

- Announced that he is excited to be on the commission.
- Stated that he enrolled his child in one of the classes at Royal Oaks Park and that the sound echo's a lot. Asked if anything could be done to reduce the noise.

Enriquez stated he would see what could be done.

- Announced that he loved the Eggfest and appreciated the short Bunny line.

Streff:

- Announced he attended the Lunar New Year event and thought it was awesome. Also stated that staff did a great job putting it together.
- Stated that he drove by the new dog park under construction in Azusa and that it looks like it's coming along nicely.
- Inquired as to whether there will be a Dodger game excursion this summer.

Enriquez replied that there will be an excursion to Dodger Stadium on Tuesday, July 1, and that registration starts May 27 for residents and May 28 for non-residents.

ADJOURNMENT: Finlay motioned, and Olague seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM. The motion was carried unanimously.

Commissioner
Streff

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pamela Romero". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Pamela Romero, Secretary