

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL
UNTIL APPROVED BY THE
CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

June 2, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Mayor O'Leary called the Special Meeting of the City Council to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Syd Kronenthal Recreation Room.

Present: Micheál O'Leary, Mayor
Jim B. Clarke, Council Member
Meghan Sahli-Wells, Council Member

Absent: Andrew Weissman, Vice Mayor
Jeffrey Cooper, Council Member

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Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vince Motyl.

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Joint Public Comment - Items Not on the Agenda

Mayor O'Leary invited public comment.

No cards were received and no speakers came forward.

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Receipt and Filing of Correspondence

MOVED BY COUNCIL MEMBER CLARKE AND SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER SAHLI-WELLS THAT THE CITY COUNCIL RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE. THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: CLARKE, O'LEARY, SAHLI-WELLS
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: COOPER, WEISSMAN

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Joint Action Items

Item J-1

JOINT CITY COUNCIL/PRCS COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM: (1) Discussion of The Syd Kronenthal Park Playground Rehabilitation Project and (2) Solicitation of Comments from the Syd Kronenthal Park/Culver City East Neighborhood Related to the Project and the Other Playground Site in Syd Kronenthal Park

Mayor O'Leary reported that information from the meeting would be conveyed to absent Council Members who were not able to attend due to schedule conflicts, and he encouraged attendees to study the concepts noting that there would be additional opportunity for discussion before the final budget hearing.

Martin Cole, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk, clarified procedures for public speaking and for submitting comments.

Dan Hernandez, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director, provided a summary of the material of record.

Discussion ensued between Council Members, Commissioners and staff regarding changing demographics in the City; appreciation to the public for their input; the different process as a result of public input; community input prior to soliciting bids from a contractor; the process prescribed by State law; transparency; and the time sensitive nature of grants.

The following members of the audience addressed the City Council:

Marta Zaragoza thanked the people who brought the issue

forward; discussed the importance of separating toddlers from older children; safety; and concern with notification for the meeting.

Mariana Quintanilla expressed appreciation for the special meeting; discussed the process; the proposed sun shade; reflecting the needs of the community; making sure that the playground appeals to multiple senses; and reflecting the value placed on children through the parks.

Justin Cole expressed concern that while the preschool is in session, younger children are not allowed to go in the play area even though the preschool rarely uses it, and he felt that the people in the neighborhood should be able to use the equipment from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Vince Motyl thanked the City for recognizing the issue and working to address it.

Erik Paesel discussed communication and outreach; indicated that the neighborhood wanted something similar to the playground equipment at Veterans Park; discussed the need for playground equipment to address three different age groups; he expressed support for option A; suggested combining the toddler and pre-school groups as well as using bucket swings and conventional swings; and he discussed other parks recently re-done.

Mayor O'Leary discussed meeting procedures and indicated that specific comments like that were needed and would be appreciated in writing.

Ken Mand wanted to see everything remain on the fast track; he discussed finalizing the design; consensus in the community; and he offered to help.

Marrischia Davis indicated that she is a teacher working in the classroom since 2001 for Culver City Parks and Recreation; she discussed the importance of communication; addressed the fact that the playground is closed noting that the policy in place is for the safety of the younger children; and she discussed the amount of outside play time for the preschool children.

Theodore Alamillo indicated that he liked playing on the old equipment as the new equipment is too hard to play on. Mayor O'Leary received clarification from audience members

that they missed the swings.

Saundra Davis thanked the City Council and Commission for having the meeting which illustrates the caring for the community, and she asked about the posting of public notices.

Charles Babb felt that cognitive play was missing from the blueprints; noted that children like to move things around; and he wanted to see the companies bring in cognitive development and imagination.

Mykeaia Clark noted that some of the new equipment requires that parents participate; expressed concern with independent play; discussed changes to Culver City Park; and she did not feel there should be such a wide separation between the play areas.

Discussion ensued between Council Members, Commissioners and staff regarding the separation and distance between the play areas; the importance of specific comments; the Playground Safety Handbook; margins of safety; cognitive play vs. physical play; the requirement that park equipment be stationary; the posting of public notice; equipment that requires parental involvement; following required processes; including a not-to-exceed amount; the balance remaining from the Prop. A grant; use it or lose it dollars; differences in bids; clarification regarding what time the preschool playground is available; efforts of the neighborhood that created the playground at Veterans Park; strain on the City budget; state mandates; efforts of citizens to raise money to create the Dog Park in the City; a suggestion that the neighborhood reach out and help improve the playground; noticing and legal requirements; mixing and matching elements of the different designs; the main component; stand alone units; incorporating water and sand tables; the shade structure; the importance of speaking your mind and being proactive; QR codes; available resources; Culver City Living; Parks and Recreation classes and other amenities in the City; the process; the ability of present Council Members to establish a number to consider with the full City Council in the budget to fund park improvements; clarification that the pre-school is a contract instructor; maximizing shared use; making policies clear; opening up additional park space; removing the exercise equipment at the other side of the park to make room for toddler equipment; the chance to make sure that the parks are connected with the neighborhood; Mom's Clubs; ascertaining the preferred option from families in the

area; the availability of the meeting online; opportunities for input; the importance of signage in the area; having block captains deliver fliers for notification; other locations for a toddler play area; the difficulty of supervising different aged children in areas that are not adjacent; feedback on the preferred designs so far; and the process for obtaining bids.

Nicole Alamillo commented on the water and sand component; discussed issues with the water element at the park on Jefferson; and she wanted to make sure that would not be an issue if a water element is included in the new area.

Dan Hernandez, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director indicated that he would discuss the water/element concern with Ms. Alamillo.

Irene Dorsey discussed senior citizens in the area and she wanted to make sure that notification goes out to everyone including senior citizens who may not be computer savvy.

Marta Zaragoza wanted to make sure that the process was done correctly this time; discussed money lost during the last process because all the children were not considered; and she noted the importance of shade structures.

Mariana Quintanilla discussed communication with Mom's Clubs in the City; the popularity of Carlson Park; and making Syd Kronenthal Park appealing for families.

Responding to Council Member Sahli-Wells, Ms. Quintanilla clarified that her list included the presidents for the Mom's Clubs in the City; she discussed signing up for notifications on the City website; Nixle; and she agreed to spread the word.

Martin Cole, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk, indicated that all speakers who provided an email address would be included in the notification process; and he discussed signing up for notification on the City website.

Vince Motyl asserted that it was somewhat unrealistic to ask for additional funding given the other pressing needs that the City has, and he questioned what could be done with the carryover funds.

Peggy Koyanagi felt that a mistake had been made in the

design of the playground improvements and that a standard solution was not the correct option; she discussed finding out who the design is for before moving forward; she disagreed with separating the children; she cited other parks in Los Angeles; budget limitations; and the importance of having children learn from each other no matter the age.

Ken Mand discussed the water/sand table; the limited budget; the shade structure; trees in the area; other pavilions available; whether there would be two separate contracts for equipment and installation; old minutes that referred to a project in Fox Hills; and grant funding.

Justin Cole expressed support for signage regarding the pre-school and clarity of communication; accommodating pre-school children; money allocated; and he expressed concern that the neighborhood was instructed to raise money.

Mykeia Clarke expressed opposition to separation of equipment by age noting that she would not be able to supervise both of her children if that were the case, and she expressed support for the gate.

Additional discussion ensued between staff, Council Members and Commissioners regarding consideration of input received; addressing issues caused by the renovation; the need for input regarding specific tradeoffs; and accommodating younger children.

Mayor O'Leary proposed a motion that staff bring back a budget item that includes a discussion of the most popular of the structures with additions and subtractions as suggested by public input as a General Fund item. Council Member Sahli-Wells seconded the motion.

Further discussion ensued between Council Members, Commissioners and staff regarding the original intent of the grant; a feeling that the issue is not correcting something that should have been done; using the carryover funds rather than impacting the budget; having the community seek additional funding; the tradition of neighborhoods banding together to make things happen; the improvement of the Veterans Park playground; different preferences amongst children; communities that organize to help themselves; limitations of the budget; people who are organizing for Community Gardens; the importance of participating in your community; determining the costs before moving forward;

improving transparency and public notice; future community input; whether the public is equipped to make determinations based upon plans; community input; specific targeted survey questions; the pre-bid process; public notice and the community conversation; whether a shade structure is necessary; and a suggestion that the \$61,000 be carried over to the next project.

Additional discussion ensued between Council Members, Commissioners and staff regarding the intent of the grant; usage; carryover funds; authorization from the County; and putting a line item in the budget.

Mayor O'Leary revised his motion to direct staff to return with a cost estimate if the carryover funds are available for consideration by the City Council before the budget is finalized.

Discussion ensued between staff, Commissioners and Council Members regarding the time frame to receive information from the County; earmarking funds that can return to the General Fund if the County does not provide their portion; having a full discussion by the entire City Council; clarification regarding the reference to making the changes as a mistake; the need for additional information to move forward; additional opportunities for public input; adding money from the General Fund to complete the project; making everyone feel welcome; the need for a site plan to request a scope change; additional public comment on the choices available; balancing the need for expediency with the need for input; a deadline for the receipt of public comment; clarification that no changes can be made once the proposal goes through the County; the existence of no clear majority with respect to neighborhood comments on the five proposed site plans; the need for specific information and community consensus for a specific site plan; the need for County approval and specific costs; adopting the budget with assumptions; taking the time needed to do the right project; making an informed decision; the ability of the City Council to add an item to the budget at any time; holding the item until information is available; public notification; the feasibility of having the item on the agenda for June 22; the required site plan; concern with transparency; incorporating comments received; and submission to the County.

Marta Zaragoza reported that the community would hold a community meeting to determine their consensus and provide a

written report to the City Council within the next two weeks for the June 22 meeting.

Additional discussion ensued between Council Members and Ms. Zaragoza regarding using the comments to make decisions on the site plan; what constitutes a community meeting; and the notification process.

Further discussion ensued between Council Members regarding continuing the discussion and working to address the issue prior to budget approval.

MOVED BY MAYOR O'LEARY AND SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER SAHLI-WELLS THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO RETURN ON JUNE 22, 2015 WITH A CONCEPT AND COST ESTIMATE FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF A PROJECT THAT WILL ONLY MOVE FORWARD IF THE CARRYOVER FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE COUNTY. THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: CLARKE, O'LEARY, SAHLI-WELLS
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: COOPER, WEISSMAN

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding clarification that the item brought forward to the City Council on June 22, 2015 would contain a lot of assumptions; the additional opportunity for public input; that future park improvements will include notification on site with ample opportunities for public input; and appreciation to the Commission for their input.

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Public Comment - Items Not on the Agenda

Mayor O'Leary invited public comment.

No cards were received and no speakers came forward.

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Items from the City Council

Chair Stuart asked that the meeting be adjourned in memory of Faith Mantooth, who was an integral part of establishment of the Culver City Dog Park.

Council Member Clarke reported that David Weissman had passed away.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 9:18 p.m., the City Council adjourned its meeting in memory of Faith Montooth to Monday, June 8, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

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Martin R. Cole
CITY CLERK of Culver City, California
EX-OFFICIO CLERK of the City Council
Culver City, California

MICHEÁL O'LEARY
MAYOR of Culver City, California