



**A Regular Meeting of the Parks And Recreation Commission Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 12, 2009**  
**Albany Community Center**  
**Edith Stone Room, 1249 Marin Ave.**  
**7:30 p.m.**

- 1. Call to Order:** 7:32p.m. Commissioners present: Vice Chair Mullarkey, Commissioners: Kindle, Linden, and Trout. Excused Chair Pilch, Commissioners Class, Como.

Staff present: Director Penelope Leach, Urban Forester Tony Wolcott and Planning Manager Jeff Bond

- 2. Approval of Minutes: February 12, 2009**

**Motion:**

Motion to approve minutes from February 12, 2009 with corrections made by Commissioner Kindle and seconded by Commissioner Trout.

Motion carried three in favor and one abstention

- 3. Public Comment:** None

- 4. Announcements/Communications:** Commissioner Linden stated that she wanted to be sure there was a timeline for Terrace Park.

- 5. Director's Report:** Director Leach stated that planning had begun for the City's Fourth of July event and that groups were invited to participate. Groups were encouraged to have a booth/activity that supported the "Green, Red White and Blue" Fourth of July theme and to hand out fliers advertising their participation. Applications for participation would be available online or at the Community Center desk after April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Director Leach stated that two Recreation Coordinators had left City employment in the past month. She stated that the positions were not going to be replaced due to economic conditions, and the remaining staff would attempt to pick up the job duties. The reduction in staff would likely have the effect of some tasks being done to a lesser degree, and some things that may not be able to be done.

- 6. Discussion and possible action on matters related to the following items, which could include reports and/or proposed resolutions if any:**

**6-1. Albany High School Garden Request: AHS teachers are requesting a plot of land to build approximately five raised beds:** Julia Schirella, Albany High School teacher, stated that a new program had been developed that would allow the school to begin a garden behind the Veteran's Memorial Building. CONNECT students would help with maintenance and planting. Other school groups like Earth Team and Build On would also help with garden upkeep and the garden would be planned to be effective and sustainable.

Director Leach stated that the Veterans were supportive of the garden site, and Ms. Schirella showed the Commission exactly where the garden would be located.

Commissioner Kindle stated support for the idea, and asked if the Friendship Club could have one of the plots. Ms. Schirella agreed. Commissioner Kindle asked if the surrounding trees would be too much shade. Tony Wolcott stated that no trees would need to be removed. Director Leach stated concern over

fruit trees dropping fruit onto the tennis courts causing maintenance issues and asked for a sketch to scale so the Commission would have a better idea of the space being used. Ms. Schirella acknowledged that fruit droppings may be a problem and agreed to create a sketch. Commissioner Kindle asked that the gardens be carefully planned to be ADA accessible, as there had been problems with accessibility at the Ocean View Community Gardens.

Ms. Schirella stated that further funding and grants needed to be worked on, but the students wanted to begin planning for spring and gardening by the fall if all went as planned.

Commissioner Linden asked about gardening space for students at the Gill tract. Ms. Schirella stated that transportation, monitoring and time made that sight difficult. Commissioner Linden stated that the Master Plan had discussed another area for gardening in Memorial Park, that could possibly be used in the future for expansion.

**Motion:**

Motion to approve the gardening space at Memorial Park for use by Albany High School students and the Friendship Club made by Commissioner Kindle and seconded by Commissioner Trout. Motion carried all in favor.

**6-2. Commission Meeting Time Change and Date Change for April. The Commission will consider changing the meeting time to 7:00 pm and also consider changing the date of the April meeting:**

Vice Chair Mullarkey stated that the community and staff had expressed concern about meetings being held at a reasonable hour, but Commissioner Como had a conflict with anytime before 7:30pm. Commissioner Linden requested waiting until the next meeting to make the decision, and favored the meetings being over by 9:30. Commissioner Trout stated that it might be difficult to have the meeting over by 9:30 if there was a late start.

Commissioner Kindle stated that it was not good public service to hold over the decision again, and an earlier meeting time meant that any teen that wanted to attend meetings could get home at a reasonable hour. Vice Chair Mullarkey stated that between the two meetings when this item had been on the agenda, all the Commissioners had stated their preference.

**Public Comment:** An Albany resident asked why any agenda items concerning teens could not be on the agenda early. Commissioner Kindle stated that the meeting hours should be reasonable enough for them to participate through the whole process if necessary.

**Motion:**

Motion to change the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to 7:00 pm to offer greater participation by the community made by Commissioner Kindle and seconded by Commissioner Trout. Motion carried 3 in favor and 1 opposed.

Commissioner Linden stated that she would prefer consensus.

Director Leach stated that she would send out an email to the Commission offering dates for rescheduling the April meeting.

**6-3. Property at 842 Masonic Avenue, Albany: Council has asked the Commission to advise them on the acquisition of 842 Masonic as a possible expansion of the Albany Senior Center:** Director Leach introduced Planning Manager Jeff Bond. Manager Bond stated that the City Council had

authorized questioning the Parks and Rec Commission as well as the Planning and Zoning Commission, as to whether the acquisition of the home should be pursued for expansion of the Senior Center.

The additional space would add approximately 2000 square feet to the Senior Center, to serve more people and was centrally located. The Planning and Zoning Commission had already endorsed the idea at an earlier meeting, and the Council was looking for direction from the Park and Rec Commission as well.

Manager Bond stated that the property was not in good shape, and would need to be torn down and rebuilt for public use. Commissioner Kindle asked for identification of funding, and how long it would take to accomplish the rebuild. Manager Bond stated that it was his guess that it would take approximately \$500, 000 to rebuild a functional adequate space.

Director Leach stated that possible-funding sources included; about \$170,000 in park in lieu of fees, \$65,000 in CDBG money, Proposition WW funds and funds from the 2012 expired Community Center bond that could be leveraged against a mortgage. She further stated that the funding would be fully identified for the Council meeting in three weeks. Manager Bond stated that the acquisition represented the best possibility of expanding an existing facility, which was a challenge, as well as a great opportunity.

**Public Comment:** Albany resident and President of the Friends of Albany Seniors, Julia Lee, stated that the Friends had passed a motion in their latest meeting, fully supporting the acquisition of the property for expanded services for seniors.

Albany resident, Clay Larson, stated concern that a significant portion of WW funds would need to be spent on the acquisition, and wanted more fleshed out funding numbers from staff.

Francisco Papalia, an Albany resident that supported senior issues, also stated concern about funding, the loss of tax revenue and timing. He stated the need to give Albany residents an idea of the final outcome in terms of money and time to complete the project. He further stated that he wanted reassurance that the Senior Center was properly funded in its current state before spending money on expansion.

Albany resident and Senior Center attendee, Zion Lee, presented the Commission with a number of letters and a petition signed by over one hundred Albany seniors in support of the acquisition of 842 Masonic. Albany senior yoga instructor Allen Jacinto expressed support for the expansion, stating that his class had expanded over 5 years and could use more room now.

Commissioner Kindle questioned if the Albany Friends thought it might be a better idea to have a second Senior Center in another Albany location, rather than one larger location at Masonic. Julia Lee stated that the location on Masonic was strategically well placed and made it possible for many seniors to walk or take the bus. Director Leach stated that one of the advantages of the current location was that expansion would not require a lot of extra staffing needs.

Commissioner Kindle stated that many Albany residents lived in the Pierce Street area, and it would be a good idea to expand services in that area. He further stated that it would be interesting to know who was using the Senior Center, and where they lived in Albany.

Director Leach suggested that it was possible for the Commission to make a motion to support the expansion in theory, as Planning and Zoning had done.

Commissioner Kindle expressed concern that the acquisition would take up too much of the funds available, and wanted to focus on other possible locations and projects. Vice Chair Mullarkey stated that

it was a good idea to keep the services together in one location. Commissioner Linden stated that the Council would make the final financial decision, but it would be difficult for the Commission to make a supporting motion without more financial information, though she supported the idea.

**Motion:**

Motion to support the concept of the acquisition of the property at 842 Masonic Avenue for the purpose of expanding Senior Center services, with serious reservations about financial feasibility and being locked into funding the Senior Center expansion, jeopardizing other projects identified in the Master Plan made by Commissioner Trout and seconded by Commissioner Linden. Motion carried three in favor and one opposed.

**6-4. Update on Funds available for Parks and Recreation projects including Lighting and Landscape (LLD) funds: Per the Commission's request staff will report on available funds the City has for Parks and Recreation projects. The Commission will also make recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year for LLD funds:** Director Leach stated that it was important to understand what the Commission had to work with, in order to make informed decisions and recommendations to Council by June. She stated that she would come back with more information in future meetings, but the preview of funds and projects statuses were: Prop 12 and Prop 40 monies were frozen, and it was questionable when or if they would be released soon, \$771,363 was available from WW, LLD funds were mostly spent on landscaping and maintenance, Measure R was for open space, creeks and playfields and the amount was not yet formulated but some may be used for Albany Hill maintenance and \$170,000 in "in lieu of" fees.

Vice Chair Mullarkey stated that she and Chair Pilch had discussed the Waterfront Committees method of prioritizing projects, and she would email their method on to those interested. Director Leach stated that she would find out about Measure F money, that she thought was already accounted for.

**6-5. Decomposed Granite (DG) Tree Basins: Update on the possibility of installing DG tree basins around select trees on Solano Avenue:** Director Leach stated that the City was trying to find funds for the DG project, but the Commission could put the project on a priority list until funds became available. Urban Forester Tony Wolcott directed the Commission to some pictures included in the staff report demonstrating the DG bases, and strongly advised using the bases for the health of the trees as well as safety issues. The cost would be approximately \$400/basin treatment.

**6-6. Discussion re Dogs in Parks: Update on community meetings scheduled for each park:** Director Leach summarized that the Terrace and Memorial Parks meetings had the most attendance. There seemed to be congenial consensus at Memorial that for a couple of nights a week, there would be no dogs in the park until after dark, garbage cans and dog bags. Terrace Park citizens opted for signs and self-policing as well as more garbage cans and bags.

**Public Comment:** Terrace Park neighbors stated that they wanted to try interim options, before any other measures were taken. One neighbor stated concern over children and dogs that were still not under voice control. Member of the Waterfront Committee, Francisco Papalia, stated a growing consensus, that many members of the community no longer used the waterfront due to the overwhelming number of dogs. He stated that parents had explained that they were unable to relax at the beach, due to dogs around their children and the rules for dogs needed to be uniform throughout the City. Another member of the public strongly disagreed that all parks should be the same. It was suggested that commercial dog walkers, should have licenses.

Vice chair Mullarkey stated the need for a joint meeting with the Waterfront Committee. Director Leach stated that the waterfront was possibly problematic because it was multi-jurisdictional. Commissioner Kindle stated that despite the fact that the area was multi jurisdictional, it did not preclude Albany from writing citations if necessary. He further stated that he thought rules for the waterfront, even for dogs, was the Waterfront Committees pervue.

Commissioner Linden asked what the next step would be. Director Leach asked for direction in terms of language for the signs for each park. Commissioner Kindle stated that signs with City ordinances should be posted stating leash law, feces and no dogs allowed in children's play areas. Commissioner Linden agreed that basic signs should be posted. Director Leach stated that she did not want to make two sets of signs.

**Public Comment:** A Terrace Park neighbor asked for fences around the play areas, the picnic area, garbage cans, bags and better latches on the openings.

Director Leach stated that she would determine prices for those items and signs, more information and suggestions for signage in a future meeting.

**6-7. Update Ocean View Sports Field Improvements: As recommended by the Commission, Council recently approved the plans for the Ocean View Sports Field improvements. Staff will give an update on the progress of the project.** Director Leach stated that bids had come in high and that the scoreboard could not be included.

**6-8. Update on Renaming Terrace Park to Jewel's Terrace Park: The Council approved the Commission's recommendation to rename Terrace Park to Jewel's Terrace Park. New sign and labor have been donated by Albany's Design-A-Sign owner and his sons.** Director Leach stated that Jewel Okawachi's sons had volunteered to pay for two signs.

**Public Comment:** Peggy McQuaid stated that a plaque should be created stating who Jewel was and her contributions.

**Motion:**

Motion to recommend the addition of a second sign for Jewel Okawachi's Terrace Park made by Commissioner Kindle and seconded by Commissioner Linden. Motion carried all in favor.

**7. Future Agenda Items:** Accessibility of parks, signage for dogs, rules for Terrace Park, Tree Task Force update.

**8. Adjournment: 10:22pm**

*Please note that if you provide your name and address when speaking before the Commission/Committee/Board it will become part of the official public record, which will be posted on the Internet.*

NOTE: Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the City Council/Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the Community Center counter located at 1249 Marin Ave during normal business hours, 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday.

