



**JOINT MEETING
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AND WATERFRONT COMMITTEE
Monday, April 27, 2009
1249 Marin Avenue, Albany 7:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Diehl Papalia So
 Larson Parker

Members Absent: Dann, Granholm
Staff Present: Ann Chaney, Penelope Leach
Others Present: Park and Recreation Commission

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: not applicable

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Caryl O’Keefe – Sierra Club Yodeler has a write up regarding the Voices to Vision sessions, and encourages attendance at more than one session. Encourages the Committee to make a public statement to correct the statement regarding multiple sessions.

4. DISCUSSIONS AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

**4-1 Parks, Recreation, and Open Speak to coverage of the Bulb in the Parks, Recreation, and
Space Master Plan: Open Space Master Plan**

Leach stated that the terms in the Measure WW guidelines can be interpreted broadly, and the bulb/waterfront area are included within the Open Space Master Plan.

**4-2 Measure WW: Discuss proposals for the use of Local Grant Program
 a. P&R Commission allocation - \$771,363
 projects**

Pilch stated that the Commission has taken a similar process as the Committee did for selecting projects. They are currently in process of developing a list of projects to review.
Kindle – priority on assessing projects: areas underserved and populations being underserved – namely Pierce Street. Recreational opportunities for high school age students and other population sectors.
Como - enhancements to the Sr. Center.
Mullarkey – narrowed it to three – underserved populations & areas.
Pilch gave background to the preliminary project list:
Teen Center – expansion
Pierce Street park – strong public interest
Upgrades to waterfront park and completion of the bay trail, Restroom at the waterfront
Solano Avenue street tree plantings, and
community gardens.

Diehl asked if the bay trail could be included within this proposal.
Chaney replied that it is not city owned land and as such could not be included. There may be a land acquisition opportunity under the Measure WW funds for Eastshore State Park.

So asked how many teens use the teen center.

Leach replied that there are approximately 25-35 students, and expanding the center would enable additional uses for teens and other site users. Funds can also be used for land acquisition, including the proposed Pierce Street park land.

Public Comment:

Okawachi – supports Pierce Street Park and expansion of the Teen Center, and a tot lot.

b. Waterfront Committee projects

Diehl stated the Committee has reviewed their individual proposals and identified 3 preferred projects based on agreed upon review criteria. The Committee recommends these projects be submitted to City Council.

Projects were presented:

Larson – improvements to Albany’s Waterfront linear park, as listed in the Open Space Master Plan: 1. Port-a-potty (completed), 2. Drinking fountain near cove, which would require establishment of a potable water line, 3. Establishment of irrigation system, improvements to landscaping and repairing fences. 4. Enhancing the cove and developing signage. 5. Continued maintenance of the park.

Papalia – “An Oasis at the Albany Waterfront” to enhance the “triangle” area (path intersection) adjacent to the cove and seating area. The plan includes improving the triangle area with drought tolerant landscaping, trees, fruit trees, and raised beds. The plan would also require moving bike racks out of the view strip, and incorporating picnic tables and benches. Papalia worked in coordination with Tony Wolcott on selecting plant species that could be planted. Plantings would be conducted with community volunteers and assistance by Tony Wolcott.

Kindle asked if Larson and Papalia’s projects could be combined. Also suggested including handicapped parking at the waterfront.

Diehl asked whether Larson and Papalia would object to their projects being combined. Larson and Papalia stated they would be supportive of projects being combined.

Pilch cautioned about the selection of species to be planted.

Diehl – Albany Bulb Safety enhancements. The project would include development of an assessment to identify and classify rebar issues, and conduct removal of the easiest and most hazardous rebar. The project is consistent with the Eastshore State Park General Plan. Project would make park more useful to park users of all ages. Project funding could be leveraged with oil spill funds if awarded in the future.

Parker asked what the breakdown between assessment and removal. Diehl replied 1/3 for assessment and 2/3 for removal.

Larson suggested the rebar removal include an enhancement to the trails.

So commented that there is public concern about the safety of rebar and that it is not a natural hazard.

Public Comment:

Howard McNenny – asked about native plants included in Papalia’s plan. Would prefer plants that are drought tolerant after initial irrigation.

Jewel Okawachi – supports both Larson & Papalia’s projects, with a priority for enhancing the cove area. An increase in benches and tables would be very helpful for park users.

Caryl O’Keefe: supports Larson & Papalia’s projects. Recommends increasing the budget for removing safety hazards at the Bulb.

Pilch asked about maintenance and how to fund maintenance of the enhancements.

Larson replied that the Open Space Master Plan tasks the Park and Recreation Commission to oversee maintenance. Pilch prefers native plants and drought tolerant plants. Pilch also recommends pursuing a permanent restroom facility.

Papalia agreed and recommended City Council submit a letter regarding the restroom issue.

Pilch asked what the Committee would like the Park and Recreation Commission to ultimately do with the project list.

Diehl replied that the Committee would like to include all three projects to City Council, and that they represent approximately 15-25% of total funds available.

So asked what the Commission’s selection criteria would be. Pilch replied that the Commission will be determining selection criteria at their next meeting.

Papalia asked how teen center/senior center improvements and community gardens qualify for Measure WW funding.

Leach replied that the teen center/senior center improvements expands recreational opportunities. Community gardens promotes community building.

- 4-3 Dogs in Albany's parks and Waterfront areas:** Discuss recent outcomes/recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Commission and Waterfront Committee's discussions regarding dogs in Albany's parks.

Papalia stated there are two issues: 1) whether there will be a land transfer of the Bulb to the EBRPD, who have expressed an interest in managing the dog situation prior to considering acquisition. 2) Park users can be intimidated by off-leash dogs and improper cleanup of dog waste. Suggests an increase in enforcement and in trash cans for disposal of dog waste.

Kindle agreed he does not go to the waterfront, and knows several other residents that do not go because of the dog issue. Suggests an increase in regulation to better manage the issue, such as a business permit for dog walkers.

Leach reported that the Commission had a number of public meetings regarding dogs in parks to develop a plan regarding the issue. Memorial park and Terrace park generate the most complaints regarding dogs. Terrace park users requested signage, and dog waste bag dispensers.

Memorial park users requested these items, and asked that dogs not be allowed in the park two evenings a week. An ordinance will be going to City Council for review, with a resolution of specific hours and days.

Diehl asked if the ordinance would apply to the waterfront.

Leach replied it currently does not, and would defer to the Committee if they would like to pursue it.

Diehl suggested not including the waterfront as there should be additional public meetings to discuss dog issues at the waterfront.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

7. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18 p.m.