

Unofficial until adopted by the
Parks and Recreation Commission

December 7, 2017
Action Item III
APPROVE

MINUTES
ALHAMBRA PARKS AND RECREATION
November 2, 2017

The Alhambra Parks and Recreation Commission met at 7:00 p.m. on November 2, 2017, at the Almansor Park Gymnasium 800 S. Almansor Street, Alhambra, CA 91801

Commission members present: Barnett, Guevara, Mumford, Norrington, Seto, Whelan

Commission members absent: Bodeman, Flowers, Martinez

Also attending: Director of Community Services Christopher M. Paulson

Deputy Director Julian Venegas

Deputy Director Michael Macias

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Norrington moved to approve the Minutes of the October 5, 2017 Adjourned Regular Meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Seto the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Ms. Lola Armendariz, resident of Alhambra, requested that the Minutes of October 5, 2017 be revised under Oral Communications, first paragraph, first line to add *Police Officer* in front of Ryan Stringer Memorial bench....

UPCOMING EVENTS

Veterans Day Celebration event is scheduled for November 11, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at the Alhambra Park Veterans Memorial. The Holiday Home Decorating Contest applications will be available in about a week. Judging will take place December 6-8, 2017.

MONTHLY STATUS REPORT

Director Paulson updated the Commission on the items listed in the report.

- Almansor Park Improvement Project under current construction.
- Almansor Park Open Field Lighting is in pre-construction. Work will begin in early December
- Emery Park Restroom Remodel is awaiting determination of availability of funds.
- Story Park Pool Demo and Improvement is awaiting determination of availability of funds.

ALMANSOR PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT POWER POINT PRESENTATION

Director Paulson began with the Mission Statement and introduced the five divisions that comprise the Community Services Department and what they are responsible for. Tonight, the meeting will focus on the Parks Division.

About two years ago, the City sold Fremont Plaza which resulted in approximately \$8 million in HUD Funds after all outstanding obligations were paid off. The City was allowed to keep and

re-invest these funds in the community. The funds must be spent by April 30, 2018 and any unused funds must be returned to HUD. Of this amount, approximately \$4.6 million was invested into street, road, alley repaving projects, crosswalk upgrades, installation of ADA sidewalk ramps and replacement of damaged/uplifted sidewalk. Another \$200,000 was invested in Homeless Outreach resources. The remaining \$3.4 million was set aside to rehabilitate certain parks. Director Paulson stated this was an opportunity to invest back in the City parks. Additional new funding from New Construction Tax will be available for park improvements. Funding from Los Angeles County Measure A which voters approved in November 2016 will be available in July 2018. The City of Alhambra is expected to receive approximately \$500,000 per year and will have the opportunity to apply for competitive grants as well. The following are recently completed HUD funded park projects:

- Almansor Park Playground Resurfacing Project \$108,000
- Almansor Park Ballfield Restroom Renovation - \$175,000
- Emery Park Playground Replacement Project - \$270,000

The Almansor Park Field Lighting Project - \$196,000 – construction to start in late November.

Unfortunately, Alhambra Park and Story Park do not qualify for HUD funding due to their proximity to South Pasadena and San Marino which are cities with a higher income bracket.

Director Paulson explained that for the community outreach portion of the meeting, there are five different stations which include three possible projects for the completion of the renovation project at Almansor Park, one wish list for Almansor Park and one wish list for all the other parks in the city.

- Dog Park at Almansor Park
- Batting Cages at Almansor Park
- Fitness Area at Almansor Park
- Almansor Park Wish List
- Wish List for All Parks

The public is invited to go to each station and speak with staff to get information and give their input about that particular project. They are also encouraged to let staff know what they would like to see in Almansor Park in the future as well as what they would like to see at other parks in Alhambra. Staff will allow a maximum of one hour for the public to visit all the stations. After the meeting reconvenes, there will be an opportunity for those who wish to speak and address the Commission to do so.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Lola Armendariz, resident of Alhambra, asked if staff had given any more thought to her request for signage at the Veterans Memorial and the Officer Ryan Stringer Memorial bench that these are memorials and people should be respectful. She stated some people use the bench as an exercise bench, to lay on, to eat on and place personal items on which is not appropriate.

Mr. Arturo Hernandez, resident of Alhambra, asked that code enforcement patrol the parks after 6:00 p.m. because many people bring their dogs to the park in the evenings. Some dogs are on leashes and others are not and the owners let them run around. Last Saturday he was attacked by

a pit bull that was not on a leash at Almanson Park. The owner did not seem concerned and Mr. Hernandez states that one of his children would not have been able to get away from the dog. He felt the dog park was a good idea.

Ms. Debra Garcia, resident of Alhambra, thanked the Commission and staff for this wonderful event and the opportunity to receive public input from the community. Ms. Garcia spoke in favor of the dog park. As a new dog owner she sees the benefits of having somewhere for dog owners to take their pets to walk and play and said it also is a good place for people to connect and meet in a responsible setting and somewhere where their dogs are welcome

Ms. Bertha Rivera, resident of Alhambra, stated that she has also witnessed people bringing their dogs to Almanson Park in the evenings with and without leashes. She said people ignore the signs about no dogs in the park. Dogs get into fights sometimes. She did not feel it was a good idea to have a dog park at Almanson Park because of the liability. There are too many people at that park as it is and too many children that are there for sports. A better suitable location would be Burke Heritage Park because there is not a lot of people there.

Mr. Pi-erh (Pierre) Lin, resident of Alhambra, brought up two issues. The first is that he plays tennis at Alhambra Park on a regular basis and stated that the chain link fence around the tennis courts is broken on the bottom and the balls get out of the court through there and players have to run after the balls. He has brought up this issue with staff on several occasions and there has not been any resolution to this. Mr. Lin also expressed concern about the restrooms needing renovation, homeless people hanging out in the restrooms and until recently there was always a shortage of soap and paper towels in the restroom. The second issue brought up by Mr. Lin was a request that the City convert one of the tennis courts at Alhambra Park into a pickle ball court. Alhambra Park has five tennis courts and one tennis court converted to another use would not impact tennis play significantly. Mr. Lin stated that one tennis court can be converted into four pickle courts and the cost to do this would not be significant. He was told the cost to restripe the tennis court into four pickle courts would be approximately \$1,000 plus the cost of the four nets. Mr. Lin stated this is the new phase and everyone is getting onboard to play pickle ball. Alhambra Park would be the first in Alhambra to have a pickle court and could be used as a prototype.

Ms. Leslie Levy, resident of Alhambra, states she is not in favor of a dog park at Almanson Park. There are many different types of birds and ducks at this park and they would not co-exist with dogs. She is also a tree and nature lover and asked why the fitness apparatus could not be set in a natural setting of grass and in between trees without rubberized surface. She stated there is a need for more trees and exercise. She was in favor of keeping the pools open from April to October because there are many people who enjoy swimming for exercise and the weather is still warm during that time. She would like to see rubberized area around the pool so that it was easier for people to get out of the pool. She would like to see more aquatic classes such as water exercises and such where there would be greater usage of the pool. Ms. Levy stated that the beams below the roof of the bathhouse need to be replaced due to termite damage.

Vice Mayor Jeffrey Maloney said it was great to see this type of meeting that involved the community. There were many great ideas brought up tonight and the challenge would be to fill all these worthy activities into the existing park space that the city has. He stated that when he was campaigning for City Council, he received a lot of feedback from the residents who said

there was a need for a dog park in Alhambra. Vice Mayor Maloney said there is a need for more parks in the community.

Councilmember David Mejia stated he supported longer pool hours and time frame. He liked the pickle ball idea. He stated all the suggestions made by the public were great ideas.

Mr. Daniel Xavier, resident of Alhambra, spoke in favor of the dog park. He stated he currently takes his dog to a dog park in Pasadena and felt that Almansor Park would be a good location for a dog park because it is convenient and there is available parking in the immediate area.

Ms. Lucy Bañuelos, resident of Alhambra, is a board member of the Alhambra American Little League and spoke as a resident and parent. She spoke in favor of the batting cages.

COMMISSION ORALS

Commissioner Norrington commented that all these things are good for the community, but there is a need for additional parking for all the proposed uses at Almansor Park.

Commissioner Barnett stated that the Alhambra Historical Society was mentioned as a location but he did not think it was an actual park.

Director Paulson clarified that Burke Heritage Park was an actual park and the Historical Museum is City park property. It would not be impossible to put something there but the City would need to take into consideration that it is bordered with residences on two of the four sides.

Commissioner Whelan stated these were all good comments and they would be taken into consideration.

Commissioner Guevara thanked staff for all their hard work in putting together this community outreach meeting. He thanked the community for coming out tonight and giving their input.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Whelan moved to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Seto, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.