



The monthly meeting of the Inglewood Parks and Recreation Commission was convened on Thursday, July 8, 2004, in the City Council Chambers, located on the 9th floor, of Inglewood City Hall. Commissioner Norma Smith presiding called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Roll Call

Present:

Commissioner Norma Smith - Chairperson
Commissioner Jamie Gutierrez – District III
Commissioner Henry Brown – District IV
Commissioner Willie Agee – At Large

Absent

Commissioner Cindy Giardina – District I

Staff:

Kevin Hawkins, Director, Parks Recreation and Community Services
Sandra Green, Administrative Secretary
Danita Meshack, Senior Administrative Analyst
James Henry, Senior Recreation Supervisor
Trina Tyson, Program Assistant

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JUNE 3, 2004

A motion for approval of the minutes from June 3, 2004 was made by Commissioner Agee and seconded by Commissioner Brown. Motion passed.

Public Comments

Diane Sambrano stated issues at Center Park has been resolved thanks to staff and police presence. People will learn that when they are in the City of Inglewood they must abide by City Rules. School District would like to get their one-way agreement.

Communications

None.

Directors Report

Summer Food

Trina Tyson, Program Assistant stated the Summer Food Program began on Monday, June 28, 2004 and is well underway. Last year 600 meals were served daily and the Department is anticipating 700 meals a day this year. The addition of an arts and crafts component has truly been beneficial to the program. The Community is really enjoying the crafts and the food. The goal has been to increase participation at each site. The level of participation is low in District 4 at Monroe Middle School where only 37 meals are served per day. Ms. Tyson stated that low participation is probably due to lack of visibility and operating in a “hidden venue”. Tremendous efforts are underway to recruit participants for the location and staff is looking at outreach strategies. Ms. Tyson reminded the Commissioners’ that the summer food program distribution sites are Monroe Middle School, Rogers Park, Lockhaven Community Center, Darby Park, Ashwood Park, and Vincent Park. The Summer Food Program will be audited so staff is complying with all state regulations.

Summer VISTA’s

Trina Tyson stated we have a partnership with UCLA and every year the Department receives summer VISTA’s who serve as volunteers and conduct different programs in the City. This year VISTA’s will be offering ESL, dance and computer classes.

Trina Tyson stated the Senior Center received a new vehicle to deliver meals. Seniors and drivers are very pleased.

Senior Meals Vehicle

Kevin Hawkins, Director stated the Commission is well aware of the problems with the senior meals vehicle. The previous vehicle was a late 80's or early 90's model and in need of replacement. The Department was able to access one-time-funds and the Public Works Department assisted in locating a very functional vehicle. The Mayor and Council Members approved the purchase.

SHAPE

Kevin Hawkins stated that SHAPE (Student Heightening Academic Performance through Education) started off as a mentoring program using UCLA students to provide mentoring and outreach services to youth at Rogers Park. Due to State budget cuts the program was affected. However when the Consolidated Action Plan was presented to the Mayor and Council Members the SHAPE program was one of several recommended for funding using Community Development Block Grant funds.

Director Hawkins also stated that a draft resolution calling for increased funding of Departmental programs, activities and services was prepared and presented to the Commissioners for consideration and adoption. If adopted, the resolution will be forwarded to the Mayor and Council Members to ensure continued funding of the SHAPE program.

Recreation

Summer Activities

James Henry, Senior Recreation Supervisor stated Summer Day Camps are being held at Lockhaven Community Center, Rogers, Darby, and Vincent Parks and are near full capacity.

Mr. Henry stated the Vincent Park swimming pool has been resurfaced thanks to the efforts of Commissioners and staff. As a result of this work, there have

not been any incidents of children cutting themselves in the swimming pool. The pool is open seven days of the week and has experienced a great turnout.

Mr. Henry stated that construction of a Skate Park at Darby Park is underway. Skate Parks will also be constructed at Rogers and Vincent Parks. The community will be served in a great way by the addition of these facilities.

Mr. Henry stated that during the month of July there will be free soccer, football, baseball and tennis play at Vincent, Rogers, Darby, Ashwood and North Parks.

Movie in the Park

Mr. Henry stated that the first presentation of the "Movie in Park" will be offered to the community on Saturday, July 24 and 26, 2004, at Vincent Park on the Soccer Field.

Jazz Concert

Mr. Henry stated that plans are underway for the Second Annual Jazz Festival at Vincent Park. It is anticipated that this years' event will be a success. Mr. Henry encouraged Commissioners to come out and visit park sites and recreation centers during the summer months and check out the various activities.

Commissioner Brown stated that during the last Council Meeting Commissioner Agee expressed concerns about soccer field traffic. Commissioner Brown asked if the Department had addressed the concerns brought to the attention of the Commission regarding soccer, football and baseball fields.

Soccer Fields

James Henry stated that in the past soccer play was permitted at Rogers, Darby, and Vincent Parks. The Recreation Supervisors met with members of the soccer community and informed them of plans to relocate soccer activity to the field at Vincent Park. The Department has been successful in bringing about the desired change at all locations except Darby Park because the park has a multipurpose field that can be used for soccer play. Currently the majority of soccer play is occurring at Vincent Park.

Commissioner Smith asked what kind of grass or turf is being used for the fields.

James Henry stated that there have not been any changes at the fields, but the procedures were changed. The two soccer fields at Vincent Park are not open to the public at the same time. Field use is alternated to preserve their condition.

Kevin Hawkins stated that at one point there was a discussion about reseeding the soccer field or using artificial turf. However generating funding for the fields has been an issue and is something the Department continues to look at. There are upcoming grant programs that will be targeted. At present there are no plans for installation of artificial turf.

Kevin Hawkins stated that what has been done at Darby Park is to make sure the fields are being used for the expressed purpose. Only Darby Park has a multipurpose field and play is critical there. A procedure has been implemented to make sure groups are properly registered for field. The Department is continuing to address the concerns. Mr. Hawkins also stated that usage patterns are being addressed by an athletic field use policy that the Commissioners adopted twice. The policy will allow the Department to become smarter in how it allocates usage of athletic fields because open space is a premium.

4th of July Celebration

James Henry stated that once again the 4th of July Celebration was an outstanding success, even though the crowd was not as large as in the past. Attendance was probably impacted by the fact that the holiday was on a Sunday.

Jazz Festival

Commissioner Brown asked if the bathroom facilities would be available for the upcoming Jazz Festival.

Kevin Hawkins stated that last year no complaints were received about the restroom facilities. The Department made sure restrooms were clean and applied a fresh coat of paint to the facilities. In addition, the agreement

between the City and event promoter requires that adequate portable restrooms be provided.

Commissioner Gutierrez stated would like to commend staff for a job well done in maintaining and keeping kids involved with programs during the summer. The Commissioner stated that he drove by Ashwood Park and it was full of kids. It is beautiful to see that kids are kept busy throughout the summer.

Kevin Hawkins asked if Commissioners received information about the Nike Go Clinic that will be held on Saturday, July 10, 2004, at Rogers Park.

Commissioner Agee stated he spoke with a parent who said there is gang activity at Vincent Park. Even though it's not so bad at this time, if nothing is done, the situation will be out of control.

James Henry stated that with the permission of his superiors he has contacted the Police Chief and other Inglewood Police Officers. Mr. Henry stated gang members are a lot more visible at this time, but he believed the Police Department had a good idea of what's happening.

Commissioner Smith stated that if any Commissioner had something to say that was not related to the subject at hand, to save the comments for the end of the meeting so the agenda could be followed.

Kevin Hawkins asked if Commissioners received an invite to the Nike-Go Clinic...there were only 2 R.S.V.P.'s.

Kevin Hawkins stated equipment is in the process of being delivered. At the last Commission meeting staff reported that the two larger mowers were down and the Department was not able to obtain any mowers by loan. Parks are looking a lot better. Despite budget constraints staff receives the same, if not more, requests for tree trimming. Again, all shops understand the need to do more with less, but the provision of basic equipment/resources is key. Due to the elimination of a 5th tree trimming crew, designated to handle special requests from Administration, Commissioners, and the City Council, regular crews must stop their normal maintenance schedules in order to address the special requests. The concern is that you may see claims and/or liability show up in other areas from the deviation in maintenance due to heavier tree branches breaking. Overall Parks Division staff is doing a great job.

Kevin Hawkins stated Danita Meshack is the Administrative Services Coordinator. When you see the excellent resolution of a research project that our Department prepared, Danita is responsible for it. Danita's role has been increasing and has done a lot of training and outreach. I want her to give a brief overview of the amphitheater. There is also a field use form component that addresses park facilities and facilities in general. Individually we have brought several of these items to this Commission over the years even going back to Councilman Franklin, but not as a complete package such as this. If the Commission and subsequently the Mayor and Council Members do not approve the use of the athletic field use and all the various permits and ordinances that may govern some field use, then we will not be able to accomplish the stated desires of the Commission. For example as relates to the Jazz Festival, last year it was a co-sponsorship and this year the agreement or the relationship has changed and now the promoter is renting the amphitheater. There was no mechanism to allow the promoter to rent the amphitheater. We had to create something that will allow renting of the amphitheater. There are some issues about the usage of the parks for large groups that may or may not qualify for resident groups, which we are trying to address. Going back to the field use policy, making sure that our fields are protected and used in a manner that preserves our resources and will allow us to monitor the usage.

Danita Meshack, Administrative Services Coordinator, provided an overview and summary of the Staff Report, Ordinance and Amphitheater Rental Permit prepared by the Department in collaboration with the City Attorney's Office (AMENDMENT OF INGLEWOOD MUNICIPAL CODE SECTIONS 2-270, 2-271, 2-271.1, 2-273 AND 8.53.3).

The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department is responsible for the management and oversight of most facilities available for public use. The Department's ability to manage these sites is considerably impacted by the provisions of the Inglewood Municipal Code (IMC). The Staff report recommends adoption of an ordinance to:

1. Make conference rooms at recreation centers available to non-resident groups,
2. Require a refundable damage/security deposit for public use of all City facilities,
3. Define and establishing the acceptable duration and hourly fee for tournament play,

4. Modify the use fee for provision of outdoor lighting at recreation centers, and
5. Establish a fee schedule and policy and procedure for rental of the Amphitheater at Edward Vincent, Jr. Park.

The changes will promote the Department's goal of continuing to market the use of City facilities while limiting the impact to the General Fund. The Amphitheater Rental Permit provides the City with a unique opportunity to showcase and promote the Amphitheater as a hospitable and attractive venue for hosting high quality productions while celebrating arts, music and culture in the South Bay.

In response to concerns expressed by Commissioner Agee Ms. Meshack stated that the Department had responded by preparing an Athletic Field Use Policy to regulate resident and non-resident use of baseball, football, and soccer fields throughout the City. The policy was presented to the Commissioners for review and approval on more than one occasion. Upon approval and adoption of the ordinance amending the Municipal Code, staff will seek to immediately implement the Athletic Field Use Policy.

Commissioner Smith asked how do we decide if the cleaning fee is \$200 as opposed to \$1,000.

Danita Meshack stated she spoke with Sabrina Barnes, Recreation Superintendent and the Site Manager of the Performing Arts Center in Redondo Beach. Based upon the discussions it was recommended that a flexible range be adopted based on the size of the event, the number of hours of use and the number of staff required to clean the site. The basic aim is to make sure the City recuperates a portion of its labor costs.

Commissioner Smith stated this is a great idea and would like to commend staff.

Commissioner Brown asked what is needed from Commissioners.

Commissioner Smith asked Kevin Hawkins if he was calling for a vote from Commissioners.

Kevin Hawkins stated not yet.

Commissioner Agee stated the main problem that we have in the City is the destruction of parks by bandit soccer players and there should be some type of regulation. The Commissioner stated that if we are going to regulate baseball and football players why not regulate soccer players.

Danita Meshack stated that she was aware of the concern and has been working on measures to respond to the matter. She stated that the ordinance before the Commissioners would create a rental process for the amphitheater, and resolve a number of inconsistencies and deficiencies regarding the Department's ability to regulate its athletic fields.

Danita Meshack read the first paragraph of the ordinance that read: Effective (date) of 2004, all persons interested in reserving a baseball, football, or soccer at City parks including, but not limited to Darby, Rogers, and Vincent Park for game play, practice, or tournament play should be provided with an application package consisting of a number of things. It will be a reservation form, rules regarding athletic field usage, and all of that. How we intend to regulate and respond to your concerns in regards to field use for soccer play is through the athletic field use policy. I believe when the ordinance was adopted it never mentioned soccer fields, and part of it can be because we really didn't have them at the time this was adopted. We are definitely going to implement this policy once the ordinance is approved. We are getting there step by step.

Commissioner Agee stated this has been something that I have been working on and it the bandits who are out there playing, not the registered soccer players. It is just grown adult men that go out there and play soccer, and all they need is a piece of green grass. They are hostile and mean people.

Commissioner Brown stated he had the opportunity to talk to Recreation Supervisors and was informed that they have the situation in hand. I know that we need both soccer fields. Staff doesn't seem to believe that there is a problem, so I am confused. I am very aware of the situation of the fourth district, but it seems like there is a win-win situation with softball, baseball, and fields and does not seem to be a problem.

Commissioner Smith stated Commissioner Agee is concerned with the fields being torn by cleats because adults are using the soccer fields on the weekends.

Commissioner Agee stated not only on the weekends but on weekdays too.

Kevin Hawkins stated if the Commissioners recommend approval of the ordinance, it would be a mechanism to get what they were asking for. It would also give the Department a tool for accomplishing what we all want, which is to maintain our fields for those who want to enjoy them.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the recommendation to amend Inglewood Municipal Code Sections 2-270, 2-271, 2-271.1, 2-273 and 8.53.3 and Commissioner Gutierrez, Brown and Agee voted in favor. Motion passed.

Kevin Hawkins stated at the last meeting he mentioned the desire to bring something to the Commissioners in support of our efforts. I explained that we were in the process of budget reviews and with so many other agencies internally as well as externally there is a serious competition for limited resources, so as a Body our hopes were that the Commission review, make comments if necessary, and adopt the resolution before it goes to City Council. We just completed the 8-month budget review and in the previous year all Departments were asked to reduce operating budgets by 5 percent. Our Department was the first Department to reach that mandate. We are still operating at the same service levels prior to the reductions and we are always striving to be more innovative and creative in terms of our outreach, services, and quality of our programs. Budget officers basically told us that they cannot give us anything else at this time, but if you had to request something, what would you ask for. Our response was simply; directly they couldn't provide the Department with additional resources, but indirectly they could by focusing on law enforcement. Leading this meeting we had someone in the public talk about the difference in the police presence at Center Park. Graffiti, illegal activity, and gang activity, which are reported at some parks, are all law enforcement-related issues. If we had the resources we would be able to resolve a lot of problems. We need to make the case, we need to be more strategic on how we approach this, that we do deserve a place at the table, that we deserve a better share of resources in order to provide a greater array of services and programs in the community, that so richly deserves more. So, that is the background on this resolution. I recommend for Commissioners to consider it, make any changes and if it is in good condition, adopt it.

Commissioner Gutierrez stated that he read the resolution and believes that there should be mandatory forms of funding.

Commissioner Smith called for a vote on the motion to support the Resolution for Increased Funding and Allocation of Additional Resources for departmental program, activities and services. Commissioners Gutierrez, Brown and Agee voted in favor. Motion passed.

Kevin Hawkins stated we have an ongoing issue with the Inglewood Unified School District with allegations of a proposal for IUSD to expand the property line of Worthington and Center Park. As you know, the City has invested a lot of money into that facility, fencing, playground equipment, restrooms, and ongoing maintenance, which IUSD uses for their recreational activities. However, residents are not allowed to use the basketball court and other facilities on the IUSD side. It is believed that when a fence was constructed separating IUSD and City property, boundaries were at issue. If this proposal is true that the Inglewood Unified School District wants takes back that portion of property I will be bringing something to this Commission as a representative from the public suggested. These concerns have been brought to the City Administrator and there is an interagency meeting that he holds with the school's superintendent. I have made our City Administrator aware of the concerns and he has promised to address this matters with the superintendent. Again, I believe in terms of the use of that facility residents are not getting their share. When the open space is utilized as a playground area for the school, residents are not allowed to utilize the basketball courts. We are responsible for the maintenance. The community reported illegal soccer play by the IUSD and after talking to and apprising the new principle about the situation, the play continued resulting in residents not being able to utilize the park in that area and additional cost to the City to restore the fields. I believe that there is suppose to be mutual benefits to both parties and joint agreements for our facilities (Center Park, Morningside High, etc.) should be established (which we are working on). Especially in district 4. Also, I have attempted to discuss this matter with the IUSD, Tim Brown, CFO in particular and have not had my call returned.

Commissioner Brown stated we cannot deal with all the problems, and we need to make sure that Council is aware.

New Business

None.

Unfinished Business

None.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

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