



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

**Wednesday, March 17, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.
700 Alma Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025
Burgess Recreation Center**

CALL TO ORDER at 6:32

ROLL CALL – (Chair) J. Tooley, (Vice Chair) K. Blythe arrived at 6:38, J. Cebrian, P. Maurano and N. Naclerio

Absent: Kristi Breisch, Andy Kirkpatrick

Other Present: Cherise Brandell, Community Services Director;
Nancy Nuckolls, Social Services Manager;
Aaron Johnson, Senior Recreation Supervisor;
David Hill, Interim Sports Program Coordinator

A. PUBLIC COMMENT #1 (Limited to 30 minutes)

There were no public comments.

B. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of the Minutes dated [February 17, 2010](#)

Motion / Second (Cebrian/Maurano) to approve the minutes of February 17. Passes 5-0.

C. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Review of new Sports Field Policy ([staff report](#) and presentation by Aaron Johnson and David Hill)

Cherise Brandell suggested that the commission members review the policy and provide input and suggestions. Cherise explained for the public that the Staff came up with the policy after the Parks and Recreation Commission suggested changes on how to allocate fields. Aaron Johnson recommended that Parks and Recreation Commission provide input and suggestions on the policy, the purpose of which is to resolve conflicts in field allocations. Aaron said that it is important to create and implement a system to allocate space, time and fields, as currently the fields are assigned by staff through matrix and informal agreements. Aaron pointed out that there is a need to establish a more formal, transparent process to approve and validate the groups to use the fields. The goal is to accommodate the growing youth sport organizations and all City of Menlo Park residents and the demand for field space and time. The policy suggests that applicants submit a form to validate the group as a valid user group. Applications would be approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission once a year. The policy also includes how the field would be allocated and what user fees would be.

The further discussion between staff and Commission included current scheduling practices in terms of field and time allocation. Aaron explained that the larger groups would get the priority over the smaller groups but at the time of the registration process the exact numbers of residents and nonresidents may not be available. The staff would work with all of the groups and

try to accommodate everyone's needs, but there currently is no formal policy. In the future staff will have to resolve problems if multiple groups request the same time and field. There is an appeal process explained under section 9, and field use priority under section 7.

Comments from public:

Vince Bressler with AYSO (American Youth Soccer Association) spoke about the importance of implementing the new policy but would like to see a clarification of how much field space is needed for certain groups. Mr. Bressler also spoke about developing an online system for field reservations.

Jeannine Morgan, Field Manager for the Menlo Park Strikers spoke about sharing the information between staff and users. Ms. Morgan feels that it would be convenient to have access to fields' schedules online. She would like to encourage the Commission and Staff to communicate more with the groups. Ms. Morgan added that club sports are growing and they need field space, so including the minimum residency requirement guarantees that Menlo Park youth groups will be able to practice close to home. She believes that there has to be a minimum residency requirement to use the fields.

Ken Johnson AYSO (American Youth Soccer Association) Field Coordinator spoke about the inconsistency of numbers of Menlo Park residents. His group has around 15% non-residents and believes that the residency should be broken down into school districts.

Robin Plankinton with MAASL (Menlo Atherton Adult Soccer League) represents a smaller women's soccer group and hopes that the needs of smaller groups could be taken into consideration.

Antoine Brooks of East Palo Alto thinks that percentage split between residents and non-residents is a flaw. Mr. Brooks said that the numbers get skewed and the better approach would be to require a certain number of residents per team.

Further discussion between the Commission members, public and staff was about other ideas for shaping the policy.

Motion / Second (Tooley / Cebrian) to support the Field Use Policy and incorporate some minor feedback. The feedback embraces:

- a) **Encouraging the youth user groups/leagues to include scholarships.**
 - b) **Establishing and implementing an on-line schedule.**
2. Recommendation to waive the naming policy for the new gymnasium and name the building the Arrillaga Family Gymnasium ([staff report](#)) ([policy](#))

Motion / Second (Tooley / Blythe) to approve the item as recommended in the Staff Report.

3. MCC Sub Committee – Recommendation to the City Council on Menlo Children's Center financial goals and management ([staff memo](#))

The Menlo Children's Center Preschool Program achieved a 100% cost recovery of budgeted costs as recommended to City Council in June, 2009. Last month there was a discussion about sustainability and potentially changing the benchmark for cost recovery to full costs, and now the issue is brought for closure. Nancy Nuckolls presented the matrix showing the full costs of the each program based on the budget and revenues. Nancy explained the Overhead category as representing a lump sum that includes custodian's costs, vehicle costs, city manager's office,

parks and recreation commission, activity guide costs, planning department, finance department, personnel department and Menlo Park Police Department. The overhead value stayed the same since FY07/08 because the expenses were steady and there were no salary increases. Nancy pointed out that eliminating the program will eliminate the revenue that covers those costs.

Comments from public:

Kary Riedel of Menlo Park spoke about her satisfaction with the program services at MCC. Ms Riedel said that she chose to buy a house in Menlo Park because she needed the services that the City offers. She added that she is impressed with the program and grateful that her child has gotten the spot in daycare. Ms. Riedel asked the Commission not to consider privatizing the center, because it overachieved the goal.

Yael Caspi of Menlo Park spoke to emphasize the importance of the Overhead category in the matrix, and the expenses that will remain if the center is privatized. Ms Caspi said that she won't need the MCC services in future but other new parents will. MCC overachieved the goal and should remain with the city.

Antoine Brooks of East Palo Alto spoke about the achieved cost recovery goals. Mr. Brooks added that the city is not in business of childcare, and that is what the city should be proud of the service that it is offering. Mr. Brooks believes that no other program in the city is going to achieve the goal in cost recovery that MCC did.

Maria Kaval of Menlo Park spoke about the low staff turnover rate at MCC. She feels that the staff has done a great job in bringing in more revenues. Ms. Kaval believes that the daycare should be privatized if no families want to sign up for the program.

Osnat Loewenthal of Menlo Park spoke about the social aspect of having a city run program. Ms. Loewenthal explained that Menlo Park families with young children need an affordable program in their city. Ms. Loewenthal added that the numbers are achieved, but is asking the Commission to consider the social aspect and people's needs as well.

Further discussion between Commission members was about meeting the needs of Menlo Park residents in terms of day care. Paula Maurano explained that the numbers presented in the matrix were wrong, and would like to see the program privatized. Paula believes that the mission was to decide whether the city should operate the program or not, but not to provide child care to a small number of residents. James Cebrian said that the goal has been achieved in short time and recognized the improvement. Nick Naclerio pointed out that a portion of General Fund was going into the program and asked if there is another way to expand child care availability in Menlo Park. Jim Tooley agreed with Nick that the program is providing affordable care to only 50 families.

Motion/Second (Tooley / Cebrian) to recognize that MCC exceeded the financial goals for budgeted cost recovery, but the concerns are:

1. The subsidy of \$152,756 for 62 families;
2. The need for council to clarify the unique public purpose of MCC.

D. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

E. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Memorandum from Public Works regarding the [Burgess Park Little League Field](#)

No discussion on this item.

2. Status of new Five Year Capital Improvement Program

CIP will go to final approval on March 23 and will include the suggestions made at the February Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. Placing the Gymnastics renovation on the list would be possible if the funding is identified. The project is listed as Unfunded. Nick Naclerio believes that the building could be remodeled within the Measure T funds.

3. Status of the El Camino Real / Downtown Specific Plan

The plan is moving forward and the public release will be ready for early April.

4. Parks and Recreation fee increases in Master Fee Schedule

On March 23 the City Council will consider the proposed Master Fee Schedule for all City services. The goal is to achieve a higher cost recovery in the programs benefiting individuals and supporting the programs that benefit the entire community. The means to achieve the goal is set by the recently approved Cost Recovery Policy. Nick Naclerio stated that proposed increase for low income families in Belle Haven community is too high. Nancy Nuckolls explained that the staff was looking at the median income within San Mateo County and noted that the low income subsidy included incomes at this level. The increase would affect only those within this median range (currently no one in the program at this level). There are 88 subsidized childcare slots in Belle Haven Child Development Center of the 96.

F. PUBLIC COMMENT #2

No public comments.

G. ADJOURNMENT at 9:32 pm.

Minutes submitted by Jelena Gaines.