

**CITY OF PETALUMA**  
**RECREATION, MUSIC AND PARKS COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

*Wednesday, May 16, 2001*

*Petaluma Community Center  
320 North McDowell Blvd.*

*7:00 p.m.*

***Commissioners Present:*** Arago, Hagen\*, Kates, McCoy, Mobley, Mount

***Commissioners Absent:*** Cader-Thompson

***Staff Present:*** Jim Carr, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Ed Anchordoguy, Parks and Recreation  
Don Phoenix, Parks and Recreation  
Sara Stewart, Parks and Recreation

***Chair\****

---

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** *March 21, 2001*

Steve Arago moved that the minutes be approved as submitted, seconded by Bob Kates, and unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Al Statz**, 102 Sunny Hill Drive – Presented a proposal to organize an annual run/walk/bike event as a fundraiser for the Parks Department. He asked for Commission’s approval to start organizing the event and obtaining sponsors.

**Carr** – Suggested a follow up meeting with Mr. Statz, Don Phoenix, and some community members to consider the feasibility of the proposal.

**Steve Arago** – Recommended that Mr. Statz contact local running clubs.

**Bruce Hagen** – Asked that the proposal be presented to the Bicycle Committee.

**PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - NONE**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**1) Petaluma Swim Center Year-round Use – Status Report (Verbal) – Carr**

**Carr** – Referred to Andy Eber’s proposal for the 2001 swim season distributed to the Commission. The Aquatic Committee would like to work with the City to form an aquatics board to oversee the swim center operations, hire an aquatics director, and have P.G.&E. conduct an energy audit.

1  
2 At a meeting with staff and the Aquatics Committee, Carr suggested the idea of the City contracting  
3 out the pool year round with the City subsidizing it partially for the first few years. Due to the current  
4 state of the budget and per direction of the City Manger, staff will continue to explore the idea. At the  
5 present time, the pool is operating at a deficit of \$ 131,000.  
6  
7 Carr reported that the re-plastering of the pool has been completed and the new chlorination system has  
8 been installed. Even though there have been some problems with the pool chlorination, the pool is  
9 open and is being used.  
10  
11 At this time, he is not recommending any action by the Commission due to the budget situation. There  
12 is a hiring freeze in the City, and the operating budget has been reduced by 10%, which does not  
13 include any utility increases. In addition, additional cuts are anticipated from the State.  
14  
15 The budget hearings for the department will be on May 30 and the City Council will approve the  
16 budget by mid-June.  
17  
18 **Carol Eber** from the Aquatic Committee made positive comments about the pool and emphasized the  
19 importance of marketing the facility in order to generate revenue. She is surprised that there will be no  
20 action on the proposal presented when some of the items are non-cost items such as the free energy  
21 audit from PG&E and the recommendation for an aquatics board.  
22  
23 She suggested that the members chosen to comprise the aquatics board represent all the constituencies  
24 of consumers so that they can bring information and ideas to generate contracts. She asked the  
25 Commission to determine the number of members needed.  
26  
27 Following discussion, Bob Kates volunteered to serve on the aquatics board.  
28  
29 **Bruce Hagen** – Would like to have the energy audit conducted by PG&E in the near future . He  
30 volunteered to work with the aquatics group for a couple of meetings to get the energy audit done and  
31 the board formed.  
32  
33 **Andy Eber** – Spoke in favor of forming the board as soon as possible and presented concerns that if  
34 the Commission does not make a decision, the swim season may slip away and they could lose the  
35 opportunity to generate revenue. So far, they have a contract from the Santa Rosa Junior College to  
36 use the pool next fall, as well as the opportunity to start a masters program and water polo, which will  
37 pay for themselves and generate revenue.  
38  
39 **Bruce Hagen** – Suggested having a joint meeting with staff and the Aquatics Committee at the  
40 Petaluma Swim Center before the next Commission meeting.  
41  
42 John Records from COTS, who manages the use of the locker rooms at the swim center during the  
43 winter months for a homeless shelter, wanted to ensure that the interests of the homeless are  
44 represented through the entire process and plans to attend a future Commission meeting.  
45 He asked Mr. Eber to invite Mr. Records to attend the next Aquatics Committee meeting.  
46  
47 **Ken McCoy** – Suggested that Mr. Records presents to the Commission information regarding the  
48 hours, times, and days COTS uses the facility.  
49

1 **2) McNear Park Playground Project Update (Verbal) - Arago**

2  
3 **Carr** – Reported that the drainage has been installed and staff is preparing a bid packet that will be  
4 sent out next week. Due to the volunteer efforts of Steve Arago and Ken Berman, the City has saved  
5 approximately \$40,000.

6  
7 **3) Lucchesi Park Soccer Field – Fee Structure Review – Carr/Phoenix**

8  
9 **Don Phoenix** – Prior to the City Council setting rates for Lucchesi Park field, staff projected a possible  
10 income of \$36,000 from the use of the field. During the first eight months, \$24,000 has been collected.  
11 Staff receives positive comments from the public about the field and a number of other communities  
12 are interested in the facility. He asked for questions or comments about the field.

13  
14 George Nazzal, a representative of Petaluma United Soccer, on behalf of the organization, thanked  
15 staff for providing Lucchesi field, which is a great place for children to play soccer. The organization  
16 holds two soccer tournaments each year, one in July and one in August, and each tournament hosts 48  
17 teams. Approximately 2,000 people will visit Petaluma, go to local restaurants, stay in hotels, and  
18 cater to merchants. Each team is charged \$260 to enter tournaments and he explained their expenses.

19  
20 He asked the Commission to consider deferring the fees charged to the organization to use the field,  
21 since the requested fee to rent Lucchesi would cause financial hardship. The organization is not in the  
22 business to make money but to provide children with a positive and rewarding experience.

23  
24 Commissioners discussed a number of alternatives. Following discussion, Carr said that according to  
25 his experience, if fees are deferred for one organization there would be no stop to the exceptions for  
26 others. Other youth organizations in the community use that field. Since the field can also be used  
27 during the winter months, staff is receiving an increasing amount of requests for children and adult  
28 tournaments. The fees collected go into a holding account and will be used for field replacement.

29  
30 He thinks that the City has tried very hard to improve and provide facilities for the youth of this  
31 community. Approving this exception will go against the efforts of staff, this Commission, and the  
32 City Council.

33  
34 **Voorhees Mount** – Concurred with Carr about setting a precedent. Fees are used to pay for the field  
35 and its maintenance.

36  
37 **Bruce Hagen** – Given the current state of the budget, the fact that the field has not been used for a full  
38 year, and the demand for the facility, he is inclined at this time to leave things the way they are and  
39 consider the request again in a few months or a year.

40  
41 **Carr** – Suggested that Mr. Nazzal explore the possibility of obtaining sponsorship from service clubs.

42  
43 **4) Brody Property – Proposed Park Site Plan (Verbal) - Anchordoguy**

44  
45 **Ed Anchordoguy** - Per Commission's recommendation, Ryder Companies will be developing the 3-  
46 acre park between the railroad right-of-way, Sonoma Mountain Parkway, and Corona Creek. The  
47 developer plans to build the park on the first phase of their housing development. He asked the  
48 Commission for input.

1 Commissioners discussed the possibility of using the site to develop a soccer training facility,  
2 presented concerns about the large amount of turf and talked about the need to develop a more creative  
3 park design.

4  
5 The following was suggested:

- 6  
7 • Leave the open area and reduce the amount of turf.  
8 • Consider other uses such as a playground, grove of trees and increased parking.  
9 • Develop a configuration of 60' x 85' to accommodate a soccer field.  
10 • Develop a more creative design.

11  
12 **Steve Arago** –To break up the turf, he suggested incorporating mounds of bark mulch, shrubs or  
13 ground cover, which will create some elevational changes and views. Because the park has a flat side,  
14 he suggested developing some horizontal and vertical curvature. He suggested that the Commission  
15 use the park as an opportunity to implement some design standards and use the Tracy Guidelines for  
16 Community Parks to determine the number of trees needed in the park.

17  
18 **Ed Anchordoguy** – Will be presenting the developer with the Commission's suggestions and asking  
19 them to prepare three different options to be presented to the Commission.

20  
21 **NEW BUSINESS**

22  
23 **1) Magnolia Proposed Park Site Presentation – Bill Phillips**

24  
25 **Steve Arago** – Has been working on this project for a long time as a Commissioner and also as a  
26 private consultant, so he needs to recuse himself.

27  
28 **Carr** – Introduced Bill Phillips who is a representative of the Committee for a Nature Park (CNP).

29  
30 **Bill Phillips** – Presented a topographical model of Magnolia Nature Park. He said that with the current  
31 demand for greater park activity diversity, the CNP is suggesting usage of the park to include an off-  
32 road mountain bike trail, walking trails, a transverse mountain-climbing practice wall, Bocce courts  
33 and a small pond, which will aid flood control toward Jessie Lane. The park is not an opportunity to  
34 add flat-land park acreage, but rather a unique moment to preserve open space and serve both City and  
35 County children and seniors.

36  
37 After providing background information about the site, he distributed a packet of information to the  
38 Commission and reviewed its contents.

39  
40 He asked that the Commission consider recommending to the City Council that the site be developed  
41 as a nature park and for support if any funds are possible through State Proposition 12.

42  
43 Members of the CNP spoke in favor of the park and against the housing development.

44  
45 Commissioners discussed the need for parks on the west side of town, possible uses of the nature park,  
46 and budget concerns.

47

1 Mr. Phillips said that in order to obtain input from all possible sources, the committee plans to send a  
2 survey to the community, speak with Senior Recreation Coordinator Trina Ramirez in regards to senior  
3 walks and facilities, and solicit input from the Bike Committee.  
4

5 **Carr** – The public hearings for the competitive grants portion of Proposition 12, which is the park  
6 bond money, are supposed to be announced this month. In June or July, the City will obtain more  
7 information.  
8

9 He asked Mr. Phillips to consider if the type of facilities he is planning to develop are compatible with  
10 the neighborhood. He believes that these type of uses would encourage a number of drivers from the  
11 County or other cities to the site for competitions, which might be something that the neighborhood  
12 may not like.  
13

14 **Bruce Hagen** – Recommended placing this item on the agenda for the next meeting so that the  
15 Commission can have the opportunity to visit the site before making a recommendation to the City  
16 Council.  
17

18 **2) Parks and Recreation Department Budget Status Report (Verbal) - Carr**

19 **3) Capital Improvement Budget – Carr**  
20

21 **Carr** – For the last three weeks, department heads had a number of meetings regarding the budget.  
22 Since the City has never had a consistently strong revenue base, staff has to think about other ways to  
23 generate revenue in this community that is sustainable and not dependent on the whims of the  
24 economy.  
25

26 The City Manager has been discussing the fact that for the last 20 years, police and fire have been  
27 growing at the expense of the other City departments. He has asked staff to consider what they are  
28 doing that they should not be doing, what aren't they doing that they should be.  
29

30 Carr suggested the following ideas for the Parks and Recreation Department:

- 31 1) Contracting out the Aquatics Center.
- 32 2) Contracting or selling the Marina.
- 33 3) Getting out of the airport business.  
34

35 The idea of the City getting out of the airport business has also been suggested by other departments.  
36 As shown in the Capital Improvement Budget, there are not enough funds to maintain any new parks.  
37 The demand for new parks is increasing but the department budget and staffing levels are not.  
38

39 The Council will be approving the 2000/01 General Fund Budget, which is the current operating  
40 budget less 10%. This does not include anticipated utility increases from both PG&E and water, which  
41 are expected to be sizable. What this means for the department is that there is \$180,000 less to  
42 maintain existing facilities. As a result, he is suggesting the following course of action:  
43

44 • **Lucchesi Pavilion** – Recommends putting construction on hold. He has allocated in the budget  
45 \$105,000 for this project and is hoping to secure Proposition 12 funding and/or local funding and  
46 services in kind.  
47

48 • **Gatti Park** - Recommends starting design this year with construction to start 01-02 due to  
49 agreement and timeline with developer.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49

• **Cavanagh Center** - Recommends starting design this year for needed seismic, structural and electric improvements. Improvement funding for 2001-02 to be augmented by Proposition 12 grant to fully finance project.

• **Willow Glenn and Westridge Parks** – Recommends not to start construction of these facilities in the near future.

Carr commented that the Boys and Girls Club uses the Cavanagh Center for some of their programs, and although they provide some supplies, they don't pay to use the facility. Staff will be discussing with them what they will be charged to use the facility.

**Ken McCoy** - Asked if there is a way to solicit funding assistance and or ideas for funding from organizations or individuals that will help Parks and Recreation develop projects.

**Carr** – Rotary, Lyons, and Kiwanis Club built some amenities at Lucchesi Park and they will be helping with the development of Shollenberger fishing pier. He will be pointing these things out at the budget hearings.

Carr reported that he has obtained a number of requests for memorial groves - Harold Mahoney's family is waiting to place one at Gatti Park. Ron Walter's friends have suggested naming the picnic area at McNear Park after him to recognize him for all the work he is done for this community.

## **COMMISSIONERS REPORTS**

1) **Voorhees Mount** – No report

2) **Ken McCoy** – Presented concerns about potential liability problems due to the fact that people are moving the goals at Lucchesi field. He requested that staff anchor the goals.

3) **James Mobley** – Asked Ed Anchordoguy about the mowing schedule at Oak Hill Park and for an update on signs.

**Ed Anchordoguy** – Staff has recently mowed the grass and the next run will be towards the end of the month. Temporary signs have been placed and permanent ones are being manufactured. The new signs will designate the areas more clearly and will be placed in different locations throughout the park.

4) **Steve Arago** –

a) **Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)** - The TAC is currently working on a couple of projects. He asked the Commission to start thinking about finding a replacement when he finishes his term at the end of June. He asked the Commission to chose a person that is knowledgeable about trees and would be interested in taking on that assignment. The TAC is an active group and since he has been on the Commission, there have been a number of planting projects they have accomplished, i.e., the planting projects of B and D Streets among others.

5) **Bruce Hagen** –

a) All of his facilities look good except for the defective stairwell lights at the parking garage.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34

**Carr** – Public Facilities is in charge of that area.

**b) Wiseman Park** – Received a complaint from a co-worker that the concrete trash cans are constantly knocked over and being broken, and the garbage is piled up.

**Ed Anchordoguy** – The containers were replaced two years ago, but he will be considering alternative designs.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT** – *Jim Carr, Director of Parks and Recreation*

**1) Shollenberger Park** – A.J. Levis has been working on the Shollenberger restroom and the project is progressing.

**2) Penry Park** – The dedication of Penry Park organized by the Penry Park Committee will be on Memorial Day. The Company Commander, who was one of the people saved by Sgt. Penry in Vietnam, will be the key-note speaker. Tomorrow morning, the committee will start to work on the bases of the two bronze plaques that will be installed at the park; one honoring Richard Penry, and the other one that will be dedicated to all men and women who served the country. The committee is expecting about 200 people attending the event.

**ADJOURNMENT** –

It was moved by Voorhees Mount, seconded by James Mobley and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 10: 05 p.m.