

## **Minutes for the Parks, Recreation and Human Services Commission**

1 Civic Center Circle, Brea, California 92821

January 22, 2025 PM

**Roll Call:** *(The following members were in attendance)*

- **Bill Higgins**, Parks, Recreation and Human Services Chair
- **Eric Mason**, Parks, Recreation and Human Services Commissioner
- **Gill Realon**, Parks, Recreation and Human Services Commissioner
- **Janet Son**, Parks, Recreation and Human Services Commissioner

**Absent:**

- **Irene Rifilato**, Parks, Recreation and Human Services Vice Chair

### **1. Call to Order**

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Chair Higgins called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm

### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

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Chair Higgins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **3. Invocation**

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Chair Higgins asked for a moment of silence for all those affected by the recent Los Angeles fires.

### **4. Informational**

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#### **4A. Student Advisory Board Update-**

Community Services Supervisor Mary Kathryn Mendoza introduced the Student Advisory Board (SAB) and shared recent activities, including hosting dances, volunteering at the Senior Center, and organizing community events. The SAB has been involved in various projects, such as face painting, arts and crafts, and assisting with special events like tree lighting. The SAB has a long history, with current Community Services Specialist Jazmine Serna starting as a participant and working her way up through the program. The SAB plans to continue its activities and make a positive impact in the school and community.

### **5. Matters from the Audience**

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Beth Riley expressed frustration over the maintenance and upkeep of the Brea Sports Park and the Tracks at Brea. She recalled past promises made about park improvements, noting that while her son, now 40, was meant to benefit from them, her grandson is now playing in the same facilities with ongoing issues.

Key concerns she raised include:

- Overflowing garbage cans at the soccer field and general park maintenance issues.
- Poor field conditions, including dangerous ruts in the baseball field.
- Weeds growing in brick areas and a lack of upkeep compared to past years.
- The need for more attention to the walking tracks, especially the underpass, which has overgrown weeds posing a fire hazard.
- The deteriorating wall on State College near the tracks, which is an eyesore.
- Concerns about funds being allocated to other projects (such as Arovista) instead of addressing immediate maintenance needs.
- She emphasized a desire to work collaboratively to improve the parks, offered her help in maintenance efforts, and encouraged officials to prioritize the upkeep of existing spaces before expanding them further. She left photos documenting the issues for review.

Craig Farris addressed the Parks and Recreation Commission to highlight concerns about park maintenance, particularly regarding baseball fields.

Key points he raised include:

- He helped organize the Centennial Anniversary of the historic baseball game and worked closely with the city staff, who did a fantastic job.
- While preparing for the event, he personally inspected the outfield and identified several hazardous holes, which were filled before the game.
- He inquired about field maintenance and was informed that staffing shortages, particularly due to COVID-related retirements and the shift from full-time to part-time positions, have impacted park upkeep.
- City staff is struggling to maintain parks, medians, and dog parks due to these workforce reductions.
- He emphasized that his intent was not to criticize the dedicated parks staff but to bring awareness to the need for proper staffing as the city grows.

- Residents are noticing maintenance issues, and he believes this concern extends beyond just a few individuals.
- He encouraged collaboration between residents and the commission to address these challenges and maintain the city's beauty.

Farris concluded by expressing gratitude to the commission for their service and reaffirming his commitment to working together for the betterment of the city's parks.

## **6. School District Representative**

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BOUSD Assistant Superintendent Rick Champion expressed his excitement to the Commission over the successful passage of Measure H. At the upcoming board meeting, two resolutions will be addressed: certifying the election and forming a citizens oversight committee within the mandated 60-day period. He emphasized the district's commitment to delivering on project promises, particularly improvements to the junior high. Collaboration with public works and city officials will be key, and more updates will follow. He also expressed appreciation for the support.

Amber Gonzalez Duong provided an update on the fencing projects at local schools. The work at Laurel Elementary is complete, and Country Hills is nearing completion. Upcoming projects include Arovista, Falcon, and Mariposa, with Brea Junior High and Brea High School scheduled for later this year.

## **7. Action**

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### **7A. Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Realon requested an addition to the minutes under **Item 4. Informational:** *The Commission requested staff to continue to monitor and provide an update.*

Commissioner Realon made a motion to approve as amended, seconded by Commissioner Mason.

Motion passed 3-1-1.

Ayes: Higgins, Mason, Realon

Nays: None

Abstain: Son

Absent: Rifilato

**3-0-1-0-0 Abstained by Janet Son**

### **7B. Adoption of Resolution No. PRHS 2025-01**

Deputy Director Sean Matlock provided background for the proposed resolution to address scheduling conflicts for Commission meetings in November and December due to Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Key recommendations:

- **November:** No meeting would be scheduled.
- **December:** The meeting would be moved from the fourth Wednesday to the first Wednesday.
- The resolution is necessary to formally approve these changes.
- If needed, a special meeting can still be scheduled in November.
- The proposal was presented as a flexible and practical solution for the commission's consideration.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Mason and seconded by Commissioner Realon.

Motion passed 4-0-1

Ayes: Higgins, Mason, Realon, Son

Noes: None

Absent: Rifilato

**4-0-0-0-0**

#### **7C. Adoption of the 2025 Parks, Recreation and Human Services Commission Calendar**

Deputy Director Sean Matlock relayed to the Commission that Staff would no longer be reaching out to assure a quorum for the meeting and the assumption would be they be in attendance.

Commissioner Mason made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Realon.

Motion passed 4-0-1.

Ayes: Higgins, Mason, Realon, Son

Nays: None.

Absent: Rifilato

#### **7D. Adoption of Goals**

Community Services Manager Jenn Colacion provided an explanation of the Goals Matrix.

Commissioner Realon made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Mason.

Motion passed 4-0-1

Ayes: Higgins, Mason, Realon, Son

Nays: None:

Absent Rifilato

4-0-0-0-0

## **8. Discussion**

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### **8A. Community Center Replacement Fund (181) Overview and Discussion**

Deputy Director Sean Matlock discusses the Community Services Replacement Fund 181 and its history, including its establishment in 1997 to cover maintenance and replacement costs for the Community Center. The fund has been used for various projects, such as ADA tiles, replacing lockers, and improving the arts garden.

### **8B. Public Works - Tree Removal and Tracks Landscaping Updates**

Public Works Supervisor Edgar Esparza provided an update on the Tracks at Brea landscape maintenance, including stump removals, pruning, and the need for additional rainfall to support hydro-seeded areas. He also expressed concerns about the current condition of the Tracks and emphasized the need for improved watering and maintenance efforts. He mentioned some of the issues that were pointed out in Matters from the Audience are Cal Trans' responsibility.

Commissioner Realon acknowledged the ongoing commitment to addressing these issues and providing regular updates to the Commission. He suggested that updates be sent via email to ensure Commissioners remain informed.

Chair Higgins stressed the importance of maintaining the city's investment in plants by increasing watering efforts. He also noted that large tree roots at City Hall Park pose a tripping hazard and should be addressed.

## **9. Information Memorandum**

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### **9A. Information Memorandum**

Deputy Director Sean Matlock reminded the Commission that the calendar was distributed at the beginning of the meeting and will also be included in next month's Information Memo. He also

provided an update on Fund 250, the Park Development Fund, which currently has approximately \$350,000 available.

Community Services Manager Jenn Colacion introduced **Go. Serve. Brea.**, an upcoming event that will replace **LOVE Brea**. She noted that this change will give the City greater control over the event while also resulting in cost savings.

Chair Higgins inquired about the homeless calls to the Hope Center. Jenn Colacion reported that 18 individuals are known to Brea, and as of last week, half of them had been transitioned off the streets and placed in shelters or programs. The Hope Center continues to assess and coordinate services for the remaining individuals who may require further assistance.

Commissioner Realon requested a line item be added to the Information Memo with the amount of groceries that are distributed each month at the Senior Center.

## **10. Reports**

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### **10A. Park Ambassadors**

Commissioner Realon requested a report on attendance at the Olinda Oil Museum and noted that the water fountain there is broken. Commissioner Mason reported that an Eagle Scout group recently installed a lighted flagpole at Wildcatters Park.

Chair Higgins asked how the tree removal at the Sports Park.

### **10B. Golf Course Ambassadors**

Chair Higgins asked about benches at Birch Hills.

### **10C. Art in Public Places Committee - Rifalato**

No update.

### **10D. User Groups - Higgins**

Director Hernandez commended the User Groups after recently attending a meeting.

### **10E. Public Works - Esparza**

No updates.

### **10F. General Plan Steering Committee - Rifalato**

No updates.

#### **10G. Staff**

Community Services Manager Jenn Colacion provided an update on Arovista Park and upcoming sidewalk improvements, noting a temporary reduction in Senior Center parking. Staff is exploring long-term solutions. Chair Higgins suggested relocating Senior Center activities to a church. Commissioner Realon inquired whether the project remains within budget, and Chair Higgins requested that staff provide the Commission with a progress report via email.

Deputy Director Matlock informed the Commission that the Commission Reorganization would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Director Hernandez announced that Kristin Griffith has been appointed Interim City Manager following Bill Gallardo's retirement. She also acknowledged that with Jenn Colacion's promotion to Manager, the department is currently understaffed and expressed appreciation for the Commission's patience. Edgar Esparza echoed these concerns, noting additional staffing shortages due to recent vacancies.

The Commission congratulated Ms. Colacion on her promotion to Community Services Manager.

#### **11. Adjournment**

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Chair Higgins adjourned the meeting at 6:58 pm.

The foregoing minutes are hereby approved

This 26th day of February, 2025:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carrie Hernandez", is written over a horizontal line.

Carrie Hernandez, Community Services Director