

Minutes for the Parks, Recreation and Human Services Commission

1 Civic Center Circle

Brea, California 92821

March 26, 2025

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

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

1. General Session

1A. Call to Order

Chair Rifilato called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

1B. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Rifilato led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1C. Invocation

Chair Rifilato asked for a moment of silence.

1D. Matters from the Audience

Amber Gonzales Duong, representative of the Brea Olinda Unified School District, provided the Commission with an update on the current fencing projects taking place at schools throughout the City. She also shared information regarding the planned updates at Brea Junior High School. The District is currently exploring options for temporary student placement during the construction period.

The following individuals spoke regarding the playground at Country Hills Park and provided a PowerPoint presentation in support of their comments:

- Janice Yoon

- Kendra Gross Tapia
- Ted Gribble
- Christina Wagner
- Justin Marlowe
- Zubin MC
- Bryce Jones
- Mikey-student
- Oliver-student
- Noelle-student

Ms. Hosozawa read a letter received in advance of the meeting into the record from Melody Dumas regarding her thoughts on the Country Hills playground.

An additional speaker, Nisha Chandel also spoke about Country Hills playground.

1E. Student Advisory Board-

Chair Rifilato adjusted the agenda to address this item before *Matters from the Audience*. The Student Advisory Board presented an update to the Commission on recent activities and events at their respective schools.

2. Action

2A. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Realon requested that Executive Director Soo Kang's employer be identified in the minutes. Director Hernandez clarified that Ms. Kang is a City employee. Commissioner Realon also noted one grammatical correction.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Realon, seconded by Vice Chair Mason.

Motion passed 5-0

Ayes: Rifilato, Mason, Higgins, Realon, Son

Nays: None

5-0-0-0-0

3. Discussion

3A. Brea Parks and Trails Updates

Community Services Manager Jenn Colacion provided an update on the Arovista Park renovation.

Deputy Director Sean Matlock provided an update on the Western Extension of The Tracks at Brea, noting ongoing negotiations with Union Pacific, which have been slower than anticipated due to differing valuations of the land. Funding remains insufficient, but staff recently met with Supervisor Chaffee to request County support. A follow-up meeting with the City Manager and Supervisor Chaffee is scheduled, and staff is preparing additional materials for that discussion.

Deputy Director Matlock also referenced a letter included in the meeting packet that initiated the Country Hills Park discussion. Public Works staff promptly inspected the site for any safety concerns. Staff is coordinating a tour with elected officials to visit parks with similar conditions and will work with Chair Rifilato on future agenda items.

Deputy Director Matlock noted that he and Director Hernandez collaborated with the City Manager on the response to recent concerns. He emphasized that, as part of the Commission's annual goal exercise, certain parks have been identified as higher priorities based on need. This does not imply that other parks are without need, but rather reflects the challenge of balancing limited funding. He added that future access to park development funds may impact priorities, and further updates will be provided in the upcoming Information Memorandum. These evolving priorities may influence future Commission goals.

3B. Ad Hoc Committee and Park Ambassador Appointments

After a brief discussion, Chair Rifilato finalized the following appointments for 2025:

Ad Hoc Committees

Brea 265 Development - **Gill Realon & Eric Mason**

Birch Hills/Brea Creek Golf Course Projects - **Bill Higgins & Eric Mason**

Arovista Park Modernization Project - **Irene Rifilato & Janet Son**

Committee Assignments

Art in Public Place Advisory Committee - **Irene Rifilato**

Country Fair Steering Committee - **Gill Realon**

User Groups/Field Allocation - **Bill Higgins**

Park Ambassadors

Arovista Park, City Hall Park/Plunge, Community Center, Skate Park - **Irene Rifilato & Janet Son**

Senior Center/Pioneer Hall, Olinda Oil Museum & Trail, Olinda Ranch Park, Tamarack Park - **Gill Realon**

Country Hills Park, Lagos de Moreno Park, Junior High Park, Wildcatters Park - **Eric Mason**

Founders Park, Greenbriar Park, Woodcrest Park, Tracks at Brea Segments 1 to 3 - **Janet Son**

Sports Park, Wildcatters Dog Park, Tracks at Brea Segments 4 to 6 - **Bill Higgins**

Birch Hills Golf Course, Brea Creek Golf Course - **Bill Higgins & Irene Rifilato**

4. Reports

4A. Park Ambassadors

The March 5 tour of the Sports Park was attended by Commissioner Higgins. Upcoming site visits include Olinda Ranch and the Olinda Oil Museum on April 2, which fall under Commissioner Realon's oversight, and Tracks Segments 4 and 5 in May. Public Works and Community Services staff collaborate annually to identify parks in need of review. Commissioners are encouraged to attend the 8 a.m. Wednesday tours if available. Those unable to attend may visit the sites independently and share observations with staff to ensure any issues are addressed.

Community Services Manager Jenn Colacion reminded the Commission that an online submission form is available for reporting park issues. Commissioners may still email or text staff, but the form allows users to specify the park, describe the issue, and upload photos. Submissions are immediately shared with all relevant staff. The link to the form will be re-sent to all Commissioners for easy access.

4B. Golf Course Ambassadors

Vice Chair Mason reported all of the benches at Birch Hills Golf Course have been installed and Commissioner Son reported the bunkers at Birch Hills Golf Course need more sand.

4C. Art in Public Places Committee

No updates but there is an upcoming meeting on April 28, 2025.

4D. User Groups

No updates.

4E. Public Works

No updates.

4F. General Plan Steering Committee

No updates.

5. Informational

5A. Correspondence

There were no questions or comments from the Commission regarding the attached correspondence.

5B. Information Memorandum/Staff Updates

Deputy Director Sean Matlock highlighted two upcoming developments expected to contribute to the park development fund: a 120-unit apartment complex at Brea Plaza and 179 single-family homes at Greenbriar. Together, these projects are projected to generate approximately \$2.4 million in park development fees. Approved by the Planning Commission on March 11, both developments are scheduled for City Council consideration on April 1. If approved, the park development fund balance will increase to just under \$2.8 million. Matlock noted this would mark the first update to the fund chart in several years and expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity to reinvest in parks and recreational facilities.

Community Services Special Events Supervisor Kristin Steyerman reported on the successful Spring Craft Boutique, which featured over 225 vendors and a full turnout. Positive vendor feedback will be included in a future meeting packet. Staff is now preparing for the 6th Annual Pet Expo, scheduled for Saturday, April 5. The event will feature over 90 exhibitors and a variety of animals. She also shared excitement about the upcoming Go. Serve. Brea. event and encouraged Commissioners to volunteer for one of the many available Community Services projects.

Director Carrie Hernandez introduced Anthony Godoy as the Senior Management Analyst for Community Services.

5C. Commissioner Requests

Commissioner Realon requested the Special Event dates be added to the *Upcoming Events* portion of the Information Memorandum.

A discussion ensued about how best to move forward with the Country Hills situation and taking the joint use agreement with Brea Olinda School Unified School District into consideration. The Commission requested staff bring the joint use agreement back to the next meeting for review, as well as a list of parks and their most recent improvements.

6. Adjournment

Chair Rifilato adjourned the meeting at 7:11 pm.

The foregoing minutes are hereby approved

This 23rd day of April, 2025:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carrie Hernandez", written over a horizontal line.

Carrie Hernandez, Community Services Director