

# **San Rafael Park and Recreation Commission**

## **Meeting Minutes: September 20, 2012**

Chairman Ralph Mihan called the meeting of the San Rafael Park and Recreation Commission to order at 7:11 p.m.

**Roll Call:** Mark Bustillos, Eric Holm, Jeff Jones, Mark Lubamersky, Mark Machado, Ralph Mihan

**Commissioners Present:** Holm, Lubamersky, Machado, Mihan

**Commissioners Absent:** Bustillos, Jones.

**Staff Present:** Director Carlene McCart, Parks Superintendent Dave Davenport, Recreation Supervisor, Gary Burns

**Guests:** Mike Schapiro, General Manager, San Rafael Pacifics Ball Club

### **1. Action Items**

**A.** Report from Albert Park Community Advisory Committee on the Agreement between the City of San Rafael and Centerfield Partners, LLC, for the use of Albert Park Stadium and Baseball Field for Professional Minor League Baseball.

Director McCart initiated the discussion with introductory remarks about the work of the Community Advisory Committee. The Agreement called for community review of the San Rafael Pacifics Baseball Club use of Albert Park. The City Council appointed four members of the public and accepted the appointment of a business representative nominated by the Business Improvement District, and a Park and Recreation Commissioner (Eric Holm). The Committee met in April to review the Agreement, in July to access the first half of the baseball season, and on September 18 to review the performance of the parties over the course of the full season. They generated a final report to the Commission. If the Commission agrees with the Report, they may accept it and forward it to City Council.

She noted the highlights of the Report:

- There were 42 home games and eleven practice dates including a pre season game.
- Games were play on weeknights at 7:15, Fridays at 7:30, Saturdays 7:15 and 5:00 and Sundays at 2:00 p.m.
- Over 32,000 tickets were sold.
- Average tickets sold per game were 770.
- The Pacifics assigned 39 staff members to each game.

The performance of each management plan was summarized:

- The Traffic Plan worked as designed to avoid congestion on City streets and in the neighborhoods. The one outstanding traffic issue is the tendency for game attendees to jaywalk across Andersen Drive.
- The Parking Plan was successful in congregating game parking at the San Rafael Corporate Center, where capacity was adequate to serve attendees. Monitoring the access to the San Rafael Community Center is necessary to preserve on site parking for facility users and Bocce attendees.

- The Security Plan was efficient. No adverse behavior or incidents occurred at the games over the first half of the season. Six incidents were reported by Barbier Security Group in the second half: a medical call for assistance, and five incidents involving transients outside the stadium.
- The Noise Management Plan, while effective at maintaining noise levels to Noise Ordinance standards was not satisfactory to several members of the neighborhood. Eight complaints over the season were received from neighbors and attendees at Committee meetings. The Report recommends further measures to address the noise issue such as starting games earlier to end earlier in the evenings and researching improved sound systems.
- The Improvement Plan was realized as the Pacifics contributed over \$20,000 improvements to Albert Park baseball facility through interior and exterior painting, new safety netting, expanded electrical service, scoreboard rehabilitation, dug out fencing and locker room renovation. The City contributed \$13,500 to the netting replacement, window repair, lighting bulb replacement, and communications service.
- The Agreement called for the Pacifics to provide community benefits. The team made 53 outreach appearances, conducted a clinic to benefit Camp Chance, utilized 47 local vendors, contracted with Dominican University for student broadcast services, and worked with the local Comcast cable station.

Other issues encountered during the season including two complaints over field lights on after 10 p.m. Lights for Pacifics games were typical when compared to historical use. A community concern for retained access to the Albert Park facilities did not materialize as the records show the stadium and ball fields were utilized on 82 dates by 8 distinct leagues, groups and private entities concurrent to the Pacifics' schedule,

The Agreement generated \$33,924 in revenue for the City. Expenses to support the improvements and the operations of the Albert Park facilities was \$23,700, higher by \$12,000 than estimated due to the complexities of replacing the safety net and the increased number of windows replaced at the Stadium. The net revenue to the City for the Pacifics' use of the facilities was \$10,223. The City continued to collect revenue from other users of the park.

The Committee Recommendation reflected a positive evaluation of the Pacifics and the City relating to the performance of the parties to the terms of the Agreement. The community supported the Pacifics as demonstrated by the number of tickets sold, the letters, petitions and comments received along with the business sponsorships and relationships with the community. There were some complaints and concerns registered regarding the Pacifics' use over noise, lights, and the use of the lawn in front of the Stadium for children's activities during games. The Committee recommended the following actions to address those issues, if the Agreement is renewed:

- Start games earlier to reduce noise and field light impacts in the evening
- Research the effectiveness of a new sound system in containing the broadcast of the public address system to the ball park.
- Improve safety by employing strategies to further reduce jay walking on Andersen Drive.
- Designate the lawn area in front of the Stadium for game related children's activities.

Chair Ralph Mihan invited questions and comments from the Commission, noting that Mike Shapiro left the meeting to attend to a family emergency.

Commissioner Holm commented the Report is an accurate representation of the Pacifics' baseball season. He thanked Tom Oblatz, chair of the Committee for the sincere effort to fairly evaluate the Agreement and the performance by the two parties.

Tom Oblatz was recognized. He thanked staff and said the debate on the appropriateness of this activity for a 63-year-old baseball facility was lively and concluded for the Committee with an affirmative Report. The community benefited in many ways from the positive nature of this use of public property.

The public was invited to comment.

- Andy Campbell asked were the Pacifics audited. Staff replied no, the Agreement did not call for such.
- Claudia Paloo stated the facility barriers at the facility could hamper an emergency evacuation. Was there a plan for evacuation? Staff replied the Fire Department made conditions to the use to take into account for evacuation such as unlocked exits, and clear entrances and exits. Security on site was also prepared to assist attendees with evacuation of the premises.
- Brian Gannon asked which groups that typically use Albert Park for baseball activities did not do so this year. Staff noted 8 groups used the facility during the Pacifics season and that the Novato Knicks semi pro baseball team and the San Francisco Hawks baseball team did not request use this year. Dates that the Pacifics played were there other users on the field? Yes, on weekends and some weekends.
- Paul Anne Pritchard asked why the City went against the Agreement and allowed the Pacifics to utilize a larger footprint of the park? Staff replied that the use of the lawn area was a supervised activity for children and that anyone, whether a game ticket holder or not could participate with a parent's signature. The activity was fun, friendly, and an asset to the park.
- Tom Oblatz noted that the public could use the knoll next to the snack bar, the barricades served to protect the children.
- Brian Gannon stated the Report was an accurate account of what happened except for the attendance numbers. He visited the park many times during games and never were there 800 in attendance, especially in the early season. Since the attendance was based on ticket sales, and no actual count of attendees was conducted the misleading attendance numbers should be stricken from the Report. The Committee agreed to insert a footnote regarding the ticket sales totals were not attendance totals but the footnote did not appear in the Final Report. The distinction is warranted because the environmental consequences of this seasons use is based on an attendance number lower than what is represented by ticket sales. Professional baseball organizations count the actual number of attendees. Mihan replied the report makes the distinction in the narrative and a footnote would be redundant. Privately owned stadiums in the major leagues count attendees by that standard is no applicable to community parks.
- Ken Conway attended 25 games and at least 6 announcements were made for attendees to create more seating space in the stands. Often seating was at or near capacity in the first innings and less so toward the later innings. Most minor league parks are publically owned like Albert Park, and attendance is based on ticket sales and estimated complimentary tickets. Photographs show full stands. There were no impacts on parking, traffic, or security problems. College students held many of the jobs. The games and the children's activities were safe family entertainment.
- Brian Gannon stated there was no accurate data to support the attendance estimates and that from his observation of 20 games from outside the stadium attendance was 200-300.
- Andy Campbell said that at 2 games there were 125 in attendance by his count.
- Mike Soldavini read the Report as it pertained to estimated attendance based on ticket sales. He agreed with the language "average sales", and asked the minutes of the Committee meeting be amended to reflect "attendance, based on ticket sales".

Commissioner Lubamersky asserted the Committee minutes could not be amended except by the Committee itself. He suggested "attendance was based on tickets sold and not head count". He

went on to say that the Committee had maintained good communication with the community. If problems arise in the future the residents are encouraged to keep the dialog open.

- Claudia Paloo asked if the Commission was concerned for the park, the integrity of the community and the “level of like for children”. Mihan replied the Pacifics in Albert Park were an asset to the community, allowing residents to share in family fun. The use of Albert Park was enjoyed by the community. Residents raised concerns and they were addressed.
- Ken Conroy stated that as a player and coach he was delighted that the community had this experience, and that the park remained available to different groups. More parks should have this type of combined use.
- Adenia Beaumont stated there were other uses appropriate for Albert Park.

After public comment was concluded, it was

M/s Lubamersky/Holm to accept the Final Report from the Albert Park Community Advisory Committee with the amendment to insert on page 1, “The attendance is based on ticket sales that include advanced internet game day tickets, tickets purchased on site, and season tickets. The number of tickets sold over the course of the season was slightly above 32,000. The average tickets sold per game was 770, an actual attendee count was not taken.\*”

AYES: Holm, Lubamersky, Machado, Mihan

NOES: None

ABSENT: Bustillos, Jones

## **B. Albert Park Stadium and Ball Field Use Policy Draft Review**

McCart presented the draft outline developed from the Commission comments submitted at the last meeting.

Mike Soldavini inquired before the discussion began why the policy under consideration did not address all the uses of Albert Park present and in the future.

Commissioner Lubamersky replied the Commission was directing this new policy to existing facilities, and specifically the sports fields and stadiums. Mihan added that a Masterplan exists for the park as a blueprint for development of the park facilities, but the Use Policy will guide the City to allow the types of activities, and the types of users most appropriate and in a priority sequence.

Ken Conway suggested more consideration be given to the policy, and to check the use policy developed for Redhill Park in San Anselmo.

Adina Beaumont asked about the time line for developing the policy.

Mike Soldavini said the Draft should articulate the Policy better.

Steve Schoonover asserted the sports fields at McInnis Park are open to the public, why can't the same be true for Albert Park? Lubamersky corrected the assumption, and Commissioner Machado concurred that the McInnis fields may be used by permit only. for groups of five or more.

Mike Soldavini asked if the Nave boxing match would be allowed under the new policy; perhaps a condition of use for similar events would be the use of a tent.

Pam Feegles inquired about the fee structure. Staff responded that had not been developed yet

After discussions, the Commission concluded that conditions for use would be the subject of the next meeting.

## **2. Commission Items**

**A. Director's Report**

McCart reported on pool revenues, afterschool enrichment programs for youth, child care centers are at capacity; Pickleweed Park Community Center will be rededicated for former Mayor Albert J Boro; the City Management Team will meet in a retreat forum September 26; vagrant issues are affecting many downtown businesses and public facilities; County of Marin did not fund the senior programs for next year.

**B. Falkirk Report**

There was no report.

**C. Parks Report**

Superintendent Dave Davenport reported on construction on Point San Pedro Median Improvements initiated on August 13; approximately 150 trees were removed along the 4.5 mile corridor and will be replaced with 200. Sudden Oak Death was detected in a Coast Live Oak tree in Victor Jones Park, preservation strategies are being applied. A new chlorine pump was installed at the Terra Linda Pool. Significant homeless encampments in Boyd Park, Gerstle Park and Mahone Path were cleared at a large cost to resources.

M/s Machado/Holm to accept reports.

AYES: Holm, Lubamersky, Machado, Mihan

NOES: None

ABSENT: Bustillos, Jones

**3. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.