

**TOWN OF CORTE MADERA
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
CORTE MADERA TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
JANUARY 28, 2019
APPROVED MINUTES**

Commissioners

Present: Fred Casissa, Chair
Nathan Blomgren
Sarah Elsen
Eric Engstrom
Emily Janowsky
Alden Miles
Elein Phipps
Camden Weinhart, Youth Commissioner

Staff Mario Fiorentini, Recreation Director
Present: Brian Hernandez, Recreation Supervisor

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chair Casissa opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

2. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments.

3. PRESENTATIONS

A. Corte Madera Age Friendly Intergenerational Center Update

Ms. Carla Condon, member of the Age-Friendly Intergenerational Center Task Force, gave a PowerPoint presentation. The Center opened on April 29, 2018 and membership has skyrocketed. She discussed the instructors, classes, and events. She noted staff member Pam Waterstone was the lynchpin of the center. There is something going on every day of the week and there is a wonderful array of events for all ages. Classes are scheduled for minimum-day (Wednesdays) so students can come directly from Neal Cummins or The Cove School. They are very proud of the fully equipped Makers Space- it has a laser cutter, a 3-D printer, a carving machine, water color printer, and more. Class size is limited to eight due to the lack of space. She stated they partnered with the Recreation Department, Marin Villages, and Age Friendly Solutions, the 501(c)(3) organization, in offering the Speaker Series, Movie Night, and other upcoming events. The Center was nominated for an award in innovation at the Independent Journal's 26th Annual Awards Luncheon. Membership is \$25 for Corte Madera residents and \$40 for non-residents- it is tax deductible. Members can attend any and all classes for the year. There are 224 members as of today! She discussed the financials and noted they are starting this year off with \$32,897. She urged everyone to get the word out about the center! Commissioner Janowsky asked if they have thought about raising the yearly membership fee- it was very low. Ms. Condon stated they raised it from \$15 to \$25 per year. They plan to raise the fee in 2020. Commissioner Elsen asked what the monetary donation was for the year. Ms. Condon stated it was about \$62,000 which does not include the in-kind donations. The County Board of Supervisors gave them \$10,000, the Family Foundation gave them \$30,000, and County Health and Human Services and Central Marin Police Authority gave them donations.

B. Introduction of Xanat Rodriguez- Summer Playground Director

Recreation Director Fiorentini introduced Summer Playground Director Rodriguez.

Summer Playground Director Rodriguez stated she is a member of the community and lives close by. She attended the Summer Playground Program as a child and her siblings still attend. She is very excited about the upcoming summer and a chance to provide a safe and fun environment.

Recreation Director Fiorentini stated staff will make a presentation in April or May about the planning process for the program.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no Consent Calendar items.

5. PARK AND RECREATION DIRECTOR AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- 5.1 Commissioners' Reports
 - December Town Council Meetings

Commissioner Blomgren stated there were no Recreation Department or Commission related items on the Council agendas.

- Executive Advisory Committee

Chair Casissa stated the Committee met last week with Recreation Director Fiorentini and talked about the agenda and the fee schedule.

- CMPR/IGC Programming Ad-Hoc Committee

Recreation Director Fiorentini stated the Committee did not meet in January. They will be meeting before the next Commission meeting in February.

- Individual Commissioner Updates

There were no updates.

5.2 Park and Recreation Director's Report- Update

- Community Center
- Outdoor
- Neil Cummins Gym
- Summer Playground
- Special Events
- Capital Projects
- Beautification Committee

Recreation Director Fiorentini reported staff has been working with Recreation Consultant Dave Wilkinson over the last several months on reorganizing roles and responsibilities in an attempt to increase service levels and efficiencies. Recreation Supervisor Hernandez has taken over the rental of the Community Center and the Neal Cummins Gymnasium. It is a detailed and challenging task that requires staff to work with a variety of personalities, organizations, requests, etc. One of the goals is to increase rental revenue. He reported the fields are closed for the winter. Little League starts at the end of January and Lacrosse starts at the end of February. These groups are very conscientious and aware of field conditions, the weather, etc. The Public Works Director will be at the February meeting to talk about improvements that have been made to the fields and other proposed projects. Staff is working with the Larkspur/Corte Madera School District on improvement to the Neal Cummins Gymnasium. It gets a great deal of use during the winter.

Recreation Supervisor Hernandez stated Spaghetti Bingo was held last Friday and it was a huge success. He is working with the Public Works Department and the Beautification Committee on a Capital Project to redo the Menke Park sign and possibly relocate it. They are looking at a wood or metal sign and possibly moving it to the corner of Tamalpais and Magnolia or closer to the bus stop that says "Old Town Square". Staff is looking at options and will present the project to the Commission soon. Funding will come from the Beautification Committee. Chair Casissa stated the Lion's Club might be able to cover any cost overruns. Commissioner Blomgren asked if Spaghetti Bingo was sold out. Recreation Supervisor Hernandez stated "no". Commissioner Blomgren stated people should be made aware of the fact that tickets would be on sale at the door. Commissioner Phipps asked if Old Town Square and Menke Park were the same. Recreation Supervisor Hernandez stated "yes".

6 BUSINESS ITEMS

6.1 Discussion and Possible Action on Animals in the Park Ordinance

Chair Casissa reported this item has been on the agenda for a while and he would like some resolution tonight. The options include: 1) No change to the ordinance- animals are prohibited from parks; 2) Change the ordinance to allow dogs on leash in parks. A survey was done last year and the result was split- 51 to 49 in favor of leaving the ordinance as is.

Commissioner Engstrom stated his concern would be that they were going against the wishes of half of the responders. He was expecting more people to be in favor of allowing dogs on leash in the parks.

Commissioner Blomgren asked if they would be comfortable making a recommendation to the Council without a unanimous vote. Should they try to find a solution that they all agree on? Chair Casissa stated there were only two options.

Commissioner Elsen stated one of the driving forces behind this discussion was to align the ordinances to make it easier on the Central Marin Police Authority. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated enforcement would probably be easier with the amended ordinance. Staff supports this idea. Commissioner Elsen asked about a trial period. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated that was not a realistic option.

Commissioner Phipps asked if there was any feedback from the other towns about how it works for them. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated it would be driven by calls of service to the police departments.

Youth Commissioner Weinhart stated changing the ordinance would not change things- there are already tons of dogs in the park on leash.

Chair Casissa opened the meeting to public comments.

There were no comments.

Chair Casissa closed the meeting to public comments.

M/s, Casissa/Janowsky, and approved to recommend that the Council amend the ordinance so it aligns with the ordinances in Larkspur and San Anselmo allowing animals in the park as long as they are on leash.

Ayes: Elsen, Engstrom, Janowsky, Miles, Phipps, Weinhart, Chair Casissa

Noes: Blomgren

Recreation Director Fiorentini stated the Council would have two readings of the ordinance (first reading, then second reading and adoption) and it would go into effect 30 days after its adoption. Commissioner Elsen asked for an update from the Central Marin Police Authority six months or so after its adoption.

Chair Casissa noted the signs in the park would need to be changed- and they will need dog poop bag dispensers!

6.2 Review and Discussion of Current Fee Resolution

Recreation Director Fiorentini presented the staff report. Staff is recommending the following changes: 1) Clarifying the definition of “residents” in terms of programming fees to include Corte Madera, Larkspur, and anyone attending the Larkspur/Corte Madera School District; 2) A reduction in the fee for the Summer Playground Program from \$850 to \$750 for non-residents; 3) An increase in the daily fee for Summer Playground Program from \$50 to \$55 and for the weekly fee from \$175 to \$185; 4) Add “Town Sponsored NRG Training” to the Town/Civic Organizations category that are exempt from paying a rental fee for use of the Community Center.

Commissioner Miles referred to the definition change in residency and asked would the effect would be. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated about 50% of the non-residents would now be considered residents. Commissioner Miles asked when the Summer Playground Program fees were last changed. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated two years ago. Commissioner Miles stated she would like to set an appropriate rate for this program taking into account all the other things they want to do. This program could supplement the other things they want to do while remaining affordable.

Chair Casissa asked if the Summer Playground Program broke even last year. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated it made money.

Chair Casissa noted that employees of the Town of Corte Madera were exempt from Summer Playground Program fees and he wondered if this should be extended to Police, Fire, and City of Larkspur employees.

Commissioner Blomgren asked how many employees take advantage of this offer. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated maybe half a dozen. Commissioner Blomgren asked if staff could reach out to the other entities to get an idea of how many might take advantage. Town employees deserve a discount- maybe 25% or so.

Commissioner Phipps stated most employees do not live in Corte Madera and they probably need a break. She was in favor of including Police and Fire employees but probably not Larkspur employees.

Commissioner Janowsky stated she liked the idea of treating Corte Madera and Larkspur employees the same- they are the Twin Cities. A full subsidy might be too generous given the fact they are trying to close some revenue gaps. She suggested a 50% subsidy and to include Police, Fire, and Larkspur employees.

Chair Casissa asked for clarification on Section IX (A), Town Sponsored Programs. He asked if Town employees pay the full rate for programs. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated there is a small discount (5% to 10%) for Town employees who want to use certain programs (soccer, gymnastics, etc.). Chair Casissa asked if this should be added to the resolution. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated that was a good idea.

Chair Casissa referred to the athletic fields and stated Twin Cities Little League and Twin Cities Girls Softball pay \$15 per hour. He asked when the rate was last raised. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated probably six years ago. Chair Casissa asked if it should be raised to \$20 or \$25 per hour. Commissioner Janowsky stated she would support an increase to \$25 per hour- they are spending a lot to maintain the fields.

Chair Casissa asked how the fees charged by the Intergenerational Center tie into this resolution. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated this is a discussion he needs to have with the center. The budgets are currently separate.

Chair Casissa asked the Commission to forward any questions to Recreation Director Fiorentini. This item will be on the next agenda.

6.3 Review and Discussion of Skate Park Rules

Recreation Director Fiorentini presented the staff report. He stated the previous comments by the Commission have centered on age appropriate levels for the park, whether to allow bikes, scooters, skates in the park, and uses in the park that might not be conducive to skateboarding.

Commissioner Blomgren stated some of the other issues include the gates being left open and kids using the ramps as slides and preventing people from using them as intended. The gates should be self-closing and a sign should be installed saying "Skaters only". They need to make parents aware of the fact that the skate park is not a playground. Recreation Director Fiorentini agreed and stated staff tries to schedule activities for young kids (2-4 year olds) early in the morning when the skate park is not heavily used.

Commissioner Elsen stated the rules might be outdated by allowing only skate boards and in-line skates. She asked staff to check into whether or not scooters and bicycles would cause a huge increase in wear and tear of the equipment. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated this ties into the topic of the age requirements for the park. Bikes and scooters would probably not increase wear and tear.

Commissioner Miles asked if they need to have certain rules posted from a liability standpoint. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated he would recommend not removing any of the existing rules. They have not been reviewed by the Town Attorney in a while.

Commissioner Elsen asked for the following addition: "Surfaces may be hot". She was concerned that the rules in the park are flagrantly ignored. She wondered if the sign should be titled "Code of Conduct" as opposed to "Rules". Skaters should have priority.

Chair Casissa opened the meeting to public comments.

There were no comments.

Chair Casissa closed the meeting to public comments.

Commissioner Janowsky stated she liked the idea of having the skaters create a sign indicating this is a skate park. Recreation Director Fiorentini stated that was a good idea and he would reach out to the skaters who helped with the design of the park.

Commissioner Elsen asked that the word “rider” be used instead of “skater”. She asked if bikers should be allowed. Commissioner Blomgren stated the park is too small for bikes. Commissioner Janowsky agreed.

It was the consensus to ban scooters, bikes, and motorized vehicles from the park.

Chair Casissa asked about age requirements. Commissioner Miles stated she would defer to the Town Attorney.

Chair Casissa asked staff to add the suggestions made tonight to the list of existing rules and have them reviewed by the Town Attorney. The item will be on the next agenda.

6.4 Approve Minutes of December 17, 2018 Meeting

M/s, Janowsky/Elsen, and approved unanimously (Engstrom and Miles abstained), to approve the December 17, 2018 minutes as submitted.

7. ROUTINE AND OTHER MATTERS

7.1 Future Agenda Items

Chair Casissa stated the following items would be on a future agenda: 1) Updates from Public Works Director, Peter Brown; 2) Discussion and Possible Action on Fiscal Year 2019-20 Fee Resolution; 3) Discussion and Possible Action on 2019 and 2020 Meeting Schedule; 4) Review of Current Fiscal Year Budget; 5) Review of Skate Park Rules.

7.2 Items for Yearly Review

Chair Casissa stated the Commission should contact Recreation Director Fiorentini about upcoming agenda items.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. Chair Casissa stated the next Regular Meeting was scheduled for Monday, February 25, 2019 in the Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni DeFrancis
Recording Secretary