

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

**CITY OF POMONA
PALOMARES PARK COMMUNITY CENTER
499 EAST ARROW HIGHWAY
POMONA, CA 91767**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 2020
9:00 A.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ayala called the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 9:20 a.m.

II. FLAG SALUTE

Chair Ayala led the flag salute.

III. ROLL CALL

Chair Ayala asked staff to take roll.

Present:

Ion Puschila, Commissioner	Mayoral Appointee
Melissa Ayala, Chairperson	District 1
Fabián Pavón, Commissioner	District 2
Cynthia Marino, Commissioner	District 5
Remington Cordova, Commissioner	District 6

Late:

Jeff Sanchez, Vice Chairperson District 4 (arrived at 10:22 a.m.)

Absent:

Noel Mendez-Zamudio, Commissioner District 3

Staff:

Benita DeFrank, Neighborhood Services Director
Michael Sledd, Parks and Facilities Manager
Monica Belloso, Technical Specialist II

Chair Ayala began by stating the purpose of this special meeting is to continue discussions from the November 17, 2019 special meeting on developing priorities and goals of the Parks and Recreation Commission. She stated that Community Services Manager Mike Osoff took the lead at the previous special meeting and since he is not present, the Commission will pick up where they left off.

January 11, 2020 Special Meeting Recap

Chair Ayala recapped the previous meeting by summarizing topic discussions on park amenities, areas for improvement, and possible goals. She began by reading out loud the list of features and amenities the Commissioners stated they enjoy and like to see in parks including:

- Green space
- Trees
- Recreational classes
- Nature trails
- Multi-generational activities
- Multipurpose features, i.e. chess tables

- Art i.e. low cost/free features, four square, chalk/hopscotch
- Celebrations
- Redo historical features
- Restoration of stages
- Sports complex
- Year round pool usage
- Splash pad
- Rock climbing

Chair Ayala recapped discussions on how the Commission described the current conditions of Pomona's parks and amenities. Chair Ayala read out loud the list of what the Commissioners stated as items and features that have room for potential and needing improvement in Pomona's parks:

- American with Disabilities Act accessibility
- Lack of amenities
- Restroom facilities
- Drinking features
- Crumbling infrastructure i.e. roofs, bathrooms, lighting.
- Lack of money
- Dirty
- Drug activity
- Gangs
- Homeless
- Parking lots i.e. cracks, needs pavement repairs
- Parks are underutilized
- Lack of recreation activity

Chair Ayala then summarized discussions from the previous meeting and read out loud the goals the Commissioners listed.

- Hosting Commission-sponsored events i.e. tamale cook off, lemonade/agua fresca-off, beautification day competition, skate competition, etc.
- Clean parks
- Review and update Parks and Recreation Commission Bylaws
- Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility
- Conduct park restroom surveys
- Create Parks and Facilities Master Plan
- Volunteer Management System
- Increased communication and awareness
 - A Parks and Recreation social media account
 - Park campaigns and events
 - Park updates
- Improve citywide marketing strategy
- Increase communication with staff
- Increase revenue
- Promote healthy living and wellness
- Increase partnerships with nonprofits and Pomona Unified School District
- Encourage public comment and feedback

- Improve signage

Next Steps for Setting Priorities and Goals

Chair Ayala advised the Commissioners that at the previous meeting, they agreed to discuss steps that would get the Commission from where they are now to where they want to be.

Chair Ayala noted that based on what they have discussed and logged, she suggested narrowing their efforts and direction. She stated it was important to be realistic on what they could accomplish. She suggested creating short term goals (1 year) and long term goals (2-5 years), and then choosing the top three.

Chair Ayala asked if anyone had other recommendations.

Commissioner Puschila suggested combining all the items onto one sheet and creating categories because many of the goals overlap.

Commissioner Marino suggested creating a list each for short term goals and long term goals.

Commissioner Puschila stated he will combine everything to one sheet and they could determine if they will be short term goals or long term goals.

Commissioner Marino suggested to make one of the categories, "Activities" since many of the goals is doing events, like skate competitions, beautification day competitions, lemonade/agua fresca-off, and cook-offs.

Commissioner Puschila wrote "Activities" as a headline on a sheet and began writing down items from the "possible goals" list:

Activities:

- *Skate*
- *Cook off*
- *Beautification*
- *Weekend activities*
- *Planting*
- *Toy drive*
- *Repaint/art*
- *Clean up trot*
- *Maze*
- *Increased programming*

Parks and Facilities Michael Sledd recommended that the Commission create goals similar to the City of Austin. Mr. Sledd read out loud "as a general statement which are global in nature that describe the conditions to be attained by the Austin Parks and Recreation Department that provide the basic framework." Mr. Sledd provided an example of a goal and objective from the City of Austin.

Chair Ayala reiterated to the Commission that the general consensus was to align their goals to the City's Council's Priorities and Goals Fiscal Year 2019/2020.

Chair Ayala stated she made some notes and asked if everyone had their copy to review Goal B/Step 4 which speaks to social media platforms and how the community is engaged.

[Goal B: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of City services to businesses and residents. Step 4: Continue to utilize social media platforms to tell the Pomona story. Train staff involved in public information to develop video vignettes into the City's social media messaging.]

Chair Ayala also highlighted Goal D/Step 2 to the Commissioners.

[Goal C: Support City Commissions and ensure alignment between City Council goals and Commission activities. Step 2: Review and update current Commission bylaws for all seven (7) commissions by June 2020.]

Chair Ayala asked Commissioner Puschila to write down "Social Media" and "Review and Update Bylaws".

Chair Ayala stated Goal K/Step 6 was about community participation, but specific to the shelter.

[Goal K: Reduce the unsheltered homeless population by 10% annually and take actions to mitigate the impacts of homelessness on the Community. Step 6: Encourage community participants to provide food and services at Hope 4 Home or other service facilities, including adopting relevant code amendments as needed, by June 2020.]

Chair Ayala stated Goal M/Step 3 speaks to seniors and families.

[Goal M: Improve safety and cleanliness at parks and public spaces. Step 3: Increase the level of senior, family, and youth activities within the parks and community centers in an effort to decrease the level of negative activities that occur by July 2020.]

Chair Ayala described Goal O/Step 2 as more of a long term goal. She said Step 2 states to complete a survey of park bathrooms, and asked, as a commission, how they can support this.

[Goal O: Improve Parks facilities in the following general order of priority: 1) ensuring that existing amenities are functioning; 2) rehabilitating bathrooms and other park facilities; 3) adding trees; 4) improving ADA accessibility of all park facilities and equipment; 5) adding new bathrooms; and 6) adding additional recreation and playground equipment. Step 2: Complete a survey of park bathrooms and propose a work plan with priorities for Council review and approval by December 2019.]

Neighborhood Services Director Benita DeFrank stated that Goal O speaks to parks in general and many of the things listed here [Commission's list] are under Goal O and about improving park facilities. Ms. DeFrank suggested to the Commission that if they want to align their priorities with City Council, look at the goal as a whole to improving park facilities.

Ms. DeFrank stated that Goal M speaks to improving safety and cleanliness in parks.

Commissioner Marino asked if the park ranger program could be crossed off.

Ms. DeFrank stated it is still an active goal, but funding still needs to be identified. The timeline will be shifted from the December 2019 deadline for when funding is available.

Commissioner Marino asked if Goal O/Step 1 is already in place with the funding they [the Commission] have talked about.

Ms. DeFrank responded that City Council adopted the priority list for when funding becomes available, and if some projects have not been done, they will be soon.

Commissioner Marino stated that when she sees the Council's Goals, it is encouraging to see that many have been completed.

Commissioner Puschila wrote "Activating" as another heading. Commissioner Puschila stated he is crossing off some of the listed items and putting them into broader categories.

Commissioner Puschila added additional items under:

Activating:

- *Adopt a Park/Garden*
- *Marketing Strategy (social media)*
- *Access/Centers for programming with local organizations and volunteers*
- *Volunteer opportunities/placemaking*
- *Support creation of park master plan*

Ms. DeFrank advised that some activities are on staff's agenda such as engaging the community on how to activate the parks and how to streamline the process. The first meeting will be in February with Pomona's Promise. Also, talks on a parks master plan will begin this year.

Commissioner Pavón asked if the goal "access to parks" would go under "Activating".

Commissioner Puschila stated he also wants to talk more about connectivity with bikes.

Ms. DeFrank asked what would be the goal when speaking about accessing the parks.

Commissioner Pavón stated he is referring to bike lanes and connectivity to parks.

Commissioner Puschila wrote "Connectivity" as another heading on the sheet.

Connectivity

- *Dedicated inter-park bike lanes*
- *Signage*

Ms. DeFrank stated park connectivity would be considered a long term goal and a focus in the parks master plan. A master plan would list the strategies to implement for when funding becomes available.

Commissioner Puschila stated he likes the idea of signage at parks that focus on bike lanes and lists the distance to the next park; that would be great to let know families know how far they are from the nearest park in each direction.

Mr. Sledd recommended to the Commission evaluating items that come before the Parks and Recreation Commission for approval and think of them as what goal the item would fall under and what is it trying to achieve, similar to how staff reports are written for City Council.

Commissioner Puschila commented that some spending is mandated for ADA or other federal or state mandates. The other type of spending that he is referring to would be for projects to improve parks that are not mandated.

Mr. Sledd suggested that a goal could be to maintain parks in a way that is in compliance with leading industry standards.

Commissioner Puschila stated that is a good idea and wrote on the sheet of paper:

[Maintenance

- *In accordance to standards*
- *Facilities (water, Rio Rancho, etc.)]*

Commissioner Puschila then asked if there a volunteer management system in place.

Ms. DeFrank responded there is currently a process through Human Resources, but it could be improved to increase access to volunteer opportunities.

Commissioner Puschila referred to the Possible Goals sheet and stated he likes “school district partnership”.

Chair Ayala suggested placing “school district partnership” under the “Connectivity” heading.

DeFrank agreed.

Commissioner Puschila added it to the list.

Connectivity

- *Dedicated inter-park bike lanes*
- *Signage*
- *School district partnership*

Chair Ayala suggested to Commissioner Puschila to place “promote healthy living and wellness” under the heading “Activities”.

Activities:

- *Skate*
- *Cook off*
- *Beautification*
- *Weekend activities*
- *Planting*
- *Toy drive*
- *Repaint/art*
- *Clean up trot*
- *Maze*
- *Increased programming*
- *Healthy living and wellness*

Commissioner Puschila asked about revenue.

Commissioner Marino insisted revenue could be increased through activities.

Chair Ayala questioned if "Revenue" focuses on maintenance through grants.

Ms. DeFrank advised that park fees are currently under review and will have a direct correlation to increased revenue for park-related activities.

Commissioner Puschila asked if those fees are coming from youth activities, like soccer leagues.

Ms. DeFrank stated no, the fees she is referring to is from new development for businesses or residential developers. But those fees cannot be increased until there is a plan on how those fees would be applied.

Commissioner Puschila asked about the status of Veterans Park.

Ms. DeFrank stated it is still under discussion because of the many factors surrounding it.

Commissioner Puschila asked about the status of Measure A funding.

Mr. Sledd stated they are working on spending the remaining Proposition A funding toward resurfacing the parking lot at Washington Park because it could only be used on past maintenance projects. Also, the remaining money needs to be spent before Measure A funding can be released.

Chair Ayala asked when the Measure A funding is released, it will go toward the priority list.

Ms. DeFrank responded yes to Chair Ayala.

Chair Ayala summarized the three main categories the Commissioners listed:

1. Activating
 - a. Activities
2. Connectivity
3. Maintenance

Ms. DeFrank restated the goals as "activating the parks, establishing connectivity, and improving maintenance." She stated the Commission also listed other goals related to City Council including social media, review and update bylaws, community participation, and the master plan and restroom survey.

Chair Ayala raised the question if the fourth goal should be reviewing and updating the bylaws and make the fifth goal as the park master plan.

Commissioner Marino suggested making the bylaws as the first goal. Commissioner Puschila agreed.

Goal 1: Review and update Parks and Recreation Commission Bylaws for better accountability.

Mr. Sledd recommended looking at the master plan as an objective to the goal they are aiming to reach.

Chair Ayala stated she thinks the master plan, when completed, can help them achieve the rest of their goals.

Mr. Sledd provided a description to manage parks in a purposeful way, and the bylaws and master plan would be the objectives to support this goal.

Chair asked if the goals should be written as SMART goals.

Mr. Sledd recommended writing the goals in a sentence form.

Chair Ayala agreed and asked the Commission to describe their goals as sentences. After Commission discussion, Commissioner Puschila wrote:

Goal 2: Support the creation of a park master plan and manage parks in an objective, purposeful way to meet the diverse needs and desires of residents.

Commissioner Marino shared about what she liked about the City of Oceanside and their vision and goals.

Pavón stated he also liked [City of Oceanside] goals.

Ms. DeFrank suggested for goal 3 on focusing on increasing park usage and participation when creating the goal.

The Commission considered various sentences for Goal 3.

Goal 3: Activate park participation and activities through increasing usership and fostering a sense of community ownership and unity. (Activating/Activities and Connectivity).

1. Activating:

- *Adopt a Park/Garden*
- *Marketing Strategy (social media)*
- *Access/Centers for programming with local organizations and volunteers*
- *Volunteer opportunities/placemaking*
- *Support creation of park master plan*

1A. Activities:

- *Skate*
- *Cook off*
- *Beautification*
- *Weekend activities*
- *Planting*
- *Toy drive*
- *Repaint/art*
- *Clean up trot*
- *Maze*
- *Increased programming*
- *Healthy living and wellness*

2. Connectivity

- *Dedicated inter-park bike lanes*
- *Signage*
- *School district partnership*

[Commissioner Sanchez arrived at 10:22 a.m.]

Commissioner Sanchez greeted everyone and apologized for not being at the meeting on time, as he is working. He stated he is on break and wanted to check in.

The Commission discussed the use of private funds to do projects and programming in the parks, and suggested various sentences to incorporate public trust. Commissioner Puschila wrote:

Goal 4 as Exercise fiscal responsibility and prudently manage funds, while maintaining public trust.

Ms. DeFrank suggested when looking at the category “Maintenance”, it speaks to infrastructure and programming.

Commissioner Marino asked if there are plans to make a park that other people can visit, like a graffiti park.

Ms. DeFrank suggested a graffiti park could go under “Activate” because it speaks to place making and activating the parks.

Commissioner Puschila stated he likes the idea of a graffiti park, maybe in downtown.

After discussion, the Commission agreed on the wording of Goal 5.

Goal 5: Promote the creation of parks and amenities that serve to attract visitors and interests to the unique history and culture of Pomona.

Commissioner Sanchez asked Commissioner Pavón about the park he posted with murals. Commissioner Pavón responded that was Chicano Park in San Diego, and it is on its way to being nationally recognized.

Commissioner Puschila stated he wants to do the next goal to engage local organizations to create more involvement in the parks.

Chair Ayala stated the goal should also state the engagement of educational organizations to tap into the universities.

Commissioner Puschila wrote down a sentence for Goal 5 for the Commission to review and discuss.

Commissioner Sanchez stated the parks should have features that teach residents history.

Ms. DeFrank recommended that might go under Goal 4, as it speaks to history and culture.

Commissioner Sanchez stated he would like to see something done with the bricks from the stables.

Ms. DeFrank stated the bricks will be used toward another project.

Commissioner Sanchez stated he thinks residents would pay for brick with their name.

Goal 6: Cultivate partnerships with local organizations and educational institutions to improve and generate more park involvement.

Mr. Sledd asked if the Commission wanted to add a goal that speaks to encouraging environmental responsibility.

The Commission agreed with adding another goal. Commissioner Puschila wrote down the next goal.

Goal 7: Encourage environmental responsibility and sustainability.

Chair Ayala asked if there is anything else to add.

Commissioner Marino stated everything she had is up there.

Chair Ayala made a motion to approve Goals 1-7 as established, seconded by Commissioner Puschila, passing with a vote of 6-0-1-0.

Mr. Sledd stated staff will send the Commission a final version of the goals for the Commission to review.

Ms. DeFrank stated staff will keep the categories and objectives that fall under each goals for reference.

Mr. Sledd suggested that Parks and Recreation Commission staff reports can state the goal that the item is supporting.

[Commissioner Puschila stepped out of the room.]

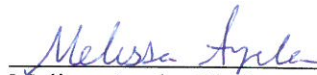
Chair made a motion to review and update the Parks and Recreation Commission bylaws at the February meeting, seconded by Commissioner Sanchez, passing with a vote of 5-0-1-0.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ayala adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.



Michael Osoff
Community Services Manager



Melissa Ayala, Chairperson
Parks and Recreation Commission

