



**MINUTES OF THE PARKS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
April 3, 2023**

The Town of Los Gatos Parks Commission conducted a Regular Meeting on April 3, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Stephenson, Vice-Chair Gleason, Commissioners, Buncic (absent), Corenson (arrived 6:04), Mapara, Ober, and Youth Commissioner Emami (absent).

CONSENT ITEMS

1. Approve Minutes of the Parks Commission Meeting of February 6, 2023.

MOTION: Motion by Vice-Chair Gleason to approve Consent Item 1.
Seconded by Commissioner Ober.

VOTE: Unanimously

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

No verbal communication.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Motion by Vice-Chair Gleason to move the Pickleball to item two and Town Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan to item three. **Seconded** by Commissioner Ober.

VOTE: Unanimously

2. Pickleball

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported on this item.

The Commission discussed this item.

Other Business Item #2 – continued

Opened Public Comment.

Waldo Joseph, Resident

- Requested the Parks Commission take into consideration the impact of the noise, day/time of usage, and parking at La Rinconada Park for Pickleball.

Bill Crites, Resident

- Requested the Parks Commission take into consideration the need for more courts, and the need to resurface and repair the courts at La Rinconada Park.

Debbie Pinkston, Resident

- Requested the Parks Commission take into consideration the need for more courts, and the need to resurface and repair the courts at La Rinconada Park.

Britt Sellin, Resident

- Requested the Parks Commission take into consideration the need for more courts, to install new courts, to designate those new courts for Pickleball, and to designate two tennis courts for eight Pickleball courts.

Closed Public Comment.

The Commission discussed the matter.

3. Town Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan

Holly Young, Administrative Analyst, verbally reported on this item.

The Commission discussed this item.

4. Establish Park Locations for June and August Meetings

The Commission discussed this item.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Ober to hold the June Parks Commission meeting at La Rinconada Park. **Seconded** by Vice-Chair Gleason.

VOTE: Unanimously

Other Business Item #4 – continued

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Corenson to hold the August Parks Commission meeting at Oak Meadow Park. **Seconded** by Commissioner Ober.

VOTE: Unanimously

5. Role of Parks Commission/Work Plan

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported on this item. I would like to hear some ideas, what are the things on your mind about parks that you would like to set staff on? I would like to take a list of ideas that are on your mind and set up a cadence to start referring them back to you. Are you wondering about parks, street trees, or trails?

Chair Stephenson, verbally commented, I think it is worth noting that with the increase in housing and the increase in population, and we are not building new parks we need to invest in what we have. We need to think carefully about our Capital Improvement funds. Like a situation tonight, we have a group asking for an entirely new facility, pickle courts and that is not going to be cheap. How do we invest in what we have? We have talked about the airplane, which gets plenty of use and it is on loan from the Air Force, and we are obligated to maintain it. There are certain things that we have to do and there are discretionary items like a new play structure. Further investments in the facilities we have since we are not building any new parks.

Jerett Blaskey, PPW Parks Services Officer, recommended that the Parks Commission look at the surrounding parks, maybe there is something we do not have and look forward to adding to our playgrounds to draw people in.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally commented, the Town's Mayor mentioned as an idea that Town we do not have Parks Master Plan. It is not unusual for a community to look at it holistically at its park assets, evaluate what it has and what currently owns. What the public demand might be for other things and what is within the sphere of influence to the viewpoint. What does Vasona have? Try to identify what are the gaps in the system. We can hire a consultant or if the Commission can take on some groundwork, we could set up a system to help us do some initial inventory. We can set up a standing topic. Inventory of how many parks we have and what we have in those parks and then start talking to the community to see what they want.

Commissioner Corenson, verbally commented, the Parks Commission talked about this seven or eight years ago and there is a database of all the Town parks and what they have to offer, the size of the parks, etc.

Other Business Item #5 – continued

Jerett Blaskey, PPW Parks Services Officer, commented that he has the document of all the Town parks, and what they have to offer, and will forward it to Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director.

Commissioner Ober, verbally commented, on QR codes of what the parks have to offer. Such as great walking trails, playgrounds, and bathrooms.

Chair Stephenson, verbally commented, to create a Master Plan with the JEDI plan in mind. There is a park in Palo Alto, Magical Bridge, this is an adaptive playground. Children with mobility issues will not go on the tanbark in a wheelchair. These are parks designed clearly with everyone in mind, children on the spectrum, and children with mobility issues. I looked into this, and it will cost one million in capital to build one of these, Morgan Hill is currently building one. One of our service communities, the Kiwanis Club, is looking into raising funds for this. I think that would be huge for us if we had a park that could include everybody. When we talk about general issues and a good escalation of equality versus equity, everybody has a need for a park, we just need parks that can serve the population. If we are not doing that, we are not meeting our goals. We should have play structures that are accessible.

Commissioner Corenson, commented, I wonder if you can get some funding from the state or other agencies regarding these types of facilities?

Vice-Chair Gleason, commented, the Arts Commission did have a more visionary approach to the discussions they were having and did meet more frequently. For example, the Gateway Project came out of them thinking forward and they did not have money for it at the time, so they had to present the vision they wanted and go and get the funding for it. The parks have come out of this strategic initiative back in the '60s that led to the funding and the purchase of the land and the establishment of the parks in the '70s and '80s. Now for decades, we have been in this more incremental mode that you are describing. I am wondering if it would make sense if we had a more visionary and strategic plan of where we want to be in 50 years. If you look at things over the course of a few years and see what they are, you will say, well we do not have the money. But if you think over 50 years there should be an opportunity to go after grants or funding from the Town or bond measures. You will have a bigger picture of what you want to achieve. If you have that vision of where you want to be at that time, you would be better positioned to decide which things you would like to go after along the way. Like a particular grant for the Master Plan.

Other Business Item #5 – continued

Commissioner Corenson, commented, a while back we tried to identify the heritage trees we have. We had a plan for that, but we never moved forward. On another Commission, we identified all the trees up and down on North Santa Cruz of which ones are heritage and try to protect them just in case they would be taken down and give them a little more protection than just your standard street tree.

Vice-Chair Gleason, commented, would there be any interest in some collaboration with the Arts Commission of any sort of art inspiration in the parks. They are interested.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, commented, if things come to you, please email Meredith, and she and I will figure out how to add it to the agenda. I am not sure when this will be going to Town Council. We will put together a memo of what you are doing and discuss with the council on what we have an interest in; art, playgrounds and maybe grant funding. Maybe this can go to Town Council on the second meeting in June and our June meeting at La Rinconada can include the memo to review and be ready for Town Council.

6. Senior Services Roadmap

Dick Konrad, Chair of the Senior Services Commission, verbally reported on this item.

The Commission discussed this item.

7. PPW Director's Report

A. Upcoming Events

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported on this item.

The Commission discussed this item.

B. River Clean-Up- Day

Jerett Blaskey PPW Park Services Officer, verbally reported on this item.

The Commission discussed this item.

8. Youth Commission Report

No report was given.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Ober commented on downed trees on St. Joseph's trail blocking the entire trail and the upper parking lot of the Toll House. I am a coproducer for Music in the Park the summer 2023 series is starting July 23rd with six consecutive shows ending August 27th, 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Veterans Memorial will have signs posted that it is closed from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. to protect the grounds during Music in the Park, we do not want any plants to be trampled on. Grays Avenue Park, when Covid first started we decided to make Grays Avenue a park, although not officially a park. We closed off the street and painted the ground green. It worked well during Covid, and it is working well now. Now there is a discrepancy between Loma Brewing and the outside amplified musicians. Commissioner Ober has been receiving a lot of feedback on what can be done. Is it an actual park, what is the purpose of it? The inside bands at Loma Brewing are competing with the outside bands. I noticed Los Gatos High School had a cornhole event. Loma Brewing commented that if this continues, they are going to be canceling the bands. Commissioner Ober found out that acoustic music is allowed outside but amplified music is not allowed.

Chair Stephenson commented on Commissioner Ober's comments for the closure signage for the Veterans Memorial.

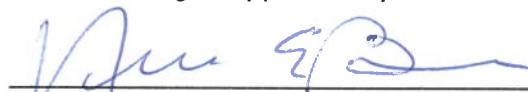
Commissioner Corenson commented on commending the Parks department for the excellent trees and trail cleanup at Belgatos Park. The one issue is the fire road between Harwood and Madera, there is a depression area and mud cross that area, it would be nice to put a retaining wall. Little higher up drainage is clogged, water has been pouring down the hill. The Beautification Committee is now being run by Dick Konrad, Commissioner Corenson read the mission statement and the next meeting is May 11, 2023.

Chair Stephenson commented on putting the Beautification Committee Liaison update on the next agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the April 3, 2023 meeting as approved by the Parks Commission.



Nicolle Burnham, Director of Parks and Public Works