

AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, September 7, 2010

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

7. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

d. Operations (07/15/10) _____ (Lane)

Present

Board: Directors Beverly Lane (Chair), Doug Siden,
Carol Severin (Alternate)

Staff: John Escobar, Jeff Wilson, Anne Scheer, Rick Parmer, Mimi Waluch,
Anne Kassebaum, Nancy Kaiser, Ira Bletz, Christina Garcia, Leigh Padmore

Public: Laurie Rogers, Randy Hees, City of Fremont; Rebecca Geffert, Boardsports, LLC;
Beth Anderson, Oakland Strokes; Steve Soderstrom, Judi Bank, PAC;
Lynne Philpott, Local 2428

I. Review of City of Fremont Patterson House Agreement: Ardenwood
Historic Farm

Revenue & Administration Manager Mimi Waluch recounted the history of the District and City of Fremont's 25-year Management Agreement for the operation of Ardenwood Historic Farm dating back to March 1982. Since a new Management Agreement is in effect as of July 8, 2010, renewal of all associated Ardenwood agreements can proceed. The original Management Agreement made provisions for the City to restore, operate and interpret the Patterson House.

District staff would like to differentiate the operation of the Patterson House from the Ardenwood Management Agreement by implementing a Patterson House Special Use Agreement to run separately from the Ardenwood Master Agreement. Staff recommends entering into a Special Use Agreement with the City for a five-year term, which would define both the District's and City's responsibilities for operating the Patterson House. The District shall compensate the City for providing house tours to the general public and scheduled groups during the park's historic season, at a rate not to exceed \$66,368 in the first year, to be increased annually not to exceed 2%, and by mutual agreement during the option terms.

Recalling his first visit to Ardenwood, Director Doug Siden commented how impressed he was that the City was able to offer this valuable addition to the greater Fremont community.

Supervising Naturalist Ira Bletz observed that when visiting Ardenwood, groups and families are offered a variety of experiences, with most focusing on a working farm. The Patterson House provides an opportunity to interpret a piece of the story that covers domestic life at the “ranch” in the 1870’s.

Mr. Bletz announced that District and City staffs have planned a small event celebrating signing of the new Management Agreement and in recognition of the 25th anniversary of the park opening to the public. The event is scheduled for Sunday, July 25th at 11:30 a.m., and Committee members were invited to attend the signing ceremony.

Ms. Waluch introduced Randy Hees, the City’s on-site Manager, and Laurie Rogers, Recreation Superintendent for the City of Fremont. Mr. Hees, assisted by a part-time coordinator, is responsible for recruitment and training of the park’s 105 volunteer docents. Responding to Director Beverly Lane’s interest in learning about the role of docents at Ardenwood, Mr. Hees explained that in addition to conducting house tours, the docents clean and maintain the house and garden, and decorate the mansion for the holiday season.

Ms. Waluch reported that staff is very happy with the current management arrangement and recommends Committee approval of the Special Use Agreement. Director Carol Severin moved that the Committee recommend that the full Board enter into a Special Use Agreement with the City of Fremont for operation of the Patterson House for a five-year term, to include the above-mentioned conditions. Director Siden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (3-0).

2. Review of New Concessionaire Agreement: Crown Beach Boardsailing

Crown Memorial State Beach has had a boardsailing and kite boarding concession since the early 1980’s. The District entered into an agreement to operate the concession through April 2010 with Tom Lloyd d.b.a. Boardsports. By mutual agreement, Mr. Lloyd assigned the agreement to Jane Comier and Rebecca Geffert d.b.a. Boardsports School, LLC, in February 2006. This agreement is in good standing and the operators have worked well with District staff. A Request for Proposals earlier this year resulted in one response from the current concessionaires. Staff would like to offer Boardsports School, LLC a four-year Concession Agreement, with one additional two-year option period, to operate the Crown Beach boardsailing concession. The District can expect annual revenue of up to \$7,500, representing 8% of total gross monthly services and sales derived from the operation.

Director Severin asked how the concession was performing in light of the current economy. Ms. Geffert responded that they are definitely feeling the effects of the changing economy but because Boardsports School is diversified, offering lessons and rentals for kite boarding, windsurfing, basic boardsailing, stand-up paddle boarding, and kayaking, they have so far been able to survive the economic slowdown. Director Lane asked about water safety and whether Boardsports reviews each student’s ability to swim. Ms. Geffert responded that students are required to sign a liability release and are prohibited from taking lessons if they are unable to swim.

Director Siden moved to recommend to the full Board staff's recommendation to enter into a four-year Concession Agreement with Boardsports School, LLC, with one additional two-year option period, to operate the Crown Beach boardsailing concession. Director Severin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (3-0).

3. Update on Tidewater Aquatic Center Program, Facility and Park Management

In updating the Committee on the status of the Tidewater Aquatic Facility, Recreation Services Manager Anne Kassebaum reported that for the past few months, staff has been working on identifying roles and responsibilities for management of the new facility. The Recreation Services Manager will be the primary liaison with the tenant, Oakland Strokes, whose agreement requires that they conduct outreach to under-served communities. Shoreline Unit Manager Anne Rockwell will be in charge of park operations and is currently working with Public Safety on installation of security cameras, alarms and telephones. Ms. Waluch will be overseeing the residence where a District employee will eventually be living. Ms. Kassebaum further reported that construction is on track to be completed by mid-October.

Following the update, Ms. Kassebaum showed recent photographs of the various buildings and described how each building will be used, including relocating the District's Outdoor Recreation staff from the Redwood Schoolhouse to the Tidewater site. Committee members were given a handout describing potential programming opportunities including boating, recreation, interpretive services, and special events. Ms. Kassebaum discussed plans to develop partnerships with schools in the area, specifically middle schools, to provide environmental education programs.

The Recreation Department has obtained a \$20,000 grant from the Regional Parks Foundation to conduct a water safety program at Tidewater in collaboration with the District's Outdoor Recreation, Community Outreach Coordinator, Lifeguard Services, and Volunteer Safety Patrol. Students will spend two hours at Roberts Pool getting used to the water and learning basic water safety skills, followed by a classroom visit and on-the-water experience at Tidewater.

Save The Bay (STB) recently restructured its focus to concentrate on youth habitat restoration projects and has elected to discontinue operation of the *Canoes in Sloughs* program. Staff was approached by STB to take over the program but determined that this was not a viable option under existing budgetary constraints. Subsequently, STB offered to donate two trailers, twenty canoes, and safety equipment to be stored at Tidewater for existing program use. Staff has committed to offering six programs for the Girl Scouts in the spring and the District's Interpretive and Recreation Services Managers are currently developing program curriculum.

AGM John Escobar reported that in the next couple of months the District's relationship with Oakland Strokes will shift from design/construction to operations. Ms. Kassebaum and AGM Escobar have had several meetings with the Oakland Strokes Board President and staff assigned to outreach efforts, to establish goals for the first full year of operation.

Representing Tidewater tenant Oakland Strokes, Program Director Beth Anderson, described her role in directing outreach plan goals. Along with three colleagues, Ms. Anderson, has already begun local outreach efforts by contacting middle schools in the area,

The Committee discussed other Tidewater-related issues, among them:

- Director Siden suggested that as we get closer to the opening, staff should contact residents across the estuary. AGM Escobar agreed and observed that the park supervisor has already made contact in terms of residents' interest during construction.
- Since available parking is limited at the site, Director Lane expressed concern about balancing the parking needs of Oakland Strokes with those of the visiting public. AGM Escobar and Oakland Strokes Board President have discussed the possibility of Oakland Strokes negotiating with a nearby trucking company for use of their property for team member parking.
- Director Lane inquired about the status of the planned dock extension, while emphasizing the importance of accommodating the public's ability to launch their boats. Ms. Anderson responded that due to timing and the District's budget constraints, this work could not be incorporated into the existing construction contract. Committee consensus is that completion of the dock is an important element of the project, and the Committee expressed their desire for Oakland Strokes to see the dock extension through to completion.
- Director Lane commented that the third building lends itself to bicycle programs, particularly for young cyclists, but noted that she has heard from irate bicyclists that they are unable to navigate the Bay Trail due to construction. Ms. Kassebaum responded that staff has plans to provide bicycle programs and twenty bicycles will be stored at the site.

Ms. Kassebaum concluded her presentation by stating that Tidewater fits well into the Recreation Services Department's strategic plan to provide programs that appeal to diverse ages, abilities, cultures and economic backgrounds, and complements the Department's core services, which focus on fostering a healthy lifestyle and promoting environmental awareness.

4. Docent Program Update: Mid-Year Report

Staff provided the Committee with reports on docent training, a description of the programs docents assist with, and plans for the next few years to continue improving the program. Initiated in 2005, the number of participants in the docent program has steadily increased and there are currently almost 100 active docent volunteers who in 2009 accumulated over 25,000 service hours.

Interpretive Services Manager Nancy Kaiser introduced Christina Garcia, Docent Coordinator at Ardenwood, who joined the meeting to provide an update and share information stories about the District's docent program and its beginnings. The first docent program was

introduced at Sunol in 1971, and the longest standing docent is Mary Anne Hannon who in 2007 was honored by *Diablo Magazine* with their *Threads of Hope Award* in recognition of those who excel in community service. Ms. Hannon also served on the committee that helped expand the docent program to all of the District's visitor centers and has been a great ambassador for the District for over 35 years. Ardenwood's docent program, initiated in 1985, is the result of a collaborative effort with the City of Fremont. Its longest standing docent, Donna Hahn, is one of the few original docents still active at Ardenwood.

Ms. Garcia described the different docent program "models" used to achieve the most effective use of docents in assisting naturalists at the various visitor centers. One area where docents are of particular value is in assisting at special events such as the *Wildflower Festival* at Sunol, the *Ohlone Gathering* at Coyote Hills, and the *Apple Festival* at Garin.

Staff reported that they expect the Mobile Visitor Center (MVC) to be wrapped within the next few weeks, and that interpretive themes will focus on watersheds and "what lives within the parks." Director Lane urged staff to take advantage of the MVC to also convey cultural information since school materials on this subject are rarely up to date.

Ms. Kaiser provided the Committee with information on materials that can be accessed on the internet, descriptions of school programs, and programs offered through each of the visitor centers. The Committee thanked the interpretive staff for an excellent presentation.

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

6. Staff Comments

AGM Escobar stated that staff is considering cancelling the August meeting since there appear to be no pressing agenda items and staff is heavily involved in budget preparations at this time.

7. Adjournment

Director Lane adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m. Possible cancellation of the August meeting will be discussed with the Committee Chair and notification of the decision will be made by August 1st.