



NOTICE OF MEETING

CITY OF PACIFIC GROVE BEAUTIFICATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, August 20, 2019, 4:00 P.M.
Council Chamber – City Hall – 300 Forest Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call

Beautification and Natural Resources Commission Board Members: Jeanie Anton (Chair), Thom Akeman, Kelly Terry, David Myers, Lindsay Jacob, Colleen Goldsmith, Rebecca Lee

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. Approval of July 16, 2019 Meeting Minutes
Reference: Chair Anton, (Attachment 1)
Recommended Action: Approve minutes

4. Presentations

- a. Monarch Sanctuary Docents Report
- b. Michael Laredo, Commissioner Handbook

5. Public Comments

- a. Written Communications
- b. Oral Communications

Comments must deal with matters subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission that are not on the Agenda. Comments from the public will be limited to three minutes and will not receive Commission action. Whenever possible, letters should be submitted to the Commission in advance of the meeting.

6. Reports Not Requiring Action

- a. Council Liaison Announcements
Reference: Councilman Nick Smith
- b. Public Acknowledgement

7. Items Requiring Action

8. Unfinished/Ongoing Business

- a. Update: George Washington Park.
Reference: Milas Smith, Park Maintenance
Recommended Action: Receive the update, provide comments
- b. Update: Monarch Sanctuary
Reference: Daniel Gho
Recommended Action: Receive the report (Attachment 2)
- c. Seasonal Noise Reduction Zone Concept Discussion

Reference: Thom Akeman Recommended
Action: Receive the report (Attachment 3).

- 9. New Business**
- 10. Commissioner's Reports**
- 11. Staff Announcements**
- 12. Items for Next Agenda**

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE OF ADA COMPLIANCE: Pursuant to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (Codified At 42 United States Code Section 12101 and 28 Code of Federal Regulations Part 35), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the City of Pacific Grove does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, disability, age or sexual orientation in the provision of any services, programs, or activities. The City of Pacific Grove does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. City Hall is an accessible facility. A limited number of assisted listening devices will be available at this meeting. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting or provide the requested agenda format.



CITY OF PACIFIC GROVE
BEAUTIFICATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, July 23, 2019, 4:00 P.M.
Council Chamber – City Hall – 300 Forest Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA

1. CALL TO ORDER AT 4 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

Beautification and Natural Resources Commission Members: Jeanie Anton, Chair; Dave Myers;

Thom Akeman; Colleen Goldsmith; Rebecca Lee; Kelly Terry; Lindsay Jacob

3. Approval of July Agenda

Unanimous approval of Agenda

4. Approval of Minutes

Unanimous approval of June 18 Minutes with corrections noted as follows: 5 a. spelling of word Round

Up to Roundup (and wherever word Roundup appears in minutes); 5 a. correct spelling of name

Polkable to Polkabra ; 5 b. change wording to say "she says" under comment by Lorna Moffett; 8 , 2.

Rebecca Lee addition that she offered to provide photos of good weeds to Public Works; 11 a. change

to insert " Coastal Commission" instead of "city" and delete word "rope"

5. Public Comments

a. Written Communications: None

b. Oral Communication:

1. Lisa Ciani noted trash pickup improvement at Lovers Point; issue with ground squirrel population with request for city follow-up to address squirrel excavations and holes along rec trail

6. No Presentations

7. Reports Not Requiring Action

a. Council Liaison Nick Smith absent; Mayor Bill Peake noted status of Library Renewal bids; Coastal Commission met in San Luis Obispo regarding LCP; Wildlife Protection Committee planning possible town hall meeting; update on status of Pine and Congress street improvements; noted service for 50 years by Gary Bales with MRWMD; and Comstock holding informational meeting at ATC regarding hotel project

b. Jeanie Anton acknowledged Colleen Ingram and Sustainable PG for informational meeting on the

issue of single use plastics; Dave Myers acknowledged news article written by Nick Smith;

Rebecca Lee acknowledged work by Lisa Ciani on both civic and environmental issues

8. Items Requiring Action: None

9. Unfinished/Ongoing Business

- a. Revised IPM Guidelines presentation by Milas Smith to eliminate use of Roundup on city property goes before city council who decides whether to ban glyphosate use
 1. Public Comment: Lisa Ciani commented on revised IPM and request for ongoing review
 2. Commission Comment: Rebecca Lee expressed support of IPM revision
- b. Monarch Sanctuary Restroom update provided by Dan Gho who stated that mistakes were made regarding CEQA guidelines; tribal involvement, bird survey and mitigation issues. In 2018, project required full sewer installation which has been modified to tie in with existing line; currently a tribal monitor in place and expectation that toilet building to be installed within days; 24th of July is scheduled date for staff walk through with arborist and Stu Weiss
 1. Public Comment: Lisa Ciani expressed disappointment with Public Works not addressing issues in timely manner; Staff comment by Connie Masotti who discussed meeting in Reno about monarch butterfly numbers and request to meet with Public Works
 2. Commission Comment: Dave Myers raised question regarding milkweed which Dan Gho stated is not recommended for overwintering sites, as it would create confusion in butterfly breeding
- c. Harbor Seals and Noise Disturbances report by Thom Akeman (attachment 3) addressing possible noise reduction ordinance during seal pupping season (March through May). Thom further noted reduction in food sources for seals with increased environmental stresses and skittish behavior observed
 1. Public Comment: Lisa Ciani acknowledged report by Thom and supports increased protection
 2. Commission Comment: Jeanie Anton suggested a mailing to residents during pupping season to advise of noise reduction concern; Kelly Terry inquired about the specificity of noise reduc-

tion ordinance and whether it would prohibit homeowners from scheduling activities such as tree removal; Colleen Goldsmith asked whether there would be any interface with Aquarium scientists; Thom Akeman advised that Facebook web page was started by Kim Akeman in 2014 and cautioned that in a public forum, data is not scientifically peer reviewed

3. Dan Gho noted that BNRC may want to go move forward with Liaison Nick Smith, Legal, and PG police department with a bullet type summary for a noise reduction ordinance. This would go to city council with a recommendation by the BNRC to take action on issue.

10. **New Business:**

- a. Existing post office island presentation by Milas Smith who noted that number of mature junipers may be rat infested and drop off mail boxes will remain in place; project will be performed by Public Works
 1. Public Comment: Lisa Ciani noted that the beautiful plants listed may be high maintenance in terms of weeding etc. in the proposed landscape plan
 2. Dave Myers posed question about mail boxes; Jeanie Anton prefers a boulder/large rock look over the proposed riverbed design; Colleen Goldsmith emphasized maintenance of plants which Milas Smith addressed by noting that ground cover included in landscape design
- b. BNRC Receipt of Updated March 2019 Boards, Committees and Commissions Handbook

11. **Commissioners Report**

1. Jeanie Anton acknowledged Chautauqua Hall weeding/clean up organized by Amy Colony; June 26th Plastics Forum at the PG Museum with presentations by Milas Smith, Sustainable PG, Aquarium, MRWMD Jeff London; Surfrider and several vendors selling compostible products; Dave Myers observed that the rec trail was crowded and chaotic and suggested need for trail improvements such as making the trail more like the one in Monterey; Rebecca Lee complimented organizers for both Plastics meetings and stated group would like to see refillable water stations and sales of reusable aluminum water bottles; also noted that 3 pine tree seedlings are growing at

the Cal Am Pump Station and trees have been removed at Middle School; Kelly Terry noted there are no plans to plant new trees and recommended that Rebecca go to school board meeting to express concerns regarding replacing trees; Kelly Terry shared observation that during visit to Eureka, local artists paint the utility boxes and would like something similar in Pacific Grove as a way to beautify area

12. Staff Announcements: None

13. Items for Next Agenda

- a. Update by Thom Akeman regarding seasonal noise reduction zone
- b. Update on Monarch Sanctuary restroom
- c. Update on post office island landscaping project

14. Meeting Adjourned at 5:15 pm

Colleen Goldsmith

8/20/19

Secretary

Date

Request for seasonal noise limits along part of Ocean View Boulevard.

Why: Ocean conditions are changing, making life and reproduction difficult for our harbor seals. At the same time, economic changes are increasing activities along our shoreline, bringing more, unusual and sometimes loud noises that can disrupt the seals' pupping season and contribute to miscarriages, stillborns, premature births and abandonments.

Where and when: Avoiding or reducing loud, unusual and unnecessary noises around the harbor seal rookeries during the spring pupping season would ease some of the discomfort the seals now experience. That would generally affect Ocean View Boulevard between Eardley and 10th Streets during the months of February, March, April and May.

How: Emergencies would be unavoidable, of course, but things like normal construction or remodeling work, reroofing, tree work, landscaping or maintenance that involves heavy equipment could be scheduled or delayed to avoid unnecessary disruptions during the pupping months. Something similar to the seasonal noise restrictions around the Monarch Grove Sanctuary when the butterflies are here might work. That could be done as an amendment to the Marine Refuge ordinance that protects harbor seals pups (Municipal Code section 14.04), or as an amendment to the general noise ordinance (section 11.96), or simply as a policy that covers building and tree permits in the designated area.

Background on the harbor seals, changing conditions and need:

Our harbor seals are here because they found a quiet place where they can sleep and rest during the days, then go into the ocean at night to hunt for fish. They disappeared in the late 1800s after seals were hunted to near extinction, but six returned to the rocks behind Hopkins Marine Station in the spring of 1967. With a healthy ecosystem to feed them and secluded beaches to protect them, the colony grew to about 500 by 1997. That year a number of pregnant females moved onto the West Beach at Hopkins to give birth, starting the first harbor seal "rookery" in Pacific Grove. It grew in size and importance as the colony grew to estimates of more than 700 by 2014. That was the peak year for harbor seals here with nearly 100 seal pups born on our beaches. There have been notable declines since then with the population dropping back to estimates of 500 or less, and only 60 successful births this year.

The reasons for the decline are varied and speculative. They include:

- food uncertainties generally caused by warming waters;

- an increasing number of a major predator -- white sharks -- in Monterey Bay;
- more human disturbances caused by increased tourism – more people and noise on our oceanside recreation trail, more street traffic noise, more kayakers and paddle boarders entering seal refuges from the water, and more people climbing and even jumping over protective fences;
- drones that produce unfamiliar sights and sounds overhead.

Docents who pay close attention to our seals -- and discuss them with thousands of visitors along our shoreline -- have also seen the animals scared from the beach by occasional loud or unusual construction noises nearby – hammering, sawing, roofing, heavy equipment operations – tree work and even tents flapping in the wind. Such reactions to noise are special concerns as pregnant seals approach delivery, or nursing moms might be frightened away from dependent pups.

Because of the disturbance concerns, docents in the past few years have approached property owners, contractors and city officials to see if home construction projects, a tree removal, a landscaping project and street repairs could be shifted or delayed to protect the delicate pupping season. In all cases (five so far), we found people cooperative and willing to rearrange the noisy work once they knew there was a reason to so. An ordinance or policy could have let them know in advance so they could have planned accordingly.

Location(s) of the rookery(ies):

The first harbor seal rookery, right next to the popular recreation trail, started in 1997 with 30 to 35 births. As the colony kept growing, that beach became crowded with as many as 450 animals at one time. In 2006, three pregnant seals left the crowd and went to small beach at the bottom of 5th Street to give birth. That established a second, or spillover, rookery. There have been births at both beaches ever since – more than 800 at Hopkins, 182 in the 5th Street cove.

Recent problems – food uncertainties, malnutrition and disturbances from noise and movements of more people in the area – have caused reproductive failures and die-offs. The survival problems have caused our seals to be more skittish and quicker to react to unusual noises and sights by fleeing into the water where they can swim away quickly. That's a serious problem during pupping season when pregnant seals can be frightened to miscarry, nursing moms can abandon their newborns to almost certain death alone. We saw six failed births in the 2014 peak season – miscarriages, stillborns, premature births and abandoned pups -- but we've seen 15 to as many as 40 failures in the years since.

The problems seem to have produced a third rookery – or second “spillover” rookery – on a beach behind the Hopkins buildings, out of public view. It's less

protected from strong ocean waves than the other two, but it seems to be quieter and certainly further from humans. Docents don't know the exact number of births on that beach this year but saw the clear signs of them (afterbirth on the sand) and as many as 21 nursing moms and pups one day.

Expansion to that secluded beach now stretches "the rookery" from about Eardley to 8th Streets along Ocean View Boulevard. We would ask seasonal noise restrictions to be extended on to 10th Street because of the way sound resonates along that part of the shoreline. The annual March of Remembrance to the former Chinese fishing village site at Hopkins has learned to stop its drumming at 10th Street in order to not flush the nursing seals in the 5th Street cove next to Berwick Park.