



Neighborhood Parks Council
Annual Park Group Meeting with Mayor Lee
March 22, 2011 9:30 AM
City Hall, Room 305

Questions submitted by the public for Mayor Lee:

1) Geoffrea Morris, Parks 94124: Parks 94124 and the McLaren Park Collaborative are both examples of community park steward groups in the southeast sector that are diligently working with residents and community stakeholders to create a massive social change towards our parks culture in the District 10.

Therefore, we need to know what are your ideas for southeast sector of San Francisco? And how do you plan to improve the quality of life for those residing in the southeast sector?

Are you willing to work with Neighborhood Parks Council, Recreation and Park, and local community park groups like Parks 94124 and the McLaren Park Collaborative to support a bond measure would specifically leverage funding and services to the parks of southeast sector of San Francisco?

Answer:

The Department has achieved several important accomplishments in District 10 so far. Here a couple of highlights:

- Youngblood Coleman has received new irrigation and restroom.
- The bathroom at Bayview Playground is being renovated.
- New irrigation installed at Hilltop Park
- Kayaking is now offered at India Basin
- Recent Volunteer Workdays with 94124 at Hilltop Park and Gilman Playground
- And we have also hosted several volunteer programs in D10, including a partnership with the Bayview Hill stewardship group and India Basin YSP programming through Downtown High School.

More importantly RPD may be pursuing another GO bond in November 2012; this next bond, if we continue to use the community and criteria driven list developed for the 2008 bond, may include several parks within the Southeast sector, including Crocker Amazon, and McLaren Park. This work will build on the more than \$50 million worth of capital work that RPD has completed in the Southeast Sector, including MLK Pool, Coffman Pool/Herz PG, Jo Lee PG, Little Hollywood Park, Portrero del Sol, and Visitacion Valley.

2) Gus Hernandez, Alamo Square Neighborhood Association: Alamo Square, home of the Painted Ladies, is San Francisco's #2 most photographed tourist destination, after the Golden Gate Bridge. Our park's irrigation system has been deteriorating year after year, and we keep hearing we are 'next'

on the list for repairs. Thanks to the rain, our park is looking clean and green; however, if we prioritize improvements to Alamo Square, visitors will be more likely to come back. Can you help make Alamo Square a priority for RPD and PUC?

Answer:

Extensive irrigation repairs have been made to bandage together the system for the coming season. Alamo Square's irrigation is past its useful life; budget constraints are the only impediment to its renovation. Unfortunately, all parks compete for limited bond funding. RPD has identified Alamo Park as its top priority as part of its 5-year Capital Improvement Plan; also, Alamo Square Park will be submitted in the next funding cycle of PUC's Large Landscape Grant Program.

As there is currently no comprehensive plan to replace the entire system, staff will continue to monitor and make repairs as immediate issues arise. This will undoubtedly continue to make for periodic brown-outs in areas awaiting repair. We will strive to make these time periods as short as possible. With our Department facing over \$1.9 billion in necessary repairs, the aesthetics of park grass may not always get the immediate attention for capital improvements as life safety issues always will be prioritized first.

3) Callen Taylor, Friends of Kimbell Park:

a) Recently members of our park group participated in a tour of city playgrounds and noticed a rather big discrepancy among the parks. In low income areas of the city there are rundown parks/ playgrounds or under scheduled rec centers. How can the city and Rec and Park address the inequity in parks and rec centers and to make sure that low income neighborhoods have access to quality programs?

Answer:

We've invested \$24M in the neighborhood (\$18M for Hamilton, \$3M for Kimbell and \$3M for Hayes Valley Playground.) We encourage everyone to participate in stewardship of their parks and continue to advocate for more park funding.

All parks, playgrounds and recreation centers are managed within the Department's values of equity and access. Any perceived discrepancies may be attributed to the only dynamic variable of community ownership, which fluctuates neighborhood by neighborhood. The Department fully embraces and is committed to social justice; as such, every opportunity and effort is dedicated to identify alternative funding sources to invest in the neighborhoods where San Franciscans may not have the same philanthropic capacity as others.

b) What kind of outreach does Rec and Park do for public school kids? Do they do school visits to help with setting up family accounts, sign up for programs, and assist in scholarships? I know many public school children's parents may not have Internet access to obtain family accounts or have credit cards to pay for programs.

Answer:

Currently the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department outreaches to public school families in a number of ways:

- 58,000 mailers go out 4-5 times per year informing families of special events and dates/locations for program registration
- Promote recreational programs and summer camps through our California Parks and Recreation award winning Website
- RPD attends and participates in citywide partnerships such as Shape-up SF, Afterschool Excel, and the Summer Learning Initiative with the San Francisco Health Department, SFUSD, and other city partners
- Facility Coordinators are currently working with surrounding school staff members to promote RPD programs by attending school events/functions, post SFUSD approved flyers, and by informing PTA's and other school groups of RPD offerings. Nevertheless, we will continue to look to improve in this area and are happy to receive suggestions
- RPD takes advantage of city-wide promotional opportunities such as Sunday Streets and Summer Resource Fair at Bill Graham Center
- RPD is currently working on an iPhone / Android RPD App
- Attend and participate in community/neighborhood convener meetings and functions
- Work with Hydra Mendoza from the Mayor's Office and President of the San Francisco School Board to find ways to better communicate with SFUSD families

4) Kate Haug, Friends of Noe Valley Recreation Center: How could SF Recreation and Parks work with schools more effectively?

Answer:

See answer to question 3.

5) Audrey Kelly, Joe DiMaggio: When will the Joe DiMaggio Clubhouse re-open?

Answer:

Previously, clubhouses were programmed 20 hours per week by the Recreation and Park Department (RPD). RPD was able to provide that service because of add-back by the Board of Supervisors in the 09-10 budget process. Given this year's historic budget deficit and the fact that RPD received no add-back in the 10-11 budget, RPD has had to close its clubhouses and seek alternative ways to provide programming at RPD clubhouses.

To keep our clubhouses activated RPD staff has sought out partners to provide programming in clubhouses. These partners will all offer programming which falls to RPD's four core programming areas: Arts and Culture, Sports and Athletics, Community Services and Extreme Recreation. Current clubhouse partners include: Rec Connect Programs, Boys and Girls Club, Self-help for the Elderly, Opportunity Impact, and nursery schools. RPD seeks out partners for clubhouses who will occupy the clubhouses the majority of the time to ensure that critical services are being delivered to the community on an ongoing basis and to maintain a user-friendly, safe atmosphere.

Activating Joe D'Immaggio clubhouse is one of our top priorities. RPD is currently reviewing and in discussions with a potential non-profit partner to lease the property. Additionally, there is interest in the community to fund raise money to support programming at the clubhouse. For questions please contact Lev Kushner at 415-831-2771 or lev.kushner@sfgov.org.

6) Jill Fox, India Basin Neighborhood Association: Would you like to know how the India Basin Community Vision--including a boating center, urban farm, and commuter bike path--will make the southern waterfront a vibrant recreation destination and revitalize the entire neighborhood?

Answer:

The India Basin Community Vision will absolutely make the neighborhood a vibrant recreation destination. RPD is currently evaluating potential India Basin acquisitions within the context of an overall revision of the acquisition policy; we expect recommendations to emerge from that process late Spring to early Summer of this year.

7) Robert Brust, Dolores Park Works: Do you support a permanent revenue stream for RPD?

Answer:

The Department has historically had a number of ongoing revenue streams, dating back to the early 20th century. These include:

- Program Fees
- Permit Fees
- Leases (i.e. Candlestick, Coit Tower)
- Concessions (i.e. hotdogs in GGP)

More importantly, we will continue to support and look for new ways to secure revenue streams that allow the department to protect key and vital services to our park visitors and users.

8) Allyson Eddy Bravmann, John Macaulay Park: Parks and playgrounds in the Tenderloin & Civic Center have significant problems with security and safety. How can RPD improve this situation so that parents don't have to act as law enforcement?

Answer:

It takes a village to keep our park safe and clean. Our custodial staff visits the playground twice a day, seven days a week and our horticultural staff is on site once a week.

Security in the area is a high priority for RPD. Every parent should participate in their child's play time, with supervision. The Department assigns staff to direct program delivery or direct service delivery. In the case of parks, the direct service delivery is in the real of landscape maintenance and restoration as well as conservation and management of natural resources.

In addition, all of the parks have the presence of custodial staff on a daily basis twice a day to provide maintenance to the park restroom. Every set of eyes, from RPD to park visitors' are crucial to ensure safe places for our children to play. Regrettably, due to budget constrains, the Department's does not have the resources to expand its Park Ranger Program, which can join SFPD efforts. This park also lies just outside the Tenderloin Police Station jurisdiction and on the edge of the Northern Station increasing the challenge of SFPD supervision.

9) Charles Farrugia, Help McLaren Park: My question is concerning the lack of plumbers, electricians, tree trimmers, carpenters, etc., at McLaren Park. I think we all have come to the realization that this park is so large that we should have at least one of each stationed permanently at the park itself. Trying to get tradesmen away from their posts in Golden Gate Park always involves huge time delays, tons of paperwork, and lost man hours on the road crisscrossing the city. There is more than enough work at this park to justify it, as well as a location perfectly suited for it at the Louis Sutter Maintenance Yard.

Answer:

If the funding was there, we would love to see up to 10 gardeners at McLaren Park.

Unfortunately, due to our limited resources, RPD has to centralize all Structural Maintenance crafts work. We have 10 crafts to maintain all of the structural elements of our 220+ parks. Some shops (e.g., cement masons, sheet metal) have only two tradesmen. Consequently, we manage all structural maintenance centrally and accomplish work throughout the entire park system via work orders. In addition to centralized staffing, this model also allows the Department to maximize our limited fleet of heavy equipment and related tool inventory that are necessary for all crafts work.

In addition, our structural maintenance crew prioritizes and completes 33 non-emergency work orders citywide every two weeks.

10) Barbara Fugate and Josie Porter, Cayuga Playground/Cayuga Improvement

Association Board Members: Why do we not have a written policy as to the plans to lease neighborhood parks? Why do we not have an equal number of community members helping to choose who gets a lease at a park clubhouse? What income earned by Rec and Park property goes into the General Fund and goes back out to Rec and Park? Are we using income from Rec and Park operated properties to pay other City bills?

Answer:

There are no current plans to lease neighborhood parks. Outside areas, including playgrounds and restrooms remain open to the public during posted hours.

11) Dan Schneider, McLaren Park: Have you been to McLaren Park lately?

Yes.

12) Marklin Alford, Support Vendor: There are compactor garbage cans available that reduce the carbon footprint of collectors and save labor--No one will take a look at them.

Answer:

Big Belly solar powered trash compactor has been installed at Dolores Park last year. Likewise, the Department has a strong partnership with the Department of the Environment to review waste diversion at our parks. Great strides have been taken in this regard.

13) Glenn Snyder, San Francisco Parks Trust: Should RPD have a dedicated public revenue source to provide a baseline of required funds to maintain our parks and recreation system? What feasible options are available?

The Recreation and Park Department currently receives a property tax set aside known as the Open Space Fund. At present, the department receives two and one-half cents for every one hundred dollars of assessed valuation, equal to approximately \$34 million in the current fiscal year. To create additional revenue, the voters could choose to increase the department's property tax set aside to create a sustainable funding source. There are numerous other possibilities including Park Improvement Districts or a parcel-tax for parks.

14) Colleen M O'Neill, Friends of Mountain Lake Park: Dr. Alex Horne (UC Berkley) presented a thorough report on Mountain Lake and the challenges involved including toxic contamination and other conditions that create unsafe and hazardous conditions for our neighborhood. This lake is located directly adjacent to a neighborhood playground. There are also concerns that the many birds and water fowl may carry contaminants to surrounding homes and Presidio. What can we do to facilitate the allocation of resources to clean up our lake?

Answer:

There is a considerable effort by multiple agency recently undertaken precisely to address this issue. The State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the Presidio Trust are leading the effort to develop a Remediation Action Plan that will clean up contaminants in the sediment for protection of freshwater species. RPD met with the Friends of Mountain Lake Park and Supervisor Mark Farrell's office a few weeks ago (3/15) to discuss additional areas of interest and priorities for the community in this area. (Ana)

15) Megan Walker, AECOM: Where is the San Francisco Urban Forest Master Plan on the priority list for restored funding?

Answer:

The Planning Department has responsibility for funding the development of a San Francisco Urban Forestry Master Plan. Unfortunately, Planning Department budgets and funding have prioritized other projects in lieu of developing this Master Plan.

16) Andrea O’Leary, Sunnyside Park Families & Neighbors, Friends of the Sunnyside Conservatory:

Has there been, and if so what, a comprehensive study citywide to determine who are the recreation providers (for profit or non-profit) for all age groups who are willing and able to set-up shop in our small local Clubhouses? Does such a list and description exist? Has there been any examination of how local residents might be assisted to combine talents to provide recreation for their neighbors in local Clubhouses versus leasing-out these sites for long terms?

Answer:

Unfortunately, the city does not have the bandwidth to research and approach all nonprofit service providers. As of November, 2010, there were 7,335 registered nonprofits in the City and County of San Francisco, according to the National Center for Charitable Statistics.

RPD relies on community needs assessments from department’s such as DCYF as well as community input in the form of town halls and neighborhood specific meetings. The latest assessment has just been completed and is being presented to city commissions. For instance, at the Sunnyside Clubhouse, neighbors suggested partnering with the following organizations:

MYEEP - The Mayor’s Youth Employment and Education Program (MYEEP) provides subsidized employment opportunities to approximately 1,400 high school aged youth each year. The goal of the program is to support the positive development of youth in San Francisco by engaging them in meaningful employment, career, leadership, and community involvement opportunities. MYEEP is a collaboration of several community-based agencies, which ensures citywide inclusion in the program, as well as access to a diverse array of services. '

GLO - Growth & Learning Opportunities (GLO) is a private non-profit organization that runs 6 after school programs and a Summer Program in San Francisco Public Schools. The GLO programs are dedicated to offering education, enrichment and recreational activities to families and their children. Serving more than 500 families, GLO provides quality after school programs free of cost to over 100 of them.

SF Arts Ed – SF Arts Ed’s mission is to bring art — in many exciting forms — to San Francisco’s youth in vivid, experiential ways. Educating through participation is what firmly distinguishes the San Francisco Arts Education Project. We pursue this by bringing career artists directly to kids in every corner of our city; helping them ignite personal confidence and growth. As children enter a world of lifelong investigation, we seek to leave them with skills that not only embrace their childhood curiosity. But captivate their imaginations over decades.

Once an organization demonstrates interest, staff will host community meetings to introduce the potential partner to stakeholder groups. If the programming is deemed a good fit, partners will be given pilot leases. Pilot leases will be no longer than two years in duration and will allow for collaborative assessment of the programming.

17) Leah Nanni, Golden Gate Women's Soccer League: What are the current/new plans for additional soccer fields in the city? It seems that as more and more people are playing, the older folks are getting squeezed off fields.

Answer:

RPD hopes to be able to deliver two new synthetic turf soccer field renovations over the next two years: Beach Chalet in Golden Gate Park, and Minnie Lovie in the Oceanview neighborhood. While not new soccer field sites, renovating these currently natural turf fields to synthetic turf will increase potential usage by 11,378 hours at those sites. Coupled with these great projects, the Department recently renovated the Polo Fields in Golden Gate Park. This million dollar project replaced the entire irrigation system, improved drainage and installed new sod. We anticipate these fields (7 soccer/ 16 acres) opening for play at the end of May.

The number of field hours allocated for adult play has actually grown. Although many of the day time hours on Saturday have gone to meet the grouping youth soccer demand, more field time has been allocated for adult play on Sundays and weekday evenings. The GG Women's Soccer League has gone from 1/2 fields per day to 1 field per day on Sundays and we have been able to sustain the 3 field allocation on Saturdays due to the field improvements listed above. In general, field availability for adult use has grown exponentially as a result of the new lighting added at our recently renovated facilities. We hope to continue this trend with our future field improvements.

18) Felicia Zeiger, PROSAC:

a) There is tree failure danger onto public paths at my local park: Stern Grove. RPD is playing Russian Roulette with park users lives including small children and infants in baby strollers Why? There's already been one death by tree failure in a public parking lot. How many more before the problem is taken care of?

Answer:

The RPD Urban Forestry crews continue to accomplish the tree work recommended in the Stern Grove Tree Assessment. The Tree Assessment rates trees on a Hazard scale of 2 to 12 (a rating of 12 being the most hazardous). To date, all trees rated 12, 11, and 10 have been removed. We will continue to perform the recommended tree maintenance actions on the remaining trees that are rated 9 and 8 in the Assessment. As with all tree work, we have to move Tree Crews around the City to address the highest priority work -- especially emergency tree work -- on our estimated 131,000 trees on San Francisco parkland.

b) I cannot peacefully enjoy my local parks (western neighborhood) because of the ongoing gunfire noise from the Pacific Rod & Gun Club every weekend of the year including holidays that usually fall on Mondays making for three days of gunfire noise disturbance as well as on every Wednesday of the year. Six non-stop hours on each of these days. Why?

Answer:

The Pacific Rod & Gun Club lease is being addressed jointly with PUC in our new Lake Merced Management MOU.

19) Art Persyko, Friends of Lafayette Park: Mr. Mayor: Rec and Park and the rest of our city's departments are facing a budget crisis. Budget cuts and privatization are not the only solutions. San Francisco is a wealthy city full of rich people and profitable corporations. Why not raise taxes on the well-to-do citizens and businesses in San Francisco instead of balancing the budget on the backs of the poor, the parks, public workers and the services they provide to all of us, for the common good?

Answer:

We are building public-private partnerships. Public-private partnerships help keep our parks and programs thriving when budget cuts mean we can no longer do it alone. In neighborhood clubhouses, our community partners are offering a variety of additional programs, including wellness classes for seniors, after school enrichment for teens and language immersion for tiny tots. According to a recent survey independently conducted by the Neighborhood Parks Council, 93.7% of survey respondents favored community partners over locked and vacant clubhouses. In fact, over 85% of the survey respondents agree with our approach to raising revenue to avoid service cuts. And, in instances where we do charge for programming and permits, 73% of survey respondents find our fee affordable. Our main budget strategy was to avoid as many cuts as possible by generating additional revenue through more special events, more partnerships and more amenities in our parks.

20) Gustin Guibert, Friends of Camp Mather: Friends of Camp Mather is pleased with the current direction of Camp Mather, and we'd like to know about any future plans for Mather regarding its size and scope.

Answer:

We are thrilled that the Friends of Camp Mather is happy with the current status of Camp Mather. RPD is partnering on a study initiated by the PUC that will look at potential opportunities for expansion of physical size and scope that may potentially allow for more families to experience and enjoy Camp Mather. The department will work closely with FoCM on any decisions to expand the camp. The department would also like to enhance current recreation program offerings identified by FoCM (which will act as the CRC), create a 24 hour supervisory function for the camp, and move forward with ACA accreditation.

21) Dennis Antenore: San Franciscans have consistently voted to support our Recreation and Parks Department through two-thirds votes for bond measures and by establishing the Open Space Fund. This support is eroding rapidly as millions of dollars are being wasted on facilities that are closed or leased out, recreation programs slashed, and our parks used to market to tourists without regard to the impact on residents. Since general fund support for the Department has been cut severely in each of last 8 years and constitutes a very small sliver of the general fund, are you willing to place a higher

priority on the parks and recreation needs of our citizens by not making further cuts in the upcoming fiscal year?

Answer:

Providing clean, safe and fun parks as well as accessible recreation programming has been and always will be our top priority.

We are thankful to San Francisco voters, who have overwhelmingly supported our parks through the 2008 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Park Bond as well as the 2000 neighborhood parks bond. These two bond measures have helped make much-needed improvements to our parks and facilities and are helping to address the more than \$1.7b in deferred maintenance our department currently faces.

We are happy to report that RPD's revenue strategies are working. For the upcoming FY 2011-12 budget, there will be no increases to existing fees for programs or permits, no further reductions to facility operating hours, we will provide a supplement for materials and supplies funding for park maintenance, and we will increase funding for the department's scholarship fund by 15%, because the ability to pay will never be an obstacle for people and families to enjoy our programs.

22) Lorraine Woodruff-Long, SFPAL: How can you ensure that the City focuses resources to ensure basic services, such as our parks, are being funded?

What are you doing to take a hard look at, for example, positions in the Mayor's office that have been added or funded continually over the last several years but that don't necessarily provide a direct service to our City residents?

Answer:

Again, our main budget strategy was to avoid as many cuts as possible by generating additional revenue through more special events, more partnerships and more amenities in our parks. So we are building public-private partnerships. Events like the Outside Lands concert generated \$1 million for the department, enough to pay for two electricians, two carpenters, two plumbers and two roofers. Our goal is to generate revenue without cutting direct services.

23) Pierre Fraysse, Take Back Our Parks: Mr Mayor: For the residents of the West Side, the proximity and easy access to our Parks and Open spaces - Ocean Beach, GGP, Lands Ends, Mont Hamilton etc...- are part of our Quality of Life. Why do you support privatizing these parks, and the levy of FEES (like for the Arboretum) to balance the budget, when the SF government give (or plan to give) huge tax break to Downtown businesses - like Twitter?

Answer:

This time last year, the City was grappling with an unprecedented deficit that only tested us professionally but taxed many of us on a personal level. We have to work harder and smarter for government efficiency without cutting services. One of the ways to do that is to

build public-private partnerships, and generate more revenue. But if anyone has any solutions on how to maintain our current level of services without any new partnerships or new revenue, please do send us your solutions.

24) Tom Murphy, Friends Of Jerry Garcia Amphitheater, Jerry Day: How can organizations with a substantial track record in the Southeast section / McLaren Park build a stronger partnership with the Mayor's Office and several other departments? Are there discretionary funds within the Mayor's office or several other departments in order to partner with key events or development ideas that would help the southeast section / McLaren Park section of San Francisco.

Answer:

From our perspective, the more events at McLaren Park, the better. Our parks are safer if they're activated and used by the community more.

25) Steven R. Currier, Crocker Amazon Playground Campaign and Outer Mission Merchants & Residents Association: I am working with the bocce ball players and members, recreation and park officials, and the community regarding fixing up the court and play area. We want RPD to make sure that they keep their promise on starting this project (refurbishing) the court on March 24th. This is an important issue for these players who are at this facility 24/7 - 365 days a year.

Answer:

RPD will begin work on the site in late March. The scope of work for the Crocker Amazon Bocce Ball includes new perimeter screen walls to the covered court area, roof repairs and electrical upgrades. Site improvements include new perimeter fencing, removal of barriers for accessibility and new irrigation and planting at adjacent landscape area. The Recreation and Park Department worked with the various stakeholders and community groups to define the project, obtain feedback and reach consensus for the scope of work. The project is funded by add-back funds from the Board of Supervisors to SFPUC and from SFRPD Open Space Funds. Completion of work anticipated early June 2011.

26) Suzanne R. Dumont, Save the Stow Lake Boathouse Coalition: Since there are so many questions and concerns regarding the fairness and legality of the Stow Lake Boathouse bid process, selection process and the Ortega lease, when will you open an INDEPENDENT investigation to insure the public that no wrong doing occurred, that the best lease was negotiated by Rec & Park and that public funds will not be spent on capital improvements to support the New Mexico chain in taking over our beloved boathouse?

Answer:

Respondents to the RFQ were asked to demonstrate (1) experience in managing businesses containing boat rental operations and food and beverage services, (2) experience in managing capital improvement projects in historic buildings, and (3) a plan to create an informal, indoor café within the Stow Lake Boathouse. According to Mr. Kinsey, "The (Recreation and Park) Commission specifically directed staff to solicit an operator willing to

perform capital improvements on the building because the condition of the facility was impacting revenue generation at the site as well as the overall customer experience.”

In response to input from the community RPD convened a 5-member selection panel consisting of a person with boat rental experience, a historic preservationist, a community member, a person with small business experience and a member of the Recreation and Park Commission. The selection panel scored the responses according to established criteria including the extent of capital improvements proposed, the qualifications of the respondents in operating similar ventures and the respondents experience performing renovations on historic structures amongst others.

As shown in Table 1 below, based on these scoring criteria, the selection panel awarded the highest score, 91.75 points out of a total of 100 points, to the Stow Lake Boathouse, LLC’s response.

Table 1: Scored Responses to the Stow Lake Boathouse RFQ

Respondent	Score
Stow Lake Boathouse, LLC	91.75
Stow Lake Corporation	74.65
Herrick, Liu, and Torrest	66.25

The total value of the capital improvements proposed by the three firms, not including maintenance fund payments, were \$233,000 from Stow Lake Boathouse, LLC compared to \$23,000 from Stow Lake Corporation.

In August of last year, the Recreation and Park Commission approved the selection panel's recommendation and in February of this year, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the selection of and lease with Ortega Family Enterprises. Lastly, in response to a lawsuit brought by the current concessionaire, a Superior Court ruling recently found that there was no evidence of impartiality in the award of the lease.

27) Sheila Gropper Nelson, Mountain Lake Park: I am very concerned with the proposed restriction of off leash enjoyment for SF citizens and their canine companions. That concern includes any projected burden that could result on the City's parks and open space. I would like the City to actively reacquire all of the land previously deeded in trust to GGNRA including Crissy, Ocean Baker and Funston so that those lands remain available for all San Franciscans. I propose that the City lease those lands back to GGNRA with an absolute caveat that there be no change to the use and enjoyment for the citizens of San Francisco inclusive of off-leash use (under voice control) for SF citizens and their dogs. Please tell me if this is being investigated and if not why not.

Answer:

RPD is still reviewing the GGNRA Dog Management Plan, but has noted that with the reduction in off leash dog areas, there may be a potential impact on RPD parks. We intend to formally comment as a City – not just the Recreation and Park Department – on the plan, and note possible impacts to SF parks. Neither the GGNRA, nor the Recreation and Park Department, are pursuing any transfer of properties between the GGNRA and the city at this time, due to the legal and financial complexities of such an arrangement. CCSF believes that

we can communicate our concerns regarding potential impacts, and achieve desired policy goals, without such a land transfer.

28) Sally Stephens, Friends of Golden Gate Heights Park and SF Dog: The Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) has recently proposed a new Dog Management Plan that would severely restrict (cutting by nearly 90%) where dogs can be off-leash with their people on GGNRA lands. The cuts in San Francisco County alone will close at least 75% of the currently available off-leash areas at Fort Funston, Ocean Beach, and Crissy Field. If this plan is accepted, literally thousands of people and their dogs will be forced out of the GGNRA and into the much smaller city parks. This will cause increased wear and tear in city parks, and increased conflicts due to putting so many people and dogs in such small spaces. Both will impact RPD's budget as well as its human and natural resources. The impacts on city parks were NOT considered by the GGNRA when it developed its plan. What are you doing to ensure the GGNRA understands that its management policies will have a significant negative impact on city parks and that any Dog Management Plan developed without fully analyzing those impacts is not acceptable?

Answer:

See answer to question 27.

29) Michelle Welch, Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council: The HANC Recycling Center and Native Plant Nursery is being evicted to make way for a community garden that brings no revenue to the city. HANC is capable of operating a garden resource center (it has been one for several years!), pays rent, returns \$600,000 a year to city residents (who then spend it!), and supports 10 well-paying jobs with healthcare. Why didn't Park & Rec consider partnering with HANC instead of going on the attack as it has? Especially in these rough economic times, a city department will spend \$250,000 to evict a revenue generating service that COSTS THE CITY TAXPAYERS NOTHING???

Answer:

Recycling at HANC is no longer relevant to the neighborhood at-large. When it first opened in 1974, there was no curbside pickup and recycling center were few and far between. Today, recycling at HANC represents a mere one-tenth of one percent of the City's total record-setting waste diversion efforts. In fact, area residents have expressed their displeasure with the recycling center for decades, citing noise, violence and other illicit activity in the immediate area. In addition, the interest in community gardening is on the rise globally and the public demand for more gardening space here in San Francisco is at an all-time high. We currently oversee 35 community gardens citywide with a waiting list of more than 500 people. The proposed community garden with an emphasis on sustainable food production is an ideal fit because it will address the area residents' concerns, and meeting the overwhelming need for community garden space.

30) Bonnie Baron, Save the Stow Lake Boathouse: Why was the contract for the Boathouse concession awarded to the Ortegas, a New Mexico company? The financial details seem to make no sense, nor does the plan to make it a fancy cafe and trinket shop. How could it make sense to switch proprietors when the current concession is a wonderful, affordable and profitable

operation for San Franciscans, especially since the current (local) tenants are willing to make upgrades if they have a long-term lease.

Answer:

The contract was awarded pursuant to a competitive bidding process, that sought, amongst other things, an entity with experience operating food and beverage and boating operations, willing to finance and perform capital improvements to the building and experience performing capital projects on historic buildings. An independent selection panel was convened to review the submissions received and selected Ortega Family Enterprises as the highest bidder. The selection was ratified by the Recreation and Park Commission and ultimately the Board of Supervisors.

One of the primary strengths of the Ortega proposal was the extent of their proposed capital improvements. Ortega proposed upgrading all of the buildings neglected exterior elements including removing dry rot in the buildings walls and rain spouts, refinishing the flooring throughout the boathouse, installing a commercial kitchen and installing an ADA bathroom, among many other improvements. The improvements proposed by Ortega vastly exceeded those proposed by the incumbent in both scope and estimated value.

Both the competitive selection process and the lease with the Ortega's specifically prohibited the creation of an upscale cafe. Once the lease transitions, Ortega will operate an informal cafe that will offer park visitors simple, organic and healthy food options like sandwiches and salads. No table service will be allowed and the retail merchandise offered will be limited to a few display racks featuring educational materials about Golden Gate Park and Stow Lake as well as items branded with the Rec Park logo.

31) Tom Scott, Save McLaren Park: Mayor -- What steps are you prepared to take to protect the undeveloped open spaces in McLaren Park from the installation of a disc golf course, which would be very destructive to the park's natural ecosystem and is overwhelmingly opposed by the surrounding communities? Furthermore, can you ensure that any future plans of this nature will undergo a thorough public process and be subjected to an environmental impact report?

Answer:

RPD believes that it is important to invest in and make significant improvements to McLaren Park that serve a wide spectrum of park users. We received tremendous community feedback on the last proposal for disc golf, and the RPD Commission has made it clear that any future proposals must undergo a robust community process. All potential capital improvements to SF parks undergo some level of environmental review, appropriate for the type of project and its potential impacts to the physical environment. This may, or may not, result in an EIR.

32) Denis Mosgofian, Keep Arboretum Free:

a) Mayor Lee, Why did you sponsor the ordinance to make the fee at the Botanical Garden at the Arboretum permanent when it sets a precedent for Balkanizing Golden Gate Park and our other parks into paid venues. has caused a dramatic decline in visitation by non-residents and residents alike,

when the net income from the fee has been only \$54,800 for seven months, when the real beneficiary is the well-heeled SF Botanical Garden Society which says it cannot pay for more than one gardener, but has over \$23 Million in its slush fund, paid \$90,000 in 2010 for lobbyist Sam Lauter to help get the fee passed by the Board of Supervisors, and are still retaining him for between \$7,500 - 10,000/month, and are guaranteeing to make the Rec & Park Dept. whole for the projected shortfall from the fee, which is expected at to be a minimum of \$84,000?

b) The RPD is converting the park & rec system into a mall, firing the staff who actually delivered services, hiring six-figure management and generally privatizing our assets and facilities. Why should anybody want to vote for a parcel tax or a bond measure for RPD unless the Mayor's office reverses the privatization policies?

Answer:

Please don't be misled. The Recreation and Park Department is not privatizing parks. We are building public-private partnerships. Public-private partnerships help keep our parks and program thriving when budget cuts mean we can no longer do it along. All over the country, public parks, pools, and recreation centers are closing because government is broke. But in San Francisco, we are working with neighborhoods, nonprofit, labor, business, and the philanthropic community to keep our parks and recreation centers clean, safe and fun. And in order to so, we need talented staffs who can efficiently work to meet our goals. So despite our budget woes, we have not closed a single recreation center or swimming pool; we have not laid off a single gardener or custodian and our budget included no new fee increases for existing permits and recreation programs.