

RUSTIC CANYON RECREATION CENTER
PARK ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
September 23rd, 2025
6:00 PM / Gallery
Minutes

Members Present: Eric Balfour, Steve Gianoli, Syda Day

Absent: Brennan Cassidy, Pierson Williams

Recreation Staff: Paige Barnes, Cristina Lerma

Public: Arus Grigoryan, Julio Torres, Crystal Tsoi

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Paige Barnes 6:16 pm
- II. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 8, 2024 MINUTES
Steve Gianoli motions to approve. Eric Balfour seconds motion. All in favor.
- III. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Traci Park council office representative Arus update on Palisades Fire recovery
 - i. Debris removal 100% complete
 - ii. Properties not removing debris (commercial, single family, mobile homes, etc.) have until October 8, 2025 to show progress
 - iii. Since it's close to rainy season, a contractor is installing preventative measures
 - iv. The rebuilding ad hoc committee has issued over 500 permits with 1,000 permits applied for
 - v. SB 79 is on the Governor's desk
 1. No longer up to LA City
 - vi. Additional fire updates in Councilmember's newsletter and the Palisades Fire recovery website on the councilmember's website
 - vii. Councilmember's office attended the bocce field opening at Palisades Recreation Center
 - viii. Underground infrastructure needs to be worked on in high-risk fire burn zones
 1. Residents need to work with DWP because work will be in private and public areas
 2. Two townhalls with DWP
 - ix. Rustic Canyon Recreation center has been very helpful
 1. Hosted a senior event
 2. Council office very impressed
 3. First PAB meeting the office has attended
 4. Paige given certificate of appreciation
 - b. Paige discusses new programs at the Center

- i. Rec. & Parks Dept. wants to see sports at center. For past 20 years Palisades Rec. Center took over sports and Rustic Canyon had camps and cultural enrichment
- ii. Thank you to the Council Office for publicizing sports at Rustic Canyon
- iii. Halloween's Fiesta of Freight scheduled for October 25th. Steve will attend
- iv. Holiday show scheduled for December 10, 2025
 - 1. Paige may need Eric and Erin's help
 - 2. Families in Schools doing a storytelling
 - 3. Eric suggests it be a PJ party. Paige says no because a portion of the event will happen outside, hot chocolate and train rides
 - 4. Paige says she needs help setting up the snow outside
 - a. Eric happy to make that happen, he's good at producing things. He suggests putting fake gingerbread houses over the snow machines
- v. Dept. has suspended focus on special events, possibly because of the Olympics, to focus on sports
 - 1. Julio voices opinion that one would want special events to draw the community to Dept. programming
 - 2. Paige says the argument that sports should be at Rustic is fair
 - a. Pee Wee Basketball is full with a wait list
 - b. The area has former Laker's children so a recreation clinic may not compare
 - 3. Eric says it's great seeing the Palisades High School girls tennis team practicing in the courts. The general consensus of the neighborhood is that children can come for unstructured play
 - a. Especially right now that Canyon Elementary is undergoing construction and there is no grass
- vi. Paige suggests a murder mystery dinner that becomes a fundraiser
 - 1. Steve adds it's a great facility for it
 - 2. Eric says maybe this is what the board takes over
 - a. Suggests a theatre group, The Willows, that stages interactive plays
- c. New playground project inception almost 4 years ago
 - i. Community wants an updated structure
 - ii. Eric reached out to Play By Design, the same company that did the playground in Ojai
 - iii. Play By Design did a prototype and said they would do fundraising and events where kids engage with designing the new playground
 - iv. LA Parks Foundation was contacted in November 2022

1. Paige said first holding pattern was because Carolyn Ramsey left and the park was told they needed a new proposal because of a new procedure
- v. Upper playground is from the 60s, bottom is from the 80s
- vi. Neither playgrounds nor the lower bathrooms are ADA compliant
- vii. No one will answer the question of who will do demolition
- viii. Crystal Tsoi from LA Parks Foundation said they had the same conversation at Barrington. Foundation can hold funds and talk with planning to get a demo contractor
- ix. Eric shows the diagram of proposed playground to the table
- x. The ramp to the lower level is ADA compliant and will not be touched
- xi. Crystal says the Resnick family from the pistachio company are interested in being a sponsor
 1. Naming the playground involves the City Attorney
 2. Don't need the Board of Directors' approval if just installing a plaque
- xii. Eric brings up replacing the sand in the playground. Says Rustic is on the list to be replaced.

IV. CURRENT BUSINESS

- a. Paige refers to the donation of historical horseshoes from when the park was a polo field. Could be used for fundraising

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Paige asks Arus before she goes to put on the Councilmember's agenda a new time capsule
 - i. 100 years ago the Uplifter's Club put a time capsule in the cornerstone of the building
 - ii. When it was opened in recently everything inside was disintegrated
 - iii. Since then the hole in the building has not been repaired, a good opportunity to start a new time capsule

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

VII. NEXT MEETING

The next Park Advisory Board Meeting will be TBA at Rustic Canyon Recreation Center, 601 Latimer Road, Santa Monica, CA 90402.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Paige motions to end meeting
 Steve seconds it
 All in favor

