



**COMMUNITY SERVICES & RECREATION
COMMISSION MINUTES
Teleconference/Web Conference
Monday, January 31, 2022
4:30 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

NGUYEN, POWER, GRAY, NGO, BUI (ALTERNATE)

PRESENT: NGUYEN, POWER, GRAY, BUI (ALTERNATE)

ABSENT: NGO

Staff Present: Vanessa Johnson, Acting Community Services and Recreation Director; Tuan Pham, Assistant City Engineer; Tammy Huynh, Senior Administrative Assistant.

Vanessa Johnson informed the commission that there is a vacancy on this commission and mentioned if there is a desire to move the Alternate into a voting member position for today's meeting, the commission could do so now. Vice Chair Power asked that item to be moved to New Business.

SALUTE TO FLAG Vice Chair Power led all those present in the Salute to the Flag.

INVOCATION Vice Chair Power led all those present in the Invocation.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Motion was made by Chair Nguyen, and seconded by Commissioner Gray, to elect Vice Chair Power to serve in the position of Chair of the Community Services and Recreation Commission. Motion carried 3-0, with the following vote:

AYES: NGUYEN, POWER, GRAY
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NGO

Motion was made by Chair Power, and seconded by Commissioner Nguyen, to elect Commissioner Gray to serve in the position of Vice Chair of the Community Services and Recreation Commission. Motion carried 3-0, with the following vote:

AYES: POWER, NGUYEN, GRAY
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NGO

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

E-Comments:

1. Quan Nguyen, Director of the Museum of the Republic of Vietnam in Westminster, expressed his support for the construction of the Quang Tri Monument and proposed that it be built at Westminster Park; he expressed the park is ideally located in the center of Little Saigon, between two major business areas of Westminster Blvd. and Bolsa Ave.
2. Paul Sau Van Le, President of the Vietnam Air Force Friendship Association of the Republic of Vietnam Central California, recommended the Quang Tri Monument to be built on the south side of Westminster Park, near Hazard Ave., as it would not interfere with other activities such as baseball and exercise.
3. Krissy Land, President of District 62 Challenger League, expressed her opposition to having the Quang Tri Monument placed at Westminster Park, and expressed her concerns that the monument may interfere with their baseball games at Westminster Park, and that having the monument there would not benefit the disabled community or their baseball program.
4. Kenny Hoang, Westminster resident, expressed his support for the construction of the Quang Tri Monument at Westminster Park, as it is close to the Little Saigon area.
5. Son Do, Westminster resident, expressed his support to build the Quang Tri Monument at Westminster Park, as it would make it easy for tourists to remember and is close to the Saigon Bus Stop.
6. Larry Breazeale, MSgt. (Ret.) USAF, Vietnam Veteran, expressed his concern regarding the action by some Quang Tri Monument committee members regarding the placement of visible markers, saluting those responsible for victory against the

communist Viet Cong, during the Vietnam War. He expressed that contribution of Air Power from the USAF and USN should be honored.

7. Bill Vetter expressed his opposition to the design of the Quang Tri Monument, and expressed the monument does not belong on public land nor should public funds pay for it; he expressed that the monument belongs on private property, preferably a cultural museum, and that the structure consists of undesirable elements that will attract homeless sleeping nearby the replica Citadel wall, and the obscured view also invites drug usage and gangs.
8. Linh Hoang expressed her opposition to placing the Quang Tri Monument at one of the city parks and thinks it is a wonderful idea to have the monument placed in the heart of Little Saigon, on private property along Bolsa Ave.
9. Andrew Dang expressed that he is not against a Quang Tri Monument being built, but feels it would be better reserved for another area, perhaps creating a historical area in the heart of Little Saigon, and not a public park where children and families go to relax and have fun, and not be reminded of darker times.
10. Joanne Paull, Westminster resident, expressed her opposition to a foreign battle being memorialized in public park spaces, and mentioned that the City already has a deficit in its park-to-population ratio. She mentioned if the monument must be approved, she suggested partnering with businesses in Little Saigon to place it on one of the shopping center properties to not take away the city's limited public green space, which she mentioned is stated in the City's Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.
11. Robert L. Harrison, USMC, Committee Member of Quang Tri Monument Committee, mentioned that he personally voted against the conditionally approved depiction/display of the Quang Tri Monument presented to City Council on January 5th; he mentioned that America's contribution to victory was ignored and the titles on the monument show no respect for America; he supports the Quang Tri Monument being built, but it should be built in conjunction with the Little Saigon Blueprint for Investment plan, on private land along Bolsa, and that it should not take up public park space away from the majority.
12. Tammy Harrison, expressed her opposition to building the Quang Tri Monument in a public park; she mentioned it should be placed on private land with the Little Saigon Investment Plan, along Bolsa, as parks are for recreation and enjoyment.

13. Conrad Gomez, Quang Tri Monument Committee Member, mentioned that the emblems on the Quang Tri Monument are dominated by the South Vietnamese military, expressing that the greatest impact of the battle was by American Air Power, which is being hidden.
14. Claudia Lantry expressed that the Quang Tri Monument should not be placed on any public land and that the monument does not represent the majority of Westminster citizens.
15. Lori Day expressed that a statue to commemorate a Vietnamese battle that was fought in Vietnam has no place in the United States of America. She questioned if this will open the door to have statues commemorating battles from a Lebanese war hero, Zimbabwe war hero, Icelandic war hero, and asked where it would stop.

Oral Comments:

16. Terry Rains, Westminster resident, stated that contrary to what was presented to the City Council and how her comments were characterized in the minutes, she opposed renaming Park West Park to Tony Lam Park for one specific reason, because it violates Section 4.4 of the City's Naming of Facilities Administrative Regulation Policy, adopted by Council in 2009 and mentioned she suggested honoring Tony Lam with a plaque at the Civic Center instead of renaming Park West Park. She expressed that the Quang Tri Monument Committee has not been transparent or inclusive; that the design of the monument is incomplete, factually and historically inaccurate; that the emblems and verbiage have not been finalized, nor approved by the City Council. She stated the design in the Agenda Packet is not the most recent version; that a non-profit has not been formed yet and no funds have been raised. She stated that Westminster Park is dedicated to providing recreational amenities and organized sports for the city's vulnerable, disabled community; that the Quang Tri monument does not belong there or any city park as it would create problems and safety hazards for regular park users. She reminded the commission what their purpose is; stated that the city has the third lowest per capita parkland space in Orange County; she recommended that the Quang Tri monument be placed on private property, along Little Saigon's Bolsa Ave., along with a Vietnamese Visitor Center and/or museum, in conjunction with the city's Little Saigon Blueprint for investment plan to create a true Vietnamese Cultural District and Worldwide Tourist destination.
17. D'vorah Mariscal stated that she agreed with all of the comments that have been made so far with regards to not having the Quang Tri Monument placed on public land; she expressed her disappointment on the amount of time that has been spent

on this item over the last year or more; she agreed with other comments that the monument should be placed in Little Saigon, in the shopping district, to make it a tourist attraction.

18. Hoang Tan Ky (Kenny Hoang), Vice Chair of Quang Tri Monument Committee, stated that the Quang Tri Monument represents Vietnamese soldiers and American soldiers that fought alongside each other to retake the Quang Tri Citadel; he asked the commission to recommend Westminster Park for the location of the monument.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 Meeting held on Monday, November 15, 2021

Motion was made by Commissioner Nguyen, and seconded by Vice Chair Gray, to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2021 Community Services and Recreation Commission Meeting. Motion carried 3-0, with the following vote:

AYES: POWER, GRAY, NGUYEN
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NGO

3.2 Meeting held on Monday, November 29, 2021

Motion was made by Commissioner Nguyen, and seconded by Vice Chair Gray, to approve the minutes from the November 29, 2021 Community Services and Recreation Commission Meeting. Motion carried 3-0, with the following vote:

AYES: POWER, GRAY, NGUYEN
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NGO

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 Park Check List Reports

Motion was made by Chair Power, and seconded by Commissioner Nguyen, to table item 4.1, Park Check List Reports, to the next meeting. Motion carried 3-0, with the following vote:

AYES: POWER, GRAY, NGUYEN
NOES: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NGO

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Update on Margie L. Rice Park and Westminster Park

Tuan Pham, Assistant City Engineer, provided the commission with an update on Margie L. Rice Park and Westminster Park playgrounds; he informed the commission that the contractor has completed the demolition phase for both parks, they completed installation at Margie L. Rice Park, and the contractor will be proceeding with Westminster Park play equipment installation that week. The anticipated completion date is the middle of March and Community Services and Recreation Staff will be planning a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

Vanessa Johnson reminded the commission that these two playgrounds were the first themed playgrounds – Margie L. Rice Park Playground will be fireman themed and Westminster Park Playground will be baseball themed.

Vanessa Johnson asked Chair Power if he would like to consider moving the Alternate member into a voting member for the meeting.

Chair Power expressed that because the Quang Tri Monument has generated a lot of discussion, some controversy, and a lot of attention by local residents and the media, he believes that given the importance of the issue and all the attention it's received, that this issue needs to be considered by a fully seated commission; he stated he understands there is an Alternate Member, but given the importance of this item, believes this issue should be voted on by a regular member, not a temporary fill-in, and that every council member should be represented to consider this issue.

Commissioner Nguyen agreed with Chair Power and asked staff if they have a timeframe on when council will be appointing permanent seats. Staff informed the commission that there is a procedure such as posting the vacancy, collecting applications, and then the council member who appointed the now vacant position, would then appoint a new member. Staff hasn't heard that there have been applications submitted for the vacancy.

Chair Power and Commissioner Nguyen agreed that the topic should be discussed with the Alternate and the Alternate should be able to participate however, the item should not be voted on until there is a full commission. Commissioner Nguyen expressed his appreciation for Alternate Commissioner Bui showing up to the meeting.

5.2 Location Recommendation of Quang Tri Monument

Vanessa Johnson read the Staff Report which included background and photos of the design of the Quang Tri Monument as well as aerial photos, park amenity and park use information.

Commissioner Nguyen expressed that he would like to see the monument design completed and approved first before recommending a location.

Chair Power thanked the Quang Tri Monument Committee for their time and effort and thanked all of the members of the community for submitting E-comments and for speaking during Oral Communications. Chair Power clarified with staff that the commission's role is advisory and the Council is free to accept or reject the commission's recommendation. Staff confirmed that is correct.

Chair Power echoed what Commissioner Nguyen said regarding seeing the complete monument design first before recommending a location, especially given that a lot of American Veterans have expressed their concerns about what is currently on the monument; he does not want to disrespect our Veterans.

Chair Power had questions about the fiscal impact as well as maintenance requirements of the monument; he expressed concern regarding current litigation against the City related to the Quang Tri Monument project and asked if any decision they make would have implications on that; he expressed that he would like to know more about the current litigation before making a location recommendation.

Vice Chair Gray questioned if the Planning Department would be involved in making a recommendation after receiving the final plans of the monument.

Chair Power expressed that he agrees with commemorating this battle, however, Westminster is a city that is built out and has little parkland and open space, and he agrees with what speakers mentioned during oral communications, that parks are for Westminster families to have picnics, to play sports, exercise, barbecue; he spoke about Westminster Park and expressed his concerns regarding how this will affect the city's disabled community, who use that park.

Chair Power asked staff if the Civic Center was considered and asked if the commission could make that recommendation. Vanessa Johnson responded that she does not believe the Civic Center was considered and that staff wasn't involved in deciding a location; she stated that a recommendation from the commission could be appropriate.

Commissioner Nguyen asked if Alternate Commissioner Bui was still present and wanted to hear his opinion, but Alternate Commissioner Bui had left the meeting.

Chair Power stated that the Civic Center should be considered because of what the monument represents – freedom, liberty, democracy, and since the Civic Center is where

our officials are located, he expressed that makes more sense to him, rather than placing the monument in a park, taking away precious parkland from families and kids.

Commissioner Nguyen expressed his concerns with placing the monument at Westminster Park and mentioned he had many questions regarding the baseball usage, safety measures, maintenance, and questioned the process for large events. Staff informed the commission that there is a Special Event Process in place for large events. He also referenced the photos of the monument and asked if it had water features. Commissioner Nguyen liked the idea of proposing the Civic Center but would like to see what Staff's position is.

Vanessa Johnson asked Kenny Hoang if there are water features on the monument. Kenny Hoang responded that there are no water features on the monument and they would only require electrical needs for lights.

Chair Power asked staff is there's anything precluding the commission from making a recommendation that this monument not be placed at a city park, but it be placed on either private land, or the Civic Center, if the Civic Center is an option. Vanessa Johnson responded that would be possible.

Chair Jamison Power expressed that before making a location recommendation, he would like to see the final approved design, a fully seated commission, and stated that pending what staff reports about the Civic Center, thinks that would be a better option than a park.

Motion was made by Chair Jamison Power, and seconded by Vice Chair Jason Gray, to table this item until they receive final design plans and a report from staff on the feasibility of the Civic Center as a location for the monument. Motion carried 3-0, with the following vote:

AYES: POWER, GRAY, NGUYEN
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NGO

5.3 Select Next Meeting Date(s)

Commissioners agreed to hold the next Community Services and Recreation Commission Meeting on Monday, February 28, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.

6. Items from Commissioners

None.

7. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Huynh

Tammy Huynh, Senior Administrative Assistant
Community Services & Recreation