

**CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH**

**Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission  
Regular Meeting  
April 7, 2026 – 5:00 p.m.**

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**I. CONVENE MEETING OF THE PARKS BEACHES & RECREATION COMMISSION TO ORDER – 5:00 p.m.**

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Anne Yelsey, Chair  
Amy Waunch, Vice Chair  
Hassan Archer, Commissioner (arrived during meeting)  
Diane Daruty, Commissioner  
Keira Kirby, Commissioner  
Kate Malouf, Commissioner  
Travis Piridy, Commissioner

Absent: None

Staff: Justin Schmillen, Recreation & Senior Services Deputy Director  
Mariah Stinson, Administrative Support Specialist  
Greg Haynes, Public Works Supervisor

**III. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CONSENT CALENDAR**

None

**V. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. Minutes of the Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission Meeting of March 3, 2026**

*Recommendation:* Waive reading of subject minutes, approve and order filed.

**B. MOD Activity Report**

*Recommendation:* Receive/file Report of past and upcoming projects and events.

**C. RSS Activity Report**

*Recommendation:* Receive/file Report of past and upcoming projects and events.

Chair Yelsey opened public comment.

Jim Mosher noted that the Municipal Operations Department Activity Report in Item No. V.B states that, on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the City's bulk mulch supply may be altered

due to a new waste disposal agreement with Orange County. He requested additional information on what the changes would be.

Chair Yelsey closed public comment.

**Motion by Chair Yelsey**, seconded by Vice Chair Waunch, to approve Item V. CONSENT CALENDAR.

**The motion carried by unanimous vote.**

## **VI. CURRENT BUSINESS**

### **A. Coast Live Oak Tree Donation – Castaways Park**

*Recommendation: Review and approve the donation of a coast live oak tree (Quercus agrifolia) at Castaways Park requested by Sherry Boston-Rennard. The proposed donation complies with City Council Policy B-17 – Parks, Facilities, and Recreation Program Donations.*

Commissioner Archer arrived at 5:04 p.m.

Public Works Supervisor Greg Haynes reported that Sherry Boston-Rennard has requested to donate a coast live oak tree in Upper Castaways Park in honor of her son, Zachary Boston. He added that this species of tree is often used in the park and that the proposed tree site is a new location for trees. He added that it is a nice open space that will allow the tree to grow to about 40 feet. He noted that it would be a 48-inch box tree.

In response to Commissioner Kirby's inquiries, Public Works Supervisor Haynes clarified where a recently donated tree is located to the south in relation to this proposed tree site. He confirmed that donated trees in this area are being spread out for proper room to grow. He added that staff is conscious of potential future sight line issues for Dover Shores residents when approving the locations, noting that this tree would not be in anyone's way due to other existing trees in the general area.

Commissioner Kirby stated that this is a good spot for a tree as it will provide often-needed shade during Memorial Day and Armed Forces Day services.

Chair Yelsey opened public comment.

Mr. Mosher noted that, in addition to a certificate of acknowledgement, the tree will be added to the City's Special Trees List through City Council Policy G-1 once it is dedicated. He inquired where the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) Donation Map for trees can be found online, adding that he was unable to find it even with the assistance of multiple search engines.

Chair Yelsey closed public comment.

In response to Commissioner Malouf's inquiry, Recreation & Senior Services Deputy Director Justin Schmillen stated that the Municipal Operations Department would have a better idea where to find the donated trees map. Public Works Supervisor Haynes added that he can access it through the City's intranet but is unsure if it is publicly accessible. He added that he is unsure why the tree map would not be available along with maps of other donated items, such as benches, adding that it could be an easily fixable Information Technology glitch. He pledged to investigate.

In response to Commissioner Daruty's inquiry, Public Works Supervisor Haynes stated that a link to this map could most likely be included on the certificate to be presented to Ms. Boston-Rennard.

Chair Yelsey agreed that this tree would provide needed shade and be a good addition to Upper Castaways Park.

**Motion by Chair Yelsey**, seconded by Commissioner Daruty, to approve the donation.

**The motion carried by unanimous vote.**

## **VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Commissioner Kirby reported that the Lower Castaways Aquatic Center Ad Hoc Committee has been sunset. She noted that the aquatic center proposal was removed from consideration early in the Committee's discussions, with the focus shifting to enhancing the park space in other ways.

Recreation & Senior Services Deputy Director Schmillen reported that Camp Newport registration has opened with over 3,000 participants registering on the first day, generating over \$1 million. He stated that this will likely account for half of the final totals, noting that the early bird registration discount ends on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. He added that, on April 18<sup>th</sup>, through a partnership with the Newport Beach Police Department, the City will host a bicycle rodeo and safety fair at Newport Elementary School featuring free pizza. He added that the City will accept community program grant applications through April 21<sup>st</sup>, encouraging local non-profit organizations to apply for either their community programs or special events. He stated that the City will recognize volunteers at the Older Adults Social & Information Services (OASIS) Senior Center on April 15<sup>th</sup> and thank them for their 15,000 annual volunteer hours.

In response to Chair Yelsey's inquiry, Public Works Supervisor Haynes reported that the City's e-waste collection event will be on April 23<sup>rd</sup> at City Hall, with the annual shredding event being on April 25<sup>th</sup>. He added that the City will have an Arbor Day event on April 24<sup>th</sup>. He noted that there will not be a compost giveaway at the e-waste event on April 25<sup>th</sup> due to construction work limiting the available space.

Commissioner Malouf reported attending the construction groundbreaking for the new Balboa Branch Library and Fire Station. She stated that, since the site's trees were removed, the birds have found a suitable home in the Balboa Blvd. median.

### **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Mosher noted that an early version of this meeting's Agenda included an update for the Commission on changes to City Council Policy G-1. He expressed hopes that it will be rescheduled for a future Agenda, adding that he will have comments about the policy's changes. He stated that another person is looking to make a presentation at this time and, speaking as the only other member of the public in attendance, that he does not object if the next speaker takes longer than the standard three minutes.

Harbor Commissioner Rudy Svrcek reported that he has also served on multiple organizations' Ad Hoc Committees related to Lower Castaways Park. He reported that the Committee that Commissioner Kirby also served on created a plan to present to the City Council that includes a Duffy Boat dock for guests to enjoy the park, along with using the sandy beach area to launch kayaks and similar watercraft, lauding the plans.

Mr. Svrcek recommended using Newport Beach's marine life and history as a blended theme for Lower Castaways Park and other City parks. He recommended that Lower Castaways Park have an amphitheater looking towards Newport Center, kayak launch ramps, public art – suggesting a whale sculpture – and displays for marine life with educational labels. He recommended relocating the monument to the City's founders to the park from across Pacific Coast Highway. He added that educational kayak tours could be launched from the park to the Back Bay to learn about marine life and that whales could be incorporated into the architecture of possible buildings constructed in the park.

Mr. Svrcek stated that the City Arts Commission could be a big part of Lower Castaways Park's future, noting the opportunities an amphitheater would create, along with potential historical honorary sculptures for the City's founders and local marine life as an educational component. He encouraged collaboration with local aquatic learning centers. He encouraged the Commission to embrace his proposed theme so that the City does not end up with another passive park when Lower Castaways Park is reimaged.

Commissioner Kirby agreed with Mr. Svrcek, noting that when the park's ultimate plans come before the Commission, they have an opportunity to help ensure that the plans include multiple elements, including a connection to the harbor and history in collaboration with the City Arts Commission. She reported that the Ad Hoc Committee discussed using Quick Response (QR) codes to link to historical facts and other information.

Commissioner Piridy expressed his support for Mr. Srvccek's proposed theme, encouraging a reinforcement through youth education about Newport Beach's oceanic ties and the need to protect its waters.

Chair Yelsey stated that she is already excited for whenever Lower Castaways Park plans come to the Commission in the future.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT – 5:31 p.m.**

Submitted by:

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Mariah Stinson, Administrative Support Specialist

Approved by:

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Anne Yelsey, Chair