



CITY OF

NEWPORT BEACH

City Council Staff Report

May 13, 2025
Agenda Item No. 7

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Seimone Jurjis, Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director - 949-644-3232, sjurjis@newportbeachca.gov

PREPARED BY: Benjamin M. Zdeba, AICP, Planning Manager - 949-644-3253, bzdeba@newportbeachca.gov

TITLE: Resolution No. 2025-23: Creating the Ad Hoc Committee on Utilization of Lower Castaways and Aquatic Center Site Options

ABSTRACT:

For the City Council's consideration is the adoption of a resolution to create the Ad Hoc Committee on Utilization of Lower Castaways and Aquatic Center Site Options. The ad hoc committee would be comprised of three Councilmembers, one Parks, Beaches, & Recreation Commissioner, one Planning Commissioner, one Harbor Commissioner, and one citizen member. The committee will be charged with assessing the potential uses of the Lower Castaways property and exploring suitable site options for a future community aquatic center.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
- b) Adopt Resolution No. 2025-23, *A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Newport Beach, California, Creating the Ad Hoc Committee on Utilization of Lower Castaways and Aquatic Center Site Options.*

DISCUSSION:

On February 27, 2024, the City Council established the Lower Castaways Park Ad Hoc Committee, and confirmed the appointments of Mayor Pro Tem Joe Stapleton, Councilmember Robyn Grant, and Councilmember Noah Blom. The committee was tasked to work with City of Newport Beach staff in evaluating additional capital improvements, harbor and beach uses, and/or recreational opportunities for Lower Castaways. It met several times between March and September 2024 and worked alongside City staff and on-call consultants to review potential concepts. Ultimately, the committee identified a community recreational pool facility with rich amenities, including a 50-meter pool, a therapy pool, a splash pad, a hand boat launch, and event venue, as the best use for Lower Castaways.

At the October 8, 2024, City Council Study Session, staff presented the committee's recommendations. At the conclusion of the item, including public comments and City Council discussion, the City Council unanimously supported pursuing the committee's recommendations. However, since that time, there has been continued community interest in the proposed use of Lower Castaways, as well as potential alternate locations for the proposed aquatic center.

At the April 29, 2025, City Council Study Session, the City Council revisited the matter and voted unanimously to form a new ad hoc committee to re-examine the potential uses of the Lower Castaways property and to explore suitable site options for a future aquatic center.

As outlined in the draft resolution attached to this staff report, the Ad Hoc Committee on Utilization of Lower Castaways and Aquatic Center Site Options will be comprised of seven members: three City Councilmembers, one Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commissioner, one Planning Commissioner, one Harbor Commissioner, and one citizen member.

The City Clerk will issue a notice that the City is accepting applications for the citizen member position. Once applications have been received, Mayor Stapleton will make the final appointments for all committee members, subject to confirmation by the City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact related to this item.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Staff recommends the City Council find this action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

NOTICING:

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Council considers the item).

ATTACHMENT:

Attachment A – Resolution No. 2025-23