



City of Los Angeles



Department of Recreation and Parks

PARK ADVISORY BOARD

RAP STAFF HANDBOOK

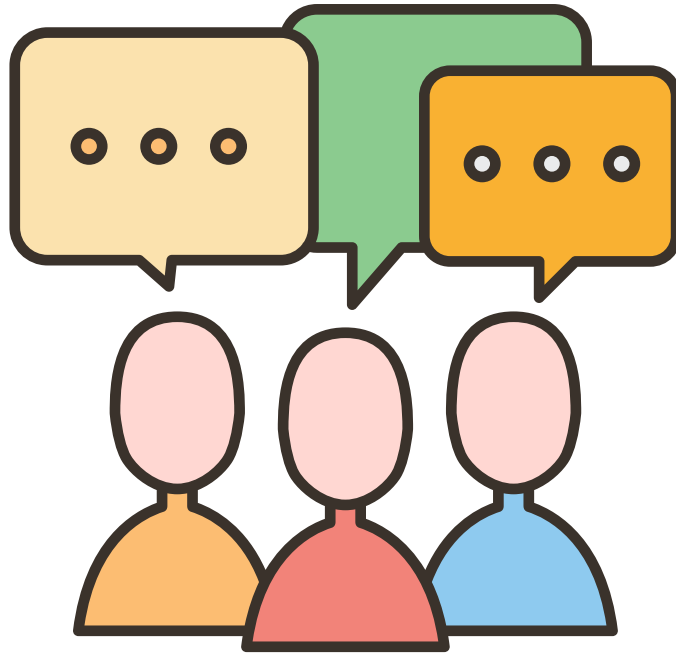


TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND OF PARK ADVISORY BOARDS

DEFINITION OF A PARK ADVISORY BOARD

ESTABLISHING A PARK ADVISORY BOARD

ORGANIZATION OF A PARK ADVISORY BOARD

ORIENTATION

CONDUCTING MEETINGS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MISSION STATEMENTS

BACKGROUND OF PARK ADVISORY BOARDS

The Department of Recreation and Parks observed the need for a formal method of incorporating community input on decisions affecting communities and initiated the development of Center Service Association or CSAs in the 1970s.

CSAs led the way for the establishment and formalization of what we now recognize as Park Advisory Boards (PABs) which began in May 1998.

The Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) believes that the partnership between staff and the community is of primary importance in identifying and meeting the recreational needs of each community.

Park Advisory Boards are essential to the overall operation of a Department facility.

A Park Advisory Board member is a community stakeholder and understands the community's needs and interests.

Members work to make facilities safe, clean and hospitable while offering suggestions for programming and assistance in fundraising.

Members work with the Department on issues involving neighborhood parks, community events, fundraising projects, existing and proposed recreation and educational programs, along with a variety of other projects important to the facility and the community.

Today's social, economic, and political climate demands that decisions concerning the expenditure of public resources are fair, equitable, and reflective of the communities and the people they impact.

Park Advisory Boards provide valuable assistance in these areas.



DEFINITION OF A PARK ADVISORY BOARD

What is a Park Advisory Board ?

A Park Advisory Board (PAB) consists of individuals who are community residents, business members, and those who work or spend time in a community and who are recruited and selected by RAP staff to help strengthen local recreation programs and services.

The Department of Recreation and Parks believes that the partnership between staff and the community is of primary importance in identifying and meeting the recreational needs of the community.

Park Advisory Boards are:

- NOT a Board of Directors
- NOT involved in the center's staffing decisions or budget decisions
- NOT involved in the formulation of policy
- NOT empowered to speak as representatives of the Department
- NOT representation for any special interest group
- NOT a political action group or political forum

Park Advisory Boards do:

- Work with the RAP staff as community partners (advisory only)
- Support RAP staff with connecting valuable resources to expand park services
- Provide guidance on how facilities may best fit the needs of the community



ESTABLISHING A PARK ADVISORY BOARD

The Park Advisory Board includes individuals of all ages, gender, ethnic origin, and economic standing.

These individuals are appointed by RAP staff and serve without monetary compensation.

Park Advisory Boards exist to broadly reflect the community they serve and should:

- Represent the community's demographic profile
- Represent the community-at-large, including business leaders and non-users
- Represent all age groups including youth, teens, adults and seniors
- Include 5-9 members with an odd number preferred for voting purposes

Park Advisory Boards may also involve ex-officio (non-voting) members including:

- Local city representatives (city council representatives, field deputies)
- Neighborhood Council representatives
- LAUSD representatives
- LAPD / Senior Lead Officers
- Local resident groups (homeowners associations, private youth groups)

Park Advisory Board guidelines:

- Each park may have only one active PAB
- PAB members may only serve on one PAB at a time
- PAB members may not be RAP employees
- PAB members may not have a personal relationship with RAP staff or other members

*Personal relationship may be defined as relatives through blood relationship or marriage, dependents, sharing living accommodations, or business partners.



ORGANIZATION OF A PARK ADVISORY BOARD

Park Advisory Board Members

PAB members are volunteers and must be cleared through a background check.

PAB members must complete the following steps:

- Interview with RAP staff
- Application / Interest Form
- Livescan / fingerprinting
- Orientation
- Review of PAB bylaws
- Sign PAB code-of-conduct form

RAP Intranet / Human Resources Tab / Volunteers / PAB Resources

Sample forms and bylaws may be found on the RAP intranet:

- <http://rapintra.ci.ca.us/volunteers/pabinfoindex.htm>

Selection of Officers

RAP staff makes the selection of PAB members and facilitates all meetings.

PAB member positions include:

- Chairperson / President
- Vice-Chairperson / Vice-President
- Secretary

Elections shall take place each January for positions at the end of their two year term.

Term Limits

- Two-year terms with the option to interview for additional terms
- When starting a PAB, it is suggested that terms limits are staggered initially
- PAB members with three plus unexcused absences in one year should be replaced
- PAB members must provide a letter of resignation if they choose to resign
- PAB members may be removed by majority vote



ORIENTATION

Purpose of Orientation

The purpose of an orientation is to give new board members information about the Department of Recreation and Parks, the roles and responsibilities of the PAB members, and how their volunteer efforts contribute to RAP services.

Board members will be more interested and more effective in their volunteer efforts if they understand why and how they are needed.

Orientation Session Components

- Orientation checklist may be found at rapintra.ci.ca.us/volunteer/pabinfoindex.htm
- RAP staff should review PAB roles and responsibilities
- RAP staff should distribute a PAB member roster and appropriate RAP staff roster
- RAP staff should provide a PAB member handbook to each new member
- RAP staff should explain attendance expectations
- RAP staff should discuss short and long term goals for the PAB and its members

CONDUCTING MEETINGS

Meeting Requirements & Agendas

PAB meetings should be held a minimum of four times per year with monthly meetings suggested.

Regular meetings can be useful, productive tools if conducted properly.

A well-planned agenda helps guide the discussion for the highest productivity.

A sample agenda can be found at <https://rapintra.ci.ca.us/volunteer/pabinfoindex.htm>.

Posting Requirement

The agenda and approved minutes from the previous meeting must be sent to the RAP Webmaster and posted 72 hours prior to the next scheduled meeting.

The agenda should also be posted at the center on the PAB bulletin board or community bulletin board for public awareness.



CONDUCTING MEETINGS

Meeting Protocols

- 40% of PAB membership are required at meetings to conduct official business
- 50% plus one additional member required to vote on and approve agenda items
- Chairperson only votes as a tie-breaker
- RAP staff do not vote
- Ex-officio members do not vote

Ralph M. Brown Act

Park Advisory Board meetings are governed by the Ralph M. Brown Act and are required to be open to the public and include an allotted time for public comments.

The Brown Act established rules to ensure that all actions taken by boards, commissions, councils, and other public bodies of local agencies are provided public access and input.

Robert's Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order are used to keep the appropriate channels of communication open and to keep the meeting discussion moving forward.

These rules help ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard and that no one person or group dominates the discussion.

Quick tips can be found at <https://www.laparks.org/volunteer/pab>.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Can PAB meetings substitute for community meetings regarding Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs)?

A. Yes, PAB meetings may substitute for community meetings concerning CIPs. However, the meetings should involve a larger community outreach when considering major improvements and Planning, Construction and Maintenance should be involved.

Q. Can part-time employees be members of the PAB?

A. No, employees of the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) are not eligible to serve as a member of a PAB.

Q. Should we provide name tags or name plates for our PAB members during meetings?

A. Yes, if you have the funding. These items do help community members know who is on the board and they also serve as a nice recognition for the PAB members' efforts.

Q. What type of paperwork needs to be maintained for PABs?

A. Directors should keep the department's PAB Google document updated, maintain a working PAB roster with term limits and dates, signed copies of the PAB Code-of-Conduct forms, as well as copies of all agendas and meeting minutes.

Q. Can the PAB vote on an item without having a quorum?

A. No, 40% is needed in order for the PAB to take official action on an agenda item.

Q. What is considered a quorum?

A. A quorum of the PAB shall be 40% of the PAB members.

Q. How many members are needed to conduct a meeting?

A. A meeting may be conducted with any amount of members, however, no agenda item may be voted on during that meeting unless a quorum is met.

Q. Should I submit my minutes to the RAP Webmaster prior to approval from the PAB?

A. No, the minutes cannot be submitted to the RAP Webmaster until they have been approved by the PAB members.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Should Directors maintain a bulletin board with PAB member pictures and postings of meetings, agendas and minutes?

A. Yes, each center should dedicate a bulletin board for posting PAB information, including meeting schedules, approved minutes, and upcoming agendas.

Q. How do Directors prevent PAB members from going out and fundraising on their own?

A. The PAB member orientation should include rules about fundraising and Directors should approve all PAB projects prior to any action taking place.

Q. Do Senior Citizen Centers and pools develop their own PAB or do they work with the recreation center?

A. There should only be one PAB per park. If a Senior Citizen Center or pool is located at the same park, they should work together to develop one PAB.

Q. Should the PAB be involved in staff decisions?

A. No, PAB members are not allowed to make any staffing decisions.

Q. Do PAB members have to be fingerprinted?

A. Yes, they are volunteers and are required to be fingerprinted and cleared.

Q. Can the Department's Maintenance and/or Construction attend the PAB meetings?

A. Yes, with prior notification they may be able to attend, or the Director can relay information for them regarding any planned or current projects.

Q. Should RAP include ex-officio (non-voting) members on the Park Advisory Board?

A. Yes, representatives from local city administrative groups, LAUSD, Neighborhood Councils, LAPD, Senior Lead Officers (SLOs), local resident groups, homeowners associations and/or private youth groups are a wonderful addition to any board and help ensure the entire community is being represented.



MISSION STATEMENTS

Department of Recreation & Parks Mission Statement

To unify Los Angeles by providing diverse recreational opportunities, beautiful facilities, and innovative leadership for all universal enjoyment of our residents and visitors by providing a broad range of recreational opportunities at various facilities to the general population, especially youth, and to all our special need segments of the population.

Park Advisory Board Mission Statement

The mission of the Park Advisory Board is to build community-wide support for recreation and parks centers while keeping in focus the neighborhood facility, park compatibility and economic growth of the neighborhood. With the recreation staff and center's director bringing forward the Park Advisory Board's advice on issues and opportunities to enhance the surrounding areas and to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

Park Advisory Board Vision Statement

The vision of the Park Advisory Board is to bring together a group of residents and businesses to advise and work in partnership with the recreation center's director in program development and park facility enhancement, assist in fundraising for special projects and events, and the distribution and communication of information to recreation center patrons, community groups, and non-users of services.



CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

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Karen Bass

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Belinda Jackson, Assistant General Manager, Recreation Services Branch

Cathie Santa Domingo, Assistant General Manager, Planning, Construction, and Maintenance Branch

Brenda Aguirre, Assistant General Manager, Special Operations Branch

CITY-WIDE PARK ADVISORY BOARDS

Elaine Piha, Principal Recreation Supervisor I

Ryan Carpio, Director of Government Affairs

Marc Meehan, LA Parks Volunteer Program

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REVISED 3/2023

