

RECREATION AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES
COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING



Chairperson	Cecelia Bernal
Commissioner	Anita Diaz
Commissioner	Maria Davalos
Commissioner	Mario Flores
Commissioner	VACANT
Student Commissioner	VACANT
Student Commissioner	VACANT
Student Commissioner	VACANT

Minutes

August 4, 2025 5:00 PM

These minutes are presented in Agenda Order

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:02 p.m. by Chair Person Bernal

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Person Bernal

ROLL CALL

Chair Person Bernal performed roll call

MEMBERS

CHAIR PERSON Cecelia Bernal (present)
COMMISSIONER Maria Davalos (present)
COMMISSIONER Anita Diaz (present)
COMMISSIONER Mario Flores (absent)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR APRIL 7, 2025

M/S/C: DAVALOS/DIAZ/BERNAL

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

REPORT OF OFFICERS, COMMISSIONERS, OR COMMITTEES

- July – Parks Make Life Better Month Recap
- Movie Under the Stars
- BASiC (Before and After School Care)
- Baldwin Park Relief Program

1. July Parks Make Life Better Month Recap

Program Specialist Jessica Gamboa Vasquez provided the commission a recap of the month of July and Parks Make Life Better Month. Over the month of July, the department hosted 12 events, 17 including the Street Market in the Park and the 4th of July Spectacular. Our kickoff on July 1st was Paletas in the Park with Loteria. Followed by Coffee & Canvases, Summer Splash Party, Karaoke Paradise, Twilight Tunes, Campfires Stories, Movies Under the Stars, Coffee with the Parks, another Summer Splash Party, Dive in Movie, Loteria Night, Game Truck Night, Chalk It Up and Park Petting Zoo. These events were not just about entertainment it was about making lasting memories for the community while keeping a safe and welcoming space. At the end of each event the staff were reminded why we do what we do, and we love doing it. A few events that had the biggest impact this summer was Loteria with approximately 200 participants. A very strong number of them were from our senior community and it was one of the most requested events this year. They encouraged us to have more events like this for the senior community. Another event that was a big hit was our Summer Splash Parties, each one brought in approximately 500 participants. We gave out free snow cones, ongoing raffles, complementary drinks and gift

cards from our sponsor Raising Canes. The energy and excitement from the families made it a memorable summer afternoon. Coffee with the Cops brought close to 300 participants that filled up the Starbucks on Ramon Blvd with arts and crafts, games, raffles and prizes donated from Starbucks. This event is an annual summer field trip for the Summer Day Campers in our BASiC program. They look forward to it every year. Campfire Stories was one of the only events held at Walnut Creek this Summer. It was designed to have families outdoors and connect with nature. This event was partnered with LA County Library and brought approximately 200 participants. Volunteers from the LA County Library read stories to the participants. Everyone enjoyed smores, juice and arts & crafts. The last event that was really a community pleaser was the Park Petting Zoo. An event that was originally scheduled for 3 hours quickly turned into a 5-hour event due to the overwhelming number of community participants that brought approximately 2,000 participants. It easily became the most popular event of the month and maybe even the summer. Our staff quickly adjust to the high demand of the community by extending staffing time, bringing out additional equipment to ensure all our families had a memorable experience. Jessica wanted to give a special “Thank You” to Program Coordinator Jimmy Wong because with his mentorship he guided us to plan and execute these memorable events for our community. With his leadership and guidance, our Program Specialists and Recreation Leaders are growing professionally. Jimmy has also assisted us in making these events more meaningful and successful. As July ends, we are proud of what we have accomplished and are already thinking and planning on ways to make next year even better for our community. Commissioner Diaz shared that even though the Petting Zoo in the Park was a great turnout there was concern regarding the participants parking in areas of concern. Participants were parking at the library across the street, double parking and blocking driveway entrances. Commission Diaz suggested a designated parking area at the park, city hall parking structure or the Metrolink station. Program Specialist Jessica Gamboa Vasquez assured the commission that staff are already thinking of parking maps for this specific event for next year.

2. Movie Under the Stars

Program Coordinator Jimmy Wong shared with the commissions the free Movie Under the Stars that will take place on Friday, August 8th at 8:30pm. It will take place in the Cesar E. Chavez Amphitheater, and we will be showing WICKED. All are welcomed and encouraged to bring their blankets and lawn chairs for a magical night under the stars. The last two movies we watched, Despicable Me and Inside Out, were both very well attended with close to 100 participants.

3. BASiC (Before and After School Care)

Program Specialist Mirna Escobedo and Senior Recreation Leader Gabriel Salazar informed with the commissions the Summer Day Camp program as well as the Before and After School Care program. Mirna Escobedo first informed the commission that Summer Day Camp started on June 9th and will continue until August 13th. The first week of camp we had 106 participants. Mirna also shared the weekly calendar that is given to the parents so they can see the weekly activities. Every week we have a field trip to the library across the street. Every student was given a permission slip and those that return it signed can attend. We looked for other trips that we could walk to, participants went to Starbucks, Michoacana, Burger King and Miss Tea. Another field trip we had this summer was Valley County Water District where the kids were educated on the way our water is filtered. This trip was geared for ages 8 to 12 years old. The 3 big trips we had this summer were to the Discovery Cube, Natural History Museum and Knotts Berry Farm. The participants in the Summer Day Camp program are also offered free Summer Lunch from our Summer Lunch Program. A menu is also sent home to the parents with the weekly calendar. Program Supervisor April Rojo added that this year Kaiser Permanente offered “Hot Topic Discussions” with 10 -12-year-olds every Tuesdays, free of charge to the kids. Summer Day Camp kids are also allowed to swim privately in our pool two days a week: Tuesdays and Thursdays. The participants also get to utilize everything that the community center has to offer computer lab, basketball gym and gamesroom. Senior Recreation Leader Gabriel Salazar shared the much-anticipated talent show hosted by the Summer Day Camp participants and staff. This summer’s talent show took place on Friday, July 18th at 6:30pm in the Cesar E. Chavez Amphitheater. Every year there is a new theme for the show and this year’s theme was Super Bowl Half Time Shows. Each age group worked on a routine with their leaders and performed at the talent show. There is a lot that goes into planning the Talent Show. We had picked this year’s theme at the end of last summer. During the

summer we have over 40 staff that assist in putting together the talent show, and it takes every one of them and their time. From making posters, costumes, backdrops, stage props, music clips and choreographing the dances. Gamesroom and special events staff also assist with the event by helping us decorate, using the PA system and breakdown. It really takes a village to put it together and we appreciate all the staff and their involvement. This year since Mike Salas has retired, staff took the MIC and hosted and MC'ed the event and they all loved it. There were 102 students that participated in the talent show this year. Commissioner Diaz shared that it would be nice to receive the activities and events within the department sooner, not just when posted on social media. Chairperson Bernal asked what some of the topics are that Kaiser Permanente talked to the kids about. Program Supervisor April Rojo shared they had topics regarding bullying, hygiene, social acting with other peers and how to deal with things unexpectedly. The Kaiser Permanente staff was great, and this program was great for the kids. Program Specialist Mirna Escobedo informed the commission that we have started taking registration for the BASiC program: Before And after School Care. We will have the program at Foster, Vineland, Tracy and Geddes. This program is from 6:00am - 8:00am and after school 2:30pm - 6:00pm and on Wednesdays 12:30pm - 6:00pm. There are students signed up and registered for BASiC before school starts. Staff communicate with each school and plan an outreach day during registration. This program is advertised on the city website, marquee and social media. Commissioner Davalos asked Program Coordinator Jimmy Wong if it would be possible to expand the Petting Zoo area and reevaluate the line because it was extremely long and moved slowly. Jimmy assured the commission that he and staff have taken notes and are planning new layouts, expanding the petting areas and adding a second petting zoo for next year. We tried to accommodate all the participants by using every EZ-up that we had to try and give shade to those waiting in line. Commissioner Davalos expressed her gratitude to staff and their readiness to accommodate the last-minute change in the crowd. Chairperson Bernal appreciates the staff jumping in and accommodating the large crowd that was not anticipated due to this being the first time having this event.

4. Baldwin Park Relief Program

Wendy Hernandez shared with the commissioners the Baldwin Park Relief Program that started today on Monday, August 4th. This program is in partnership with Los Angeles County Chair Pro Tem and First District Supervisor Hilda L. Solis and local businesses. Since we posted today, we have had families coming in today submitting and inquiring about the program. This is an effort to assist those in our community that were affected by the recent immigration raids. This program helps with essential needs including a box of non-perishable groceries, toiletries, and flexible financial support to help cover urgent expenses such as utility bills and one-time rental assistance. Applications are administered by the Julia McNeill Senior Center staff, all provided with compassion, confidentiality and a focus on serving the families most in need. Some of the requirements must be a Baldwin Park Resident, must provide proof of residency, consular identification, and must meet household income limits. If anyone has any questions, they can call (626) 813-5245 EXT. 564 and or stop by the senior center front counter Monday – Friday 8am-3pm. The flyer is posted on the city website along with the application for the program. Chair Person Bernal asked what the turnaround time would be. Acting Director of Recreation and Community Services shared that depending on the day of the week we receive the application we can have a check within a week. The check will be mailed directly to the utility company. Commissioner Diaz asked how the applicant's information is going to be kept confidential and how can we reassure the applicants that they will not be turned in. Wendy expressed that all the documents will be confidential and secured at the Senior Center along with our other documents we store at the senior center. Acting Director of Recreation and Community Services Maria Moreno shared with the commission the fundraiser Baldwin Park Pizza Co has agreed to have on August 27th and 28th for the Santa Clothes Program. 15% of the proceeds will go to the foundation. All regular orders from 11:00am to 9:00pm. To participate, simply present the flyer at time of purchase. This will help us reach our goal of 375 deserving students this December. The flyer is being created and as soon as it is ready to go, please reshare from our social media.

COMMISSION REQUESTS & COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Diaz shared that she participated in the Pride of the Valley 5K, and she really enjoyed it, it was a great day for the event. She was very moved by the Wildfire Runners that participated in the race. She thanked them for participating and asked if we could invite them to the city parade. Maria said that the department would extend the invitation to them.

Commissioner Davalos wanted to Thank the department for all their hard work because all these events are a lot of work. Especially the events with the younger kids, they can be draining especially in the heat. You all have a lot of patience. Not everyone could do it, it takes very special people. Thank you.

Chairperson Bernal agreed with Commissioner Daiz, it takes very special people to do what you all do. Summer is almost over, and you will have to switch gears and start on holiday events. Thank you for all that you do.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business being presented, it was motioned and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:39pm M/S/C:
DIAZ/DAVALOS/BERNAL