

City Considers Meters and Parking Permits Around Sand Dune

By Evan Ortega

Neighbors of Sand Dune Park attended Tuesday night's Manhattan Beach City Council meeting pleading for relief from the increasingly large crowds of non-residents using the park, nicknamed "Duners" by one resident, particularly during summer. The Council voted unanimously to direct the Parking and Public Improvements Commission (PPIC) to study and review metered parking and a neighborhood parking permit program. "It's the first new idea to minimize or reduce the impact on the neighborhood that we've come up with in many years," Manhattan Beach City Manager Geoff Dolan said. "We believe that by metering the streets, charging an appropriate charge to use them and providing permit parking in the neighborhood, you will find people less inclined to use the park because it's not quite as convenient," Dolan said. "This idea may be an idea that would actually achieve some of the desired results in the neighborhood and still maintain the dune for our residents and those who want to use it."

With Councilmembers Mitch Ward and Nick Tell away on business, Mayor Portia Cohen and Councilmembers Wayne Powell and Richard Montgomery heard from City staff and fielded resident complaints for several hours. "As we would get the spikes in attendance, we would get the spikes in complaints," Parks and Recreation Director Richard Gill said. "We were trying to focus the busloads of people coming in more towards the hours of 11 to three." Mayor Cohen asked Gill if he was being facetious about buses of people. To the laughter of park neighbors in the audience, Gill replied that he was not; he has seen buses drop off large groups of people at the dune.

Dolan explained how the problems neighbors complain about are caused by the large crowds, most of them from out of town and even from different states. "The staff is absolutely the first to admit that this has been the busiest summer we've ever seen out at Sand Dune...clearly more people than ever," Dolan said. "The ancillary activities that

cause concern in the neighborhood have also increased, whether that's traffic or speeding, or parking problems or trash."

Gill reported that most resident concerns involve concerns involve noise, parking, traffic and littering. "A lot of socks, people go up and down the dune with their socks filled with sand and just leave them behind," Gill said.

In order to alleviate some of the problems over the years, Gill said the City has changed park hours, banned bullhorns and whistles, installed new signage and more trash cans, added part-time staff, hired a full-time park ranger in 2003, dropped group use without a permit to under 15 people, installed a turn-around on 33rd Street to reduce congestion, and limited groups from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Previous councils have temporarily closed the park, although Gill has authority to do so if he determines it is needed.

Police Chief Rod Uyeda told the Council his officers are called at least 10 times a month, and that officers patrol the area about 100 times monthly. "We do get a lot of complaints of just general crowds, especially during the summertime," said Uyeda. "This summer has just been horrific in terms of more crowds coming in. We do our best to try and maintain the peace and tranquility of the neighborhood, but when you have that many people coming in it's really difficult."

Kim Riley of 33rd Street wanted the City to plant the top of the hill to make it less desirable for athletes to train on, and to enforce existing rules. "If you did that and restricted the hours, you might not have to resort to parking meters...if we park down with the parking meters we would have to pay even though we live there," Riley said. "Ninety percent of the problem is the people they hire for Parks and Recreation, they do not enforce a thing down there. I have to walk up to the park leaders and ask them to remove their headphones...it's getting beyond the point of being ridiculous."

Dolan explained the park ranger tries to

See Permits page 22

Calendar

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22, 2009

- Volleyball Tournament, Men's Open and Women's A, AA and unrated, 8:00 a.m. South Side of Manhattan Beach Pier. Dates subject to change call MB Parks & Recreation Dept. to confirm events 310-802-5448.
- Beach Short Film Fest at Hermosa Beach Community Center 7:00 p.m. 710 Pier Ave. (PCH & Pier) Tickets \$10 box office at 6:30 p.m. Showcasing amateur short films surfing and beach lifestyles theme. For more details www.beachshortsfilmfest.com

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23, 2009

- MB Concerts in the Park series. This is a summer-long event held each year at Polliwog Park, on Sundays, the free concert is from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM (1601 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Manhattan Beach). For more information please contact the Parks and Recreation Department (310) 802-5448.

MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2009

- The South Bay Chapter of the California Republican Assembly, will meet at 6:30 - 8:30pm El Segundo Library, Larry Greenfield of Claremont Institute will speak 310-406-5429.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2009

- Manhattan Beach Farmers Market offers fresh, locally grown, fruits, vegetables, flowers, artisan foods, etc. located on 13th Street between Morningside and Valley Drive. Farmers Market is sponsored by the Downtown Manhattan Beach Business Association 310-379-9901. The farmers market is open every Tuesday from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM between Memorial Day and Labor Day and from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM the rest of the year.

- 'Ukulele Night at the Manhattan Beach Library. An evening with 'ukulele performer and teacher Mitch Chang. Bring your own 'ukulele and learn some licks and tricks or just sit back and enjoy! 7:00 to 8:30 pm. 320 Highland Avenue. 310-545-85956.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2009

- Take pleasure in networking with members from all the South Bay Chambers at the beach while celebrating the end of summer at the Seaside Lagoon 5:30 pm-7:30 pm at 200 Portofino Way, Redondo Beach. Sample food from local restaurants and a large raffle while enjoying the best of what the South Bay has to offer. Participating Chamber Members \$5 Guests \$10 admission. To donate a raffle prize and or for more information contact Heidi at the Redondo Beach Chamber, 310-376-6911 ext. 24.

UPCOMING

- The Manhattan Beach Parks and Recreation Department invites you to join us on

Saturday, August 29, 2009 at 7:00 PM for a free movie on the beach! Families, pack your beach blankets, grab dinner in downtown Manhattan Beach or pack a picnic basket and head down to the pier! The featured movie will be The Wizard of OZ. 7:00 pm-Kevin Sousa, acoustic rock. Sundown-Movie will begin. 11:00pm-Approximate end time. Please be courteous of your fellow beach moviegoer and use low beach chairs. Parks and Rec 310-802-5448.

- Paintings exhibition. Director Richard Stevens is featuring a one-man show of paintings "The Dancer is the Answer" by Wilfred Sarr, opening Saturday, September 12th 4 p.m. to 10+ p.m. Cannery Row Studios, 604 No. Francisca, Redondo Beach. 310-379-6313.

- Citizens Helping Neighbors and Our City. The Manhattan Beach Fire Department is looking for community volunteers to sign up for the next Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) course. The training teaches skills that improve personal safety, taking care of your family and neighbors, and assisting the community in the event of a major emergency or a disaster. The topics include disaster preparedness, terrorism, disaster medical care, fire suppression and extinguisher use, light search and rescue, and the Incident Command System. The instructors are members of the Manhattan Beach Fire Department and CERT Association. Class dates are Saturdays (September 12, 19 and 26) from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The cost is \$50 for each participant, which includes a backpack with emergency supplies, a CERT hard hat/vest, a photo identification badge, manual, and graduation certificate. To sign up, go to the website at: www.mbcerta.org or email info@mbcerta.org.

ONGOING

- MOMS Club of Manhattan Beach. Moms Club MB invites local at-home mothers for friendship, fun playgroups, support and more! Contact Michelle e-mailto:momsclub90266@hotmail.com or 310-489-3927 for membership info and meeting dates/locations.

- Older Adults discussion group. Come discuss current events, movies, topics of local and national interest, whatever is on your mind. The discussion group meets every Monday from 9:00 a.m. - noon at the Joslyn Community Center, 1601 Valley Drive. For more information please call (310) 802-5447. •

Correction

We mistakenly printed the wrong caption for the front page photo in last week's issue August 13. Please see correct caption below.



Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament. Pictured: Marry McSorley, Wally Kurth, Tory Sullivan.



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