

MINUTES - DRAFT

City of Orange

**Park Planning and Community Events
Commission**

March 17, 2026

The Park Planning and Community Events Commission of the City of Orange, California convened on March 17, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in a Regular Meeting the Council Chamber, 300 E. Chapman Avenue, Orange, California.

1. OPENING/CALL TO ORDER

Chair Romero called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

1.1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Commissioner Fields.

1.2. ROLL CALL

Present Ahlswede, Fields, Perez, Kushon, and Romero

Absent Litwin

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1. Approval of minutes of the City of Orange Park Planning and Community Events Commission Regular Meeting held on January 20, 2026

A motion was made by Commissioner Perez, seconded by Commissioner Kushon, to approve the minutes as presented.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Ahlswede, Fields, Perez, Kushon, and Romero

Noes: None

Absent: Litwin

4. COMMISSION BUSINESS

4.1. Consideration of Prohibition of Smoking in City Parks

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, presented a staff report on options related to smoking in City parks.

Lieutenant Kevin Plog and Sergeant Mike Sellers of the Orange Police Department

answered Commissioner questions on enforcement ability and the parameters of where a smoking ban would apply.

A motion was made by Commissioner Perez, seconded by Vice Chair Ahlswede, to make a recommendation to City Council to ban smoking in all City parks.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Ahlswede, Perez, Kushon, and Romero

Noes: Fields

Absent: Litwin

4.2. USA250 Fundraising Subcommittee Appointment

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, presented a staff report on the USA250 Fundraising Subcommittee that was established at the October 21, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Park Planning and Community Events Commission.

Commissioners discussed the benefit of an additional member on the subcommittee.

Commissioner Kushon made a motion to nominate Vice Chair Ahlswede to join the USA250 Fundraising Subcommittee.

Vice Chair Ahlswede stated his gratitude for the nomination but declined before a second could be made and the motion was withdrawn.

No other motions were made. No action was taken.

5. COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR'S REPORT

5.1. Updates on USA250

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, presented an update on the USA250 initiative around the City.

Chair Romero provided an update on a Celebration in the Park on July 3, 2026 event in connection with the USA250 initiative. She requested each Commissioner fundraise \$2,500.00 to contribute to the event.

Staff clarified the difference between the USA250 Planning Subcommittee and the USA250 Fundraising Subcommittee. Having fulfilled their purpose, the USA250 Planning Subcommittee was dissolved.

5.2. Utility Box Art Program

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, provided an update on the Utility Box Art Program, a collaborative initiative between the Community and Library Services Department and the Public Works Department to celebrate USA250 by wrapping City-owned traffic signal control boxes with sponsored art submissions.

Submissions for art will be accepted through April 13, 2026 and will be brought back to the Park Planning and Community Events Commission for final selection.

5.3. Updates on the Grijalva Park Masterplan

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, provided an update to the Grijalva Park Masterplan. A community-wide questionnaire was released and a community input public workshop is scheduled for March 31, 2026.

5.4. Updates on Summer Programs

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, provided an update on aquatic and day camp programs provided in the City. Agreements were approved by City Council with Premier Aquatics LLC to provide a year-round aquatic program at Hart Park Pool and with The Hub OC for the Youth Centers of Orange to provide a youth and teen summer day camp out of Shaffer Park.

5.5. Budget Study Sessions

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, informed the Commission of upcoming City Council meetings with a focus on the City budget.

5.6. Updates on Capital Improvement Projects

Emily Bustamante, Assistant Community Services Director, provided updates on the Hart Park Pickleball and Fitness Circuit Project, Serrano Park Lodge Pole Fencing, the Skatepark at Grijalva Park, and Rampart Street Park projects.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

The next Regular Park Planning and Community Events Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

Emily Bustamante
Assistant Community Services Director