



London Breed, Mayor
Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager

Date: April 4, 2019

To: Recreation and Parks Operations Committee

Through: Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager

From: Sarah Madland, Director of Policy and Public Affairs
Brenda Cartagena, Youth Services Volunteer Manager

Subject: The EcoCenter Facility at Heron's Head Park

Agenda Wording

Discussion and possible action to authorize the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department (SFRPD) to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the San Francisco Port Commission, with terms substantially the same as the draft MOU dated March 1, 2019, for SFRPD to operate and provide programming at the EcoCenter at Heron's Head Park.

Strategic Plan Reference

Strategy One: Inspire Space: Keep today's parks safe, clean, and fun; promote our park's historic and cultural heritage; and build the great parks of tomorrow.

Objective 1.2 Strengthen the quality of existing parks and facilities.

Objective 2.3 Work with partners and neighborhood groups to activate parks through organized events, activities, and unstructured play.

Strategy Three: Inspire Investment: Through community engagement advocacy and partnerships, cultivate more financial resources to keep San Francisco's parks and programs accessible for all.

Objective 3.2 Broaden engagement and strengthen external communications with park users and park partners.

Objective 4.3 Increase eco-literacy of park users and park maintenance staff.

Background Information

Since 2010, the Recreation and Park Department (SFRPD) has provided free programming on behalf of the Port of San Francisco. SFRPD has collaborated with former tenants of the EcoCenter at Heron's Head Park to engage youth and community members in education and stewardship of the east end of Heron's Head Park through our Volunteer Division's Youth Stewardship Program (YSP), Greenager Program (GP) as well as the Leisure Division's Healthy Parks, Healthy People (HPHP) program.

SFRPD's Youth Stewardship Program (YSP) is free program offered to teachers and educators in the city of San Francisco for youth 2nd-12th grade, run by YSP interns. SFRPD hires 4 highly motivated and driven young adults to intern in YSP each year. Through hands-on and inter-departmental collaborations,



they are trained to run and implement YSP programming. Since 1997, YSP has served well over 21,000 youth and facilitated 135,000 hours of stewardship city wide, trained and provide experiential opportunities to over 80 YSP interns. Since SFRPD began working at Heron's Head Park, YSP has facilitated well over 80,000 hours of environmental education themed field trips to over 9,000 youth ranging from 5-18 years of age.

In 2012, SFRPD and the Port of San Francisco piloted a new program, the Greenager Program, to help address the lack of jobs and youth opportunities in the Southeast of San Francisco-- with Heron's Head Park serving as its home base. GP was designed to serve teenage youth that live in or attend a school in the Southeast of San Francisco. The neighborhoods include Bayview Hunters Point, Visitacion Valley, Crocker Amazon, Portola, Outer Mission, Excelsior, Silver Terrace and Potrero Hill. In 2017, SFRPD expanded the program by adding a 2nd crew to provide similar opportunities for teenage youth in the Northeast of San Francisco. The neighborhoods include Chinatown, Western addition, Japantown and parts of Soma and Treasure Island. The Greenager Program's mission is to empower youth from the Southeast and Northeast sectors of San Francisco to become community and environmental youth leaders through civic engagement, park stewardship and outdoor recreation opportunities.

To date, the Greenager Program has served 78 students, visited and cared for over 20 parks and opens spaces, and provided over 10,000 hours of community service. Looking at outcomes specific to Heron's Head Park, 54 of those 78 youth (including 11 2nd year leaders) and 2,427 of those 10,000 hours have been specifically dedicated to education and stewardship at Heron's Head Park. That includes serving as International Coastal Clean-up site captains at two Port of San Francisco properties: China Basin and Heron's Head Park. Since 2017, the northeast crew has served as site captains at China Basin Park and since 2013, the southeast crew has served at Heron's Head Park.

In partnership with Healthy Parks, Healthy People (HPHP) Bay Area, a collaborative effort between 25 local agencies, SFRPD has been providing accessible and free guided leisurely walks at Stow Lake, Glen Canyon, McLaren Park, and Heron's Head Park. Participants get to explore the city's natural areas while socializing with friends, feeling fit, and finding inspiration in the city's native plants and wildlife. HPHP walks happen every 4th Saturday of the month at Heron's Head Park. To date over 36 scheduled walks have taken place since it first began.

Port of San Francisco History and Development of the EcoCenter

In 1999, the Port of San Francisco (Port) constructed Heron's Head Park, an approximately 22-acre peninsula of land comprised of fill that the Port had placed in the San Francisco Bay during the 1970s. Heron's Head Park included approximately 8 acres of wetland habitat and 14 acres of adjacent open space. The upland portions of Heron's Head Park are used for passive recreation, including walking, picnicking, fishing, and bird-watching. Visitors enjoy expansive views of the bay from the eastern tip of the peninsula, which extends approximately 1/3 of a mile from the shoreline.

The EcoCenter was designed and advocated for by Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ) with the Port's consent in 2009. The EcoCenter opened to the public in April 18, 2010 to promote public access and deliver high quality programs focusing on green building, sustainable resource use, environmental justice, experiential learning and community engagement for San Francisco's southeastern neighborhoods



as well as a broad spectrum of participants of various ages and backgrounds. To date, the EcoCenter has served as a demonstration of green building technology, including solar power, a green roof, sustainable building materials, on-site wastewater treatment, and rainwater harvesting and reuse.

Project Description

SFRPD proposes to enter a 9-year MOU term with the San Francisco Port Commission to operate and provide programming at the EcoCenter building in Heron's Head Park.

SFRPD's use of the EcoCenter facility for public recreational and leisure purposes will enliven the waterfront by attracting people to the waterfront and raising awareness of the waterfront and its benefits and amenities at no fee to users or increased cost to the Port.

SFRPD will leverage its collective expertise, tenure in the community and partnerships in providing recreational opportunities and creating leadership opportunities for local youth to further activate the EcoCenter within the parameters as stated in the Operations and Program Plan.

Port of San Francisco and SFRPD's permitted use agreement

The Port of San Francisco and SFRPD have negotiated and agreed on the following permitted use terms:

1. The EcoCenter facility shall be used for education, recreation, leisure as written in SFRPD's Operations and Program Plan.
2. The EcoCenter facility shall serve local community organizations as an assembly space for purposes related to the building educational mission as further described in SFRPD's Operations and Program Plan.
3. The EcoCenter Facility will be open for free public access at least four (4) days/week, including at least one weekend day.
4. The Port will work with own contractors and oversee the physical and technical oversight of the onsite wastewater treatment and solar power systems.
5. The EcoCenter and an approximately 6,000 sq. ft. portion of Heron's Head Park immediately surrounding the EcoCenter are collectively herein the "EcoCenter Facility" as presented in Exhibit A.
6. There is no expectation from the Port of SFRDP to maintain or work in the fenced irrigated meadow in the Park. However, upon prior consent, the port is receptive should SFRPD express interest in further developing that space into a diverse ecosystem for native flora and fauna as an added educational component to the facility.
7. The Port shall cause Heron's Head Park to be open to the public at all times except between thirty minutes after sunset and thirty minutes before sunrise.
8. SFRPD shall use its best efforts to ensure that all of the premises are used continuously during the Term for the permitted uses and requirements of this MOU.
9. SFRPD shall not reduce existing Public Access Hours without the prior written consent of the Port. However, SFRPD reserves the right to reduce and or halt Public Access Hours temporarily without the Port's written consent in the event of 1.) EcoCenter building and system failures that could impact staff productivity, negate visitors experience and prevent access safe clean



restrooms and drinking water 2.) dangerous and or threatening situations caused by extreme weather conditions and/or 3.) dangerous, threatening and/or persistent unwelcome behavior from public members.

10. SFRPD will provide weekly records to support data collection that informs Port's hired Technical Operations team on status of Facility Systems
11. SFRPD will provide timely updates regarding immediate building concerns, systems failures and yearly status reports to the Port of San Francisco that depict program reach.

Other items to be addressed will be included in the Operations and Programs Plan (Exhibit B)

MOU

The Draft MOU is attached for reference.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the San Francisco Port Commission and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department for the Department to operate and provide programming at the Eco Center at Heron's Head Park.

Project Supported BY

SFRPD Volunteer Division

Port of San Francisco

Bayview Hunters Point Mobilization for Adolescent Growth in our Communities (BMAGIC)

Literacy for Environmental Justice

A Philip Randolph Institute San Francisco

Project Opposed BY

None Known

Attachments

MOU, Appendix A, Appendix B

