



DRAFT MINUTES
CUPERTINO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Thursday, June 4, 2026

At 7:01 p.m. Chair Gopal Kumarappan called the Regular Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to order in the Quinlan Community Center Conference Room, 10185 N. Stelling Rd., and via teleconference.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Gopal Kumarappan, Vice Chair Sheela Sreekanth and Commissioners Claudio Bono, Carol Stanek and Seema Swamy. Absent: None.

CEREMONIAL ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS

MOTION: Kumarappan moved and Sreekanth seconded to reorder the agenda to hear Item No. 2 after Item No. 4. The motion carried with the following vote: Ayes: Kumarappan, Sreekanth, Bono, Stanek, Swamy. Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

1. Subject: Grassroots Ecology
Recommended Action: Receive a presentation on Grassroots Ecology.

Written Communications for the item included a presentation.

Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Carolyn McDowell introduced Co-Executive Director Alex Von Feldt and Project Manager Stephanie Saffori from Grassroots Ecology who gave a presentation.

Commissioners asked questions, which the presenters responded to.

Chair Kumarappan opened the public comment period and, seeing no one, closed the public comment period.

Commissioners received the presentation.

2. Subject: Parks and Recreation Department Marketing and Communications
Recommended Action: Receive a presentation on Parks and Recreation Department

marketing and communications.

Written Communications for the item included a staff presentation.

Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Carolyn McDowell introduced Communications and Marketing Coordinator Branton Curt, who gave a presentation.

Commissioners asked questions which staff responded to.

Chair Kumarappan opened the public comment period and, seeing no one, closed the public comment period.

Commissioners received the presentation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3. Subject: May 7, 2026 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes
Recommended Action: Review and approve the May 7, 2026 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes.

MOTION: Bono moved and Swamy seconded to approve the May 7, 2026 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes. The motion carried with the following vote: Ayes: Kumarappan, Bono, Stanek, Swamy. Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: Sreekanth.

Chair Kumarappan opened the public comment period and, seeing no one, closed the public comment period.

POSTPONEMENTS – None

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Deena Horeff discussed pickleball.

Marshall discussed pickleball.

Minna Xu discussed Lawrence Mitty Park.

Aref discussed pickleball.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

4. Subject: Santa Clara County Library District StoryWalk Initiative - Park Recommendation

Recommended Action: Receive a presentation from the Santa Clara County Library District and rank the three potential park locations for installation of the StoryWalk Initiative for recommendation to City Council.

Written Communications for the item included a presentation.

Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Carolyn McDowell and Recreation Manager Molly James introduced the item.

Director of County Library Communication and Marketing Dianne Roche, Supervising Librarian of Adult and Teen Services Karen Dixon, and members of the Cupertino Library Commission: Vice Chair Chandra Sakthivel and Commissioner Qin Pan gave a presentation.

Commissioners asked questions which staff and the presenters responded to.

Chair Kumarappan opened the public comment period and the following people spoke:

- Minna Xu (speaking as a member of the public).

Chair Kumarappan closed the public comment period.

The following factors were cited by Commissioners in support of selecting Wilson Park for the installation of the StoryWalk Initiative:

- Wilson Park has a higher concentration of young families and school-aged children and is widely regarded as having one of the largest populations of young residents in the area.
- Trail traffic was identified as an important consideration, with emphasis on serving areas that have the greatest number of young children and families.
- A bridge connecting the walking trail to Wilson Park enhances accessibility and may attract additional visitors, increasing overall park usage.
- Wilson Park was viewed as an attractive location due to its connection to the regional trail network and the resulting pedestrian activity.
- Commissioners discussed the opportunity to introduce a new amenity to a park that currently has fewer recreational facilities, thereby expanding opportunities for the community.

- Commissioners noted that Jollyman Park has already benefited from significant recent upgrades. Locating the amenity at Wilson Park would help distribute park investments more equitably across the community while providing distinct recreational opportunities at each park, allowing both parks to develop unique identities and serve different user groups.

Commissioners noted the following concerns regarding Wilson Park for the installation of the StoryWalk Initiative:

- Unlike Jollyman Park, Wilson Park does not currently offer the same range of amenities and family-oriented features, including inclusive recreational opportunities.
- Limited parking availability at Wilson was identified as a potential constraint and consideration for future improvements.

The following factors were cited by Commissioners in support of selecting Jollyman Park for the installation of the StoryWalk Initiative:

- Jollyman Park was recognized as a well-established family-oriented park, with inclusive amenities, basketball facilities, and a well-equipped play structure that attract young families.
- Jollyman Park offers ample parking.
- Jollyman Park was identified as a key destination for young families, and its amenities align with the City's commitment to providing inclusive recreational opportunities.
- Commissioners noted that Jollyman Park is easily accessible and serves residents from across Cupertino, making it a widely used community park.
- Commissioners noted that this project presents an opportunity to further advance and build upon the City's commitment to inclusivity.
- Commissioners who attended the park's reopening following the upgrades observed that many children, families, and adults visit Jollyman Park, including visitors from outside the immediate neighborhood.
- Jollyman Park was noted for its inclusive playground, recent upgrades, and frequent community events, all of which contribute to its popularity among Cupertino residents.
- The proposed amenity was discussed as an opportunity to provide additional recreational and social opportunities for neurodivergent individuals and their families.

Commissioners noted the following concerns regarding Jollyman Park for the installation of the StoryWalk Initiative:

- Commissioners emphasized the importance of considering amenities and opportunities that serve a broader range of community members and user groups.
- It was noted that concentrating too many amenities in a single park may limit access elsewhere; distributing facilities across multiple parks could promote more equitable access and encourage use of parks throughout the city.
- Jollyman Park was also described as a relatively small park, which may limit its capacity to accommodate additional amenities.
- Commissioners noted that Jollyman is primarily surrounded by senior housing and established family neighborhoods, which may result in lower levels of use by young children compared to other areas.

The following factors were cited by Commissioners in support of selecting Varian Park for the installation of the StoryWalk Initiative: None Listed.

Commissioners noted the following concerns regarding Varian Park for the installation of the StoryWalk Initiative:

- Noise from the tennis courts may impede concentration on the StoryWalk displays.
- It is situated on the edge of the city, has more limited accessibility, and presents additional challenges compared to the other park options.

MOTION: Bono moved and Swamy seconded to rank the three potential park locations for installation of the StoryWalk Initiative for recommendation to City Council with Wilson Park as number one, Jollyman Park as number two, and Varian Park as number three (The Commission did not vote on this motion).

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Stanek moved to recommend to City Council that the Commission had the most support for Wilson Park, some support for Jollyman Park, and did not support Varian Park. (There was no second, and the motion was not considered.)

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Bono moved and Swamy seconded to provide Wilson Park as number one, Jollyman Park as number two, and Varian Park as number three, with feedback as to why they came to that decision. The motion carried with the following vote: Ayes: Kumarappan, Sreekanth, Bono, Stanek, Swamy. Noes: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Chair Kumarappan recessed the meeting at 8:58 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 9:05 p.m. with all Commissioners present.

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS –

Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Carolyn McDowell reported on recent revisions to the Commissioner's Handbook, upcoming Parks and Recreation programs and events, that City facilities would observe Juneteenth, and the Commission's next meeting would be held on August 6 due to the July meeting cancellation.

At 9:30 p.m., Chair Kumarappan left the meeting.

Commissioner Swamy reported on local parks, particularly Jollyman Park, and noted their beauty and that the community was benefitting.

5. Subject: Upcoming Draft Agenda Items

A tentative Parks and Recreation Commission meeting agenda calendar was provided in the published agenda.

FUTURE AGENDA SETTING – None.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:34 p.m. Vice Chair Sreekanth adjourned the Regular Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting.

Minutes prepared by:

Lindsay Nelson, Administrative Assistant