

SUMMARY ACTION MINUTES

(Action Items Displayed in Italics)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025 — 10:00 a.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Skorpanich, Vice Chair Sarkis, and Commissioners Gossett, Harrell, Johannes, Moodian, Senft, Thoms, and Yauger were present. Commissioners Brown, Chinn, Remnet, and Richonne were absent.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

At this time, members of the public may address the Commission on items of public interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission and are not contained in tonight's agenda.

No comments were received from the public.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR (ITEM(S) A)

The following item(s) on the consent calendar will be approved by one motion unless a Commissioner requests to pull a specific item.

A. APPROVE COMMISSION MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 4, 2025 MEETING

Motion: Commissioner Gossett

2nd: Commissioner Moodian

Approved 8-0-1 (Commissioner Senft abstained)

IV. STAFF UPDATE (ITEM(S) A)

A. CULTURAL RESOURCES OPERATIONS FACILITY UPDATE

Staff will give an update on the recent happenings within the Cultural Resources Operations at historical facilities.

Dennis Shaffer, OC Parks Operations Manager, provided an update on current projects and recent happenings at the historical facilities, recent staff changes within the Cultural Resources Operations Group and answered the Commissioners' questions.

V. DISCUSSION CALENDAR (ITEM(S) A-E)

A. SODA FOUNTAIN PAVILION WELCOME

Staff will give a brief overview of the Soda Fountain Pavilion, its history, and how it is used today.

Lauren Serrano, OC Zoo Operations Manager, provided an introduction to the Soda Fountain Pavilion and answered the Commissioners' questions.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file.

B. UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL DISCUSSION

The Chair will report the inaugural meeting of USA250OC.org at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum and the upcoming plans to commemorate the event. The Commission will discuss potential ways it may want to participate in the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and birth of the United States of America.

Chair Skorpanich spoke about the meeting of USA250OC.org and answered Commissioners' questions.

Dennis Shaffer, OC Parks Operations Manager, provided information on the presentations given at the USA250OC.org the meeting and answered the Commissioners' questions.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file.

Item was received and filed.

C. COMMISSION HISTORIC SITE PLAQUE APPLICATIONS

The Commission has received three applications for historic plaques. The Commission will consider the historic site plaque applications for Crystal Cove State Park's Laguna Beach Japanese Language School and Community Center and the City of Dana Point's Palisades Gazebo and Pines Parks for approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Approve Crystal Cove State Park's application for a plaque for the Laguna Beach Japanese Language School and Community Center and authorize Commission funds for purchase of the plaque.

Motion: Commissioner Senft

2nd: Commissioner Moodian

Approved 9-0

2. Approve City of Dana Point's application for a plaque for Palisades Gazebo Park and authorize Commission funds for purchase of the plaque.

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Motion: Commissioner Gossett

2nd: Commissioner Moodian

Approved 9–0

3. Approve City of Dana Point’s application for a plaque for Pines Park and authorize Commission funds for purchase of the plaque.

Motion: Chair Skorpanich

2nd: Commissioner Gossett

Approved 9–0

D. COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS FOR REVENUE

Discussion about the role of Commission publications as a potential source of revenue for Commission activities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file.

Item was received and filed.

E. COMMISSIONER ROLES REPORTS

Commissioners will provide updates on the latest developments or request input from the Commission in their assigned roles.

1. Administrative — Vacant
2. Arden: Helena Modjeska — Harrell
3. Cooper Center — Vacant
4. Grants — Remnet
5. Heritage Hill — Vacant
6. Historic Preservationist — Chinn
7. OC Archives — Gossett
8. Oral History — Remnet
9. Plaque Program — Thoms
10. Publications — Richonne
11. Public Events — Johannes

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12. Treasurer — Senft

Commissioners provided updates in their roles. Some Commissioners requested to change their active roles to others that were open. Commissioners Harrell and Yauger suggested adding a Treasure Report to the Agenda for transparency.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Receive and file.

Item was received and filed.

VI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND REPORT

At this time Commissioners may comment on agenda or non-agenda matters, provided that no action may be taken on off-agenda items unless authorized by law.

VII. ADJOURNMENT 12:30 p.m.



Oral History Program Training Workshop

OC Historical Commission — March 4, 2025



What is Oral History?

- The Oral History Association defines it as a field of study and a method of gathering, preserving, and interpreting the voices and memories of people, communities, and participants in past events.
- It predates the written word and is also the most modern historical inquiry by using 21st century recording technology.

Historical Commission Program

- The program will focus on:
 - Former OC Historical Commissioners
 - Former OC Parks Commissioners
 - Former OC Parks Employees
 - Volunteer Groups (Amigos de la Colina, Modjeska Foundation)
- As the Commission is not an academic body, the program will take a more laid-back approach to interviewing and the documents turned in with the interviews.

Steps to Complete an Interview

- Identify a Narrator that fits the criteria of the program.
- Have a discussion to gage their willingness to participate.
- Explain the program and purpose and time needed to complete the interview.

Steps to Complete an Interview

- Once the Narrator has agreed to the interview, set a date for:
 - Pre-interview meeting or phone call
 - Actual recorded interview
- Check with OC Parks staff that recording equipment is available for the day of the interview.

Pre-Interview Meeting

- Meeting can be over the phone or in person
- Make sure to cover the following topics:
 - Paperwork to be signed
 - Options for video and audio recording or audio only
 - Setting a time and place suitable for the recorded interview
 - Background questions to guide your own research
 - What years were they on the Commission?
 - What major projects were they involved in?
 - Were they born in Orange County, or did they move here?
 - What was their occupation outside of the Commission?
 - Why and/or how did they become Commissioners?

Pre-Interview Preparations

- Once the pre-interview is complete, you will have a guide for doing research before the recorded interview.
- Research is needed in order to produce the interview questions.
 - 10 questions at a minimum
- Look into the history of the Commission the Narrator served on:
 - If the pre-interview gave you projects they completed, look deeper into them.
 - What was happening in Orange County during their tenure?
 - If they gave information on if they were born in Orange County or moved here later, what was happening that brought them here?
 - If interviewing an OC Parks staff member, research the history of the agency and who was in charge during their career.
- A basic understanding of the Narrator's past and affiliations is needed in order to ask open ended and probing questions.

Tips for Creating Good Interview Questions

- Ask open ended questions that allow the Narrator to answer at length.
 - Tell me your favorite project that you completed.
 - What do you consider your greatest accomplishment while on the Commission?
- Avoid closed questions like "Did you serve on the Commission?"
- Some questions are needed to establish a timeline, like when the Narrator was born, what city they grew up in, what year they joined a Commission.
- Majority of the questions should allow for longer answers.

Tips for Creating Good Interview Questions

- Prepared questions are a starting point and give a guideline for how the interview will progress.
- During the interview you can ask follow up questions and ask for clarification as needed.
- Don't feel locked into your prepared questions.
- The interview is a conversation, and the Interviewer must always be flexible and follow where the Narrator is leading.

Pre-Interview Preparations: Equipment Testing

- Preferred set up of the interviews will be audio and video recording.
 - Narrator can choose to only do audio if preferred.
- Go Pro Camera will be used for video and a MixPre 3 recorder for audio recording.
- Staff will give a full demonstration of the set up when the equipment is picked up by the Interviewer.
- Always practice with the equipment before the interview.
 - Interview will not begin well if you are unsure how to operate the equipment.

Pre-Interview Preparations: Equipment Testing

- Equipment will be kept at the Old Courthouse Office and staff will check it in and out to Interviewers.

Conducting the Interview

- Creating and maintaining rapport is essential.
 - Doing all previous steps with professionalism begins good rapport.
 - Knowing how to set up equipment quickly and effectively continues the rapport and puts the Narrator at ease.
 - Allowing the Narrator to select a meeting location that is comfortable for them is essential to a good interview.

Conducting the Interview

- Review and sign all agreement forms before the interview begins.
 - Review again the purpose of the program and how the recording will be used.
- Take photos of any personal items the Narrator brought to add to the interview.

Conducting the Interview

- Have a pen and paper with you to take notes.
- Write down thoughts as they come to you about:
 - Follow up questions to come back to
 - A new question that came to you while the Narrator spoke
 - Use the Proper Words List form to write down correct spelling if needed for later

Conducting the Interview

- Each interview will start with an introduction by the Interviewer that includes the following:
 - Identify yourself and your Narrator
 - Give name and date of the interview
 - Identify purpose of the interview
 - Identify location of the interview
 - Include that the interview is part of the OC Historical Commission Oral History Program

Conducting the Interview

- Once introductions are complete, begin your questions chronologically.
- Always follow up on details that need clarification.
- Take care if you need to challenge questionable information.
 - Be non-threatening and make sure Narrator remains comfortable and keeps answering questions.
 - Be gentle when challenging information, take the approach of correcting with a question.
 - Example: "I believe Orange County was founded in 1889, isn't that correct?"

Conducting the Interview

- Be flexible and follow where the Narrator leads the discussion.
 - Each Narrator is different.
 - Some need more guidance and will require more input from you in the form of follow up questions.
 - Some Narrators can talk for hours and may need you to remind them to answer your key questions.

Conducting the Interview

- Avoid asking leading questions that show bias.
 - Never ask a question like, "The County was never the same after the bankruptcy, how did your Commission deal with that?"
 - Alternate question could be, "How did your Commission function once the County declared bankruptcy?"
- The Interviewer is always impartial and unbiased.

Conducting the Interview

- Closing the interview
 - Take the Narrator's lead.
 - If all your questions are answered and you feel a natural stopping point is reached, end the interview.
 - If not all questions have been asked but you can tell the Narrator is tired, be courteous and end there, but schedule a follow up interview later.

Conducting the Interview

- Have a graceful closing.
 - Ask a question that is an assessment of the experiences just discussed.
 - Example, "What would you want future generations to remember about your work with the Commission?"
 - Thank the Narrator on the recording, and make a statement that concludes the interview.

Hearing from the Experts



Oral History Program Training Workshop

OC Historical Commission — March 4, 2025



Hearing from the Experts



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Post Interview Steps

- Once the recording is stopped, thank the Narrator and pack up all equipment.
- Ask for clarification on any names or places added to the Proper Words List form.
- Inform Narrator of the next steps:
 - They will be provided with a copy of the recordings.
 - When feasible, a transcript of the interview will be created and provided to the Narrator.
 - Not all interviews will be transcribed, but all will receive audio/video copy.

Post Interview Steps

- If needed, schedule a follow up interview with Narrator.
- Return all equipment to OC Parks staff.
- Staff will take the following steps:
 - Save recordings onto shared drives
 - Save copies of any photos with the audio files
 - Save copies of signed paperwork
 - Give the interview an archive number
 - Provide copies of audio files to Interviewer

Post Interview Steps

- Once OC Parks staff have provided the copy of the audio files, the Interviewer should:
 - Contact the Narrator to thank them again for interviewing
 - Provide Narrator with audio copy of interview
- The Interviewer is now free to search out another Narrator!

Links for More Information

- Oral History Association
 - <https://www.oralhistory.org/web-guides-to-doing-oral-history/>
- Samuel Proctor Oral History Program
 - <http://sites.clas.ufl.edu/spohp/files/2014-Oral-History-Workshop.pdf>
- California State University, Fullerton, Lawrence de Graaf Center for Oral and Public History
 - <http://coph.fullerton.edu/resources/remotefinterviewing.php>