


R-17

Date: May 22, 2007
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell, Fourth District 
Subject: El Dorado Nature Center Security and Recognition

The El Dorado Nature Center is part of El Dorado East Regional Park. Originally a flood plain of the San Gabriel River, it is now a local wildlife habitat, park and learning center. The Nature Center has been host to over 2 million visitors, including local students. In addition to animals, the 102.5 acre Center is home to oaks, alders and redwoods. The Nature Center's staff and dedicated volunteers are on site to educate visitors, and raise awareness of the facility. Their work, and the Nature Center itself, should be celebrated as one of the City's many treasures.

Recently, there have been several incidents of vandalism at the Nature Center. In addition to harming the preserve's animals, there was damage to and theft of City property. In order to ensure the security and ambiance of the Nature Center, as well as the many other park facilities within our jurisdiction, the City should review its current security standards and practices amongst the responsible departments.

The normal close of business at the Nature Center is 5:00 pm. However, Park Rangers cannot issue trespassing citations until 10:00 pm, which is the curfew for the City's other parks. In order to assist law enforcement and further protect the Nature Center, the City should amend the Municipal Code to address this specific issue. This will provide an additional tool for law enforcement. An amendment to the Municipal Code Chapter 16.16 as drafted by the City Prosecutor (Exhibit A attached) would allow the Director of Parks to address this issue with law enforcement.

Recommendation:

Request that the City Manager declare an "El Dorado Nature Center Day" in order to celebrate the Center and those who support it.

Request the City Manager to work with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine, its Park Rangers and the Long Beach Police Department to conduct an inter-departmental review of security at El Dorado Nature Center.

To declare ordinance amending Long Beach Municipal Code Section 16.16.010 (s) read the first time and laid over to the next regular meeting of the City Council for final reading.

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH AMENDING CHAPTER **16.16** BY ADDING SECTION **16.16.010(s)** TO THE LONG BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE PROHIBITING TRESPASS ON FENCED, GATED, OR OTHERWISE ENCLOSED PARKS, RECREATION, OR MARINE GROUNDS OR FACILITIES OUTSIDE OF POSTED HOURS OF OPERATION WITHOUT PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND MARINE.

The City Council of the City of Long Beach ordains and adds section **16.16.010(s)** to Chapter 16.16 of the Long Beach Municipal Code as follows:

The Director of Parks shall be authorized to designate the hours of operation or the business hours for any fenced, gated, or otherwise enclosed grounds, area, structure or facility of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine by providing reasonable notice to the public by signs and/or posting. Except during the posted hours of operation or business hours, no person shall enter, occupy, remain, or otherwise be within any fenced, gated, or otherwise enclosed grounds, area, structure or facility without prior authorization from the Director of Parks, Recreation, and Marine or the Director's designee. The hours of operation or business hours shall be posted at the public entry of each fenced, gated, or otherwise enclosed grounds, area, structure or facility subject to this subsection. The provisions of this section shall not apply to a peace officer, security officer, emergency personnel or employee of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine acting in an official capacity.