



**CITY OF PACIFICA  
COUNCIL AGENDA SUMMARY REPORT**

**6/22/2020**

**SUBJECT:**

Pacifica State Beach Surf Camp/School Permitting

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Refer to the Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission a work item to evaluate and make recommendations on potential changes to the Pacifica Surf Camp/School Policy for Pacifica State Beach.

**STAFF CONTACT:**

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**BACKGROUND:**

In 2003, the City's Public Works Department developed a Master Plan for Public Improvements at Pacifica State Beach. To address beach related issues during the implementation of these improvements, a Beach Subcommittee was formed on April 15, 2004. The subcommittee's work consisted of making recommendations and developing guidelines for the elimination of fires, beach hours of operations, ideas for the creation of a parking program, and recommendations for signage.

At the time, concerns were raised about beach usage, water safety and congestion due to lack of regulation relating to surf camps/schools. The subcommittee spent considerable time on the topic of surf camps/schools at Pacifica State Beach. After many public forums, the subcommittee put forth a recommendation to limit surf camps to a maximum number of three, to be regulated by the Parks Beaches and Recreation Department.

This direction is addressed in Ordinance No. 692-C.S., Section 4-10.116, *"The Director may promulgate rules and regulations for the reservation, rental, and use of exclusive use facilities in all beaches, and parks. The Director may also impose reasonable time, place, and manner conditions in writing to ensure that public health, safety and welfare are protected during the use of exclusive use facilities. It shall be unlawful for any person to violate such rules, regulations or conditions."*

The Parks, Beaches, and Recreation (PB&R) Commission, after conducting a study session, concurred with staff and the subcommittee to recommend the limitation of surf camps and develop rules/guidelines for them. On April 25, 2005, the recommendations were on the agenda of the regularly scheduled City Council meeting. Council approved the implementation of a policy to support the Ordinance listed above and directed staff to come back to the following meeting with some changes and clarifications to the guidelines, specifically allowing that:

- Local surf shops, who hold a Pacifica business licenses and carry liability and workers compensation insurance, may continue the practice of employees teaching individual and small group lessons with a maximum of 5 students in

keeping with the ratio of five (5) students per instructor (minimum safety requirement).

At the May 9, 2005 regular City Council meeting, council directed staff to proceed with implementation of the Pacifica State Beach Surf Camp/School Policy Guidelines.

On November 28, 2012 and January 9, 2013, the PB&R Commission held study sessions to discuss and review the surf camp/school policy as well as to consider increasing the amount of permit holders. Representatives from each surf school and the owner of Nor Cal Surf shop attended the November 28 meeting, and each surf school was represented at the January 9 meeting.

At the January 23, 2013 meeting, the PB&R Commission adopted changes to the Surf Camp/School Policy (attached) that included allowing one local surf shop to apply annually for a permit to increase the number of students that were currently allowed (for surf shops) from 5 to 12 at the small surf camp rate.

## **DISCUSSION**

At the June 8, 2020 City Council meeting approximately 30 emails/letters and 13 speakers addressed concern over the surf camp permitting process. In particular, many wrote or stated that they were concerned about racial equity relating to beach access, and that the permitting process makes it difficult for non-profits, like Brown Girls Surf and City Surf Project to apply for a surf camp permit.

In addition, several commenters shared personal anecdotes relating to the importance of equitable beach access, their experiences at the beach and surfing, as well as volunteering with non-profits that work with diverse communities. Many of the speakers advocated reforming the surf camp permitting process.

The 2020 price for an annual permit is \$1,060 for small camps and \$1,280 for large camps. Currently there are four permitted surf camps, two large - Adventure Out and Surf Camp Pacifica, one small - University of Surfing and one local shop - Nor Cal Surf Shop. These camps have been permitted to operate for many years. When an inquiry is received, groups are added to a list and told they will be contacted should a spot open up. Since the policy limits the number of permitted camps, and each year the camps have chosen to renew their permits, new camp operators, whether non-profits or not, have not been able to operate.

The City Manager recommends that Council refer a work item to the PB&R Commission to evaluate the Pacifica Surf Camp/School Policy to determine if/how the program could be amended to allow more surf camps to operate, or to revise the permit renewal process in order to support non-profits that work with diverse communities. Staff estimates that this process may take up to two study session/meetings with the PB&R Commission, with action on recommendations at a third meeting, potentially followed by City Council action.

## **RELATION TO CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND WORK PLAN:**

This action helps to support youth services, which is a component of **A Healthy and Compassionate Community**. It also promotes **An Engaged Community**, taking actions to restore trust in city government, expanding communication and building community.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with referral of this work item to the PB&R Commission. However, this is a new work item not currently on the Council or Commission's priority actions list adopted through the annual goal-setting process, and therefore will divert staff resources normally focused on already approved priority actions and on-going programs.

**ORIGINATED BY:**

Parks, Beaches & Recreation Department

**ATTACHMENT LIST:**

surf camp requirements 2018(PDF)