



Monterey County

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Board Report

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Current Status: Agenda Ready

Matter Type: General Agenda Item

Request that Pajaro-Sunny Mesa Water District consider a Memorial Park Naming, Tree & Bench at Pajaro Park in Memoriam of Jessica & Jorge Cortez.

..Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors request that Pajaro-Sunny Mesa Water District consider a Memorial Park Naming, Tree & Bench at Pajaro Park in Memoriam of Jessica & Jorge Cortez.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

Chair Alejo requested staff to agendize a board referral as a late add on to the agenda for December 11th or 12th. On December 6th, due to time constraint, the County Administrative Officer asked RMA to prepare a report for a memorial in Pajaro Park prior to the Board Referral being considered by the full Board.

According to the draft referral, County sibling children, Jessica Cortez, age 9, and Jorge Cortez, age 16, were gunned down in Pajaro at El Nopal Bakery 25 years ago. This event was highly publicized and resulted in the creation in a peace movement in Watsonville to address gang and domestic violence, including the formation of the Annual Watsonville Peace & Unity March organized by local youth that same year.

This referral also requests the collaboration and waiving of fees of the Monterey County Sheriffs Dept. so that marchers can do their annual procession of the Watsonville Peace & Unity March from the Watsonville City Plaza to "Cortez Park" in Pajaro and then back. The City of Watsonville is a co-sponsor of the Annual March and will be coordinating with Supervisors Alejo and Phillips for this event. Staff understands that the fee waiver can wait until January as all paperwork will need to be filed with the city.

The former Monterey County Redevelopment Agency developed a community park in Pajaro. Following completion of Pajaro Park, an agreement was entered with Pajaro-Sunny Mesa Water District to manage the facility.

This proposal would formally request that the Pajaro-Sunny Mesa Water District rename a small plot of grass on the corner of Salinas Road & Stender Avenue in Pajaro to "Cortez Park," and to also permit the installation of a memorial bench and tree in the park in their honor. The Pajaro-Sunny Mesa Water District has already expressed initial support for this proposal and this referral seeks to obtain

official support from the Board of Supervisors and to formally make the recommendation to the District.

CEQA:

County is simply requesting action by a District that would be subject to consideration of CEQA for this project. As such, this is not a County project and staff has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The fee waiver consideration has been referred to the Sheriff's Office.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

Costs for the memorial bench (with cement slab) and tree will be raised by private donations and will have no cost to the County or District.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:

The recommended action supports the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Initiative for Health & Human Services.

Economic Development
Administration
X Health & Human Services
Infrastructure
Public Safety

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