

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE GRIEVANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, June 11th, 2025
3:30 p.m. - Basement, Thorman Conference Room
801 Texas Ave., City Bldg. 3, El Paso, Texas

Minutes

Members Present: (4)

District 1 – Sandra Olivar (Subcommittee Vice-Chair)
District 4 – Benjamin Avalos
District 7 – Marcella Carrillo
District 8 – Ricardo Bustamante

Members Absent: (1)

District 3 – Michael Adjemian
(Subcommittee Chair)

City Staff Present

Pablo Caballero, Director
Emigdio Gonzalez, Assistant Director
Alondra Navarrete, Office Manager
Jazmine Pullom, Customer Relations Representative
Enrique Valadez, Recreation Programs Manager
Nicolas Valdes, Recreation & Sports Coordinator
Rebecca Freeman-Hendricks, Rec. Program Supervisor
Angel Juarez, Rec. Program Supervisor
Lluvia Espinoza, Rec. Program Supervisor
Raul Diaz, Media Specialist

City Attorney – Legal

Jesus Quintanilla, Assistant Attorney

Public Present

Theresa Valdez
Raul Valdez
Maria Elena Sarmiento
Rubi Sarmiento

- **Meeting Called to Order**

Michael Adjemian, Subcommittee Chair, was not present for this meeting. Sandra Olivar, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, stepped in for Mr. Adjemian and called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

- **Public Comment**

Alondra Navarrete, Office Manager, informs the Subcommittee that there is no one signed up for public comment.

1. **Introductory Statement:** Introductory Statement for Grievance Hearings

Sandra Olivar, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, read the Introductory Statement for Grievance Hearings, to all in attendance.

2. **Introduction Reading:** Of the Grievance Subcommittee Hearing Structure

Sandra Olivar, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, read the Grievance Subcommittee Hearing Structure to all in attendance.

3. **Discussion and Action:** On Adoption of staff recommendation to suspend Theresa Valdez for three (3) months for violation of the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department's Behavior Management Policy. – Pablo Caballero, Director, and Enrique Valadez, Recreation Programs Manager

Sandra Olivar, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, read the Notice of Suspension for Mrs. Theresa Valdez to those in attendance.

Nicolas Valdes, Recreation and Sports Coordinator, introduced himself and Rebecca Freeman-Hendricks, Recreation Program Supervisor for the Wellington Chew Senior Center, who would provide background and information to the Subcommittee on Theresa Valdez's suspension.

Ms. Freeman-Hendricks addressed the Subcommittee, explaining the events that led to Mrs. Valdez's suspension, including verbal abuse and rudeness towards the staff and patrons of the Wellington Chew Senior Center. The Subcommittee had questions for Ms. Freeman-Hendricks to clarify the events.

Theresa Valdez addressed the Subcommittee to present herself and read the letter she prepared with her account of the events being referenced for her suspension. Alondra Navarrete, Office Manager, informed Mrs. Valdez that her allotted speaking time is up and asks the Subcommittee if they would like to provide a three (3) minute extension for Mrs. Valdez.

Motion by Sandra Olivar to grant Theresa Valdez three (3) more minutes for her appeal, seconded by Marcella Carrillo.

AYES: Sandra Olivar, Benjamin Avalos, Marcella Carrillo, Ricardo Bustamante

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Michael Adjemian

Motion passes.

Theresa Valdez continued addressing the Grievance Subcommittee and answered the questions the Subcommittee had for her.

The Subcommittee deliberated on the presentations and documentation given.

Motion by Ricardo Bustamante to approve the staff recommendation of a three (3) month suspension for Theresa Valdez, seconded by Marcella Carrillo.

AYES: Sandra Olivar, Benjamin Avalos, Marcella Carrillo, Ricardo Bustamante

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Michael Adjemian

Motion passes.

Sandra Olivar, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, advised Ms. Valdez that her suspension would be upheld and she will be able to return to Wellington Chew Senior Center on or after July 29th, 2025.

4. **Discussion and Action:** On Adoption of staff recommendation to suspend Maria Elena Sarmiento for three (3) months for violation of the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department's Behavior Management Policy. – Pablo Caballero, Director, and Enrique Valadez, Recreation Programs Manager

Sandra Olivar, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, read the Notice of Suspension for Maria Elena Sarmiento to those in attendance.

Nicolas Valdes, Recreation and Sports Coordinator, introduced Lluvia Espinoza, Recreation Program Supervisor for the Jessie Moreno Happiness Senior Center, who would provide background and information to the Subcommittee on Maria Elena Sarmiento's suspension.

Ms. Espinoza addressed the Subcommittee, explaining the events that led to Sarmiento's suspension, which included disruptive behavior and disrespectful treatment towards other patrons of the Jessie Moreno Happiness Senior Center. The Subcommittee had questions for Ms. Espinoza to clarify the events and actions that occurred.

Maria Elena Sarmiento addressed the Subcommittee to present herself and share her account of the events being referenced for her suspension. Alondra Navarrete, Office Manager, informed Sarmiento that her allotted speaking time is up and asked the Subcommittee if they would like to provide a three (3) minute extension for her.

Motion by Marcella Carrillo to grant Maria Elena Sarmiento three (3) more minutes for her appeal, seconded by Ricardo Bustamante.

AYES: Sandra Olivar, Benjamin Avalos, Marcella Carrillo, Ricardo Bustamante

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Michael Adjemian

Motion passes.

Maria Elena Sarmiento continued addressing the Grievance Subcommittee and answered the questions the Subcommittee had for her.

The Subcommittee deliberated on the presentations and documentation given.

Motion by Ricardo Bustamante to approve the staff recommendation of a three (3) month suspension for Maria Elena Sarmiento, seconded by Marcella Carrillo.

AYES: Sandra Olivar, Benjamin Avalos, Marcella Carrillo, Ricardo Bustamante

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Michael Adjemian

Motion passes.

Sandra Olivar, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, advised Ms. Sarmiento that her suspension would be upheld and she will be able to return to the Jessie Moreno Happiness Senior Center on or after July 29th, 2025.

- **Adjournment:** 4:10 p.m.