



MEETING DATE: 9/20/04
ITEM NO. 8

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2004
TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: DEBRA J. FIGONE, TOWN MANAGER
SUBJECT: PROVIDE DIRECTION ON THE REFURBISHMENT OR REMOVAL OF THE OAK MEADOW PARK AIRPLANE

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. If Council direction is to retain the airplane, authorize staff to:
A. Enter into discussions with the Air Force regarding our interests.
B. Seek proposals on refurbishment methods and costs.
C. Evaluate funding options, including Town resources.
2. If Council direction is to remove the airplane then:
A. Authorize staff to initiate discussions with the Air Force regarding options for removal.
B. Authorize staff to seek proposals on the cost of removal.

BACKGROUND:

In 1974 the Town of Los Gatos entered into an agreement with the United States Air Force Display Program to lease an airplane for recreational purposes for children visiting Oak Meadow Park. This airplane is only one of two airplanes in the United States that is loaned by the United State Air Force authorized to be used as play equipment.

Parks maintenance personnel have maintained the plane over the years in order to keep it safe for play. Because the interior of the fuselage had become unsafe for children to access some years ago, it was decided to fill it with concrete, enabling only the cockpit to be accessed in the plane.

PREPARED BY: JOHN E. CURTIS
Director of Parks and Public Works

Reviewed by: Assistant Town Manager, Attorney, Clerk, Finance, Community Development
Revised: 9/15/04 7:57 am

PAGE 2

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

SUBJECT: PROVIDE DIRECTION ON THE REFURBISHMENT OR REMOVAL OF THE
OAK MEADOW PARK AIRPLANE

SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

The metal skin of the plane has become damaged from use as playground equipment. The cloth covering on the air foil has become frayed with age. Further, the summer heat produces a temperature of the metal surface which may produce heat blisters on young hands and bare feet.

With these concerns in mind, and without a direction for action to be taken, the staff closed the plane to further use as playground equipment last year.

DISCUSSION:

Staff is obligated annually to report the continuing existence of the aircraft in our park to the Air Force. If it is the desire of the Town to remove the plane from the park, the Town would need to pay for its transport to a designated Air Force facility. The cost of this is unknown, as the location is not known.

Staff has investigated the cost of repairing the plane to make it safe and usable again as playground equipment. This repair work would include the replacement or repair of the worn sheet metal skin of the plane, the replacement of worn cloth on the wings, and spraying the plane with a 1/4 inch polyurethane coating with an ultraviolet protective top coating to lower the surface temperature on the craft. These repairs would enable the plane to return to playground service. The cost is estimated to be \$60,000, but quotations for the work have not yet been requested.

Staff believes that the cost of moving the plane out of the park to an Air Force facility, though unknown, could be very expensive. Anecdotally, staff has received many comments from park users hoping the plane will be returned to active use on the playground, some recalling their own enjoyment of it over the years. The Parks Commission would also like to have the aircraft remain in the park.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the Town Council consider retaining the airplane for playground use at Oak Meadow Park subject to funding ability and reasonable certainty that the Town's investment in refurbishment would return the airplane to safe playground use. To accomplish this, it is further recommended that Council authorize staff to seek bids to renovate the aircraft to make it safe for the children of the community. With confirmation of serviceability, staff would propose that the costs for the refurbishment of the airplane be part of the discussions for the 2005-06 Capital Improvement Program, or sooner if feasible. As part of this due diligence process, staff would confirm with the Air force the long term status of the airplane given the size of the investment to refurbish it.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

PAGE 3

MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

SUBJECT: PROVIDE DIRECTION ON THE REFURBISHMENT OR REMOVAL OF THE
OAK MEADOW PARK AIRPLANE

SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

FISCAL IMPACT:

This project, whether to remove or renovate the aircraft, is not included in the FY 2004-05 budget. Funds would need to be obtained from unencumbered funds in the budget, from reserves, or the project carried over to the next year and included in the budget process at that time.

Staff has investigated the appropriateness of Proposition 12 and Proposition 40 funds being sought for this project. These grant funds are not available for this type of expense.

Distribution:

Parks Commission