



# Naming the park at Pine Meadow

## Tim Platt

Choosing a recommended name for this new city park at Pine Meadow was the subject of the Park, Recreation, Marina and Cultural Commission (PRMCC) meeting on Tuesday, October 17. Several names were discussed from the ones suggested by the public during the name application period. The discussion was detailed and illuminating.

Here are recaps of the Commissioners' thoughts on the names that were discussed, in the order they came up:

**Pine Meadow Park** It was pointed out that Pine Meadow is the long-standing historic name for the former golf course and the property on which the park is located. That name would bring back many memories to those who have had experiences there.

A petition endorsing the name with 384 signatures that was sent to the City was discussed, along with the Martinez Historical Society names review and their board's unanimous support for this name.

It was clarified that the name application process was not a popularity contest but was designed to get public ideas for names and the reasons why the names made sense. Then the PRMCC would use those names and the information to help them decide what they felt was the best name. Petitions were not requested and it was unclear how the petition that was included was gathered or how it was presented to those who signed it.

Others pointed out that there are no pine trees on the property and no meadow. It was mentioned that pine trees that once were on the land might not even be indigenous. It was also pointed out that street names on the project already called out that name and other names connected with the family.

**Volunteer Park** Some spoke of the fact that the park would not even exist without the long-term and difficult actions of the hundreds of volunteers who fought to have a park here. This park was not originated by the City Council or the city, but by volunteer citizens and through the actions of the Friends of Pine Meadow.

Commissioners felt that the name would honor those who worked so hard to make this first new city park in over 20 years a reality. Equally important, it would not only honor those citizens, but act as an inspiration to others to become involved in making our city a better place for everyone even without City Council support.

It was also noted that few public places are named “volunteer”, and it would be good to change that.

One commissioner was concerned that the name might result in groups wanting to use the park as a meeting place for volunteer actions and that might be disruptive to the neighbors.

Platt Park was also noted in conjunction with this name, but the consensus was that “volunteer” would be better as it recognized all who worked to establish this park. (Editor Note: Tim Platt had submitted the name “300 Park” to honor the volunteers, but supports “Volunteer Park” after hearing the PRMCC discussion. Thousand Friends of Martinez also agrees with that.)

**Karkin Park** Commissioners spoke of the need to support diversity and equity and honor the ancient inhabitants of the land, the Karkin tribe. The land was taken from them and their ancient presence on the land should be acknowledged.

Their history on the land goes back a lot further than ours and we should recognize that. Few places in our town now even mention that part of our history. Overall there is little diversity in naming public places in Martinez and this is a good opportunity to change that. From the sense of diversity, equity and historical honesty the park should be named after them.

No other names were discussed.

The Commission then proceeded to nominate names and vote, in the order below:

**Volunteer Park** 3 Yes 7 No

A break occurred here to define the voting process more clearly.

**Karkin/Volunteer Park** 4 Yes 6 No (A commissioner nominated this composite name)

**Pine Meadow Park** 5 Yes 5 No

**Karkin Park** 6 Yes 4 No

***Karkin Park won the vote and will be forwarded to the City Council for their consideration and final decision at the City Council Meeting on November 15.*** A recap of the meeting and ideas and opinions expressed will also go to the Council.

Note: some sporadic gaps occurred in the meeting audio apparently due to some kind of mike problem.

Here is the link to the meeting that can get you to the “Agenda” with attachments:

[https://martinez.granicus.com/DocumentViewer.php?file=martinez\\_6d0876c056aa726d53be2e8c47c50cdb.pdf&view=1](https://martinez.granicus.com/DocumentViewer.php?file=martinez_6d0876c056aa726d53be2e8c47c50cdb.pdf&view=1)

and to the “Video”

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