



MINUTES  
Recreation and Community Services Commission  
Adjourned Regular Meeting  
May 11, 2022

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MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6 p.m. by Chairperson Dave Allen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Vice Chairperson Ted Spaseff.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Chairperson Dave Allen  
Vice Chairperson Ted Spaseff  
Commissioner Veronica Lucio  
Commissioner Robert Nelson  
Commissioner Stacy Valdez

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of April 13, 2022. A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Spaseff and seconded by Commissioner Stacy Valdez to approve the minutes from the meeting of April 13, 2022. The motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her remarks by formally introducing Abel Andrade, the department's new Parks Superintendent, to the commission. She noted that Abel began his tenure on April 18.

Parks Superintendent Abel Andrade introduced himself to the commission and provided details regarding his professional background. Mr. Andrade informed the commission that he had arranged one-on-one meetings with all of the Environmental Resources Division (ERD) staff and planned to complete those meetings by the following week. He informed the commission that ERD staff had done an amazing job aerating and fertilizing the Lisa Fernandez Field after the Pan Am Fiesta. He noted that staff would work to bring the field back to its pristine state in the coming weeks.

Ms. Frost thanked the commission for their attendance at the Pan Am Fiesta's Welcome and Flag Ceremony held at Mayfair Park. It was said that the weekend of activities was well organized by city staff and exceptionally received by the community. Ms. Frost shared that she spoke with many residents; all who commented on how great it was to have the event occur again.

The commission was informed that the Active+ Pickleball Program, coordinated by Burns Community Center staff on the Mayfair Park basketball courts, regularly meets on Wednesday and Friday mornings. In response to high resident demand, there will now be an additional drop-in Pickleball program on the Mayfair Park basketball courts. It was said that May 10 was the first day of extended programming and had 13 participants.

Ms. Frost announced that after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the Human Services Association was again offering congregate dining at the Weingart Senior Center. Since some clients are still not comfortable with dining in-person, a hybrid version of meal service is offered, with in-person dining Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and weekly frozen meal pickup offered on Wednesdays.

It was said that the second of three Spring Community Car Shows would be held on Friday, May 13, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Palms Park. A variety of cars will be displayed along with a food truck, several community vendors and a kid's fun zone featuring inflatable attractions. Ms. Frost noted that while all cars are welcome, pre-registration was required for each vehicle. The event is free for the public, as part of the *Play at Palms* community event series.

Next, Ms. Frost shared that Mayfair Pool would open for recreation swim on Saturday, May 28 for the Memorial Day holiday weekend. The YMCA will again run aquatic programming at McCormick Pool beginning Monday, June 6.

The department's summer kickoff and training event for part-time recreation and community center staff was said to be scheduled for Thursday, June 2 at Monte Verde Park beginning at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners are welcomed to attend the training.

Ms. Frost informed the commission that Election Day was scheduled for Tuesday, June 7. It was said that Mayfair Park, Palms Park, and the Lakewood Youth Center would serve as 4-day vote centers beginning Saturday, June 4.

The first of many scheduled Community Walks was held on Saturday, April 30 and gathered 39 residents throughout the city. Ms. Frost shared that attendees took a 2-mile walk around the park getting to know their neighbors. She mentioned that the second Community Walk was scheduled for Wednesday, June 8 in the evening.

Ms. Frost informed the commission that a Community Emergency Response Training would take place June 10 to June 12 at the Weingart Senior Center. She explained that this was particularly exciting since the last CERT class was held in January of 2020. For the commission's reference, she noted that the class was taught by personnel from the Los Angeles County Fire Department. It was said that to date, Lakewood has offered 16 CERT classes and has enrolled 531 students. Of the 531 students, approximately 93% were Lakewood residents. CERT graduates can support the city's efforts to respond in the event of an emergency such as an earthquake or flood.

Ms. Frost concluded her announcements by asking that the commission save the date for the Lakewood Youth Sports Opening Day ceremony, scheduled for Saturday, June 18. It was said that 986 youth were registered to play baseball, softball and t-ball during the summer.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff extended his congratulations to Community Services Supervisor Veronica Ramirez for being named Manager of the Year. He also expressed his condolences for the family of Link Perle. He shared that he was able to attend the Pan Am Fiesta and mentioned it was a great turn out. He commented that it was nice to see Lisa Fernandez Field open again. Lastly, he shared that he attended the Older Adult Volunteer Luncheon and mentioned it was a great event.

Commissioner Robert Nelson shared that he recently attended the Youth Leadership Workshop hosted by California State Assemblymember, Speaker Anthony Rendon and mentioned that staff did an excellent job with the event. He gave kudos to Community Services Supervisors Joseph

Vasquez and Kelly Garnetti for their role in the event. He shared that he attended the Pan Am Fiesta and mentioned that it was a great event and nice to see the commissioners have a role in the welcome ceremony. Additionally, he mentioned that he looked forward to attending the next Community Car Show event with his classic car. In honor of Law Enforcement Appreciation Week, Commissioner Nelson expressed thanks to the law enforcement personnel who assist the recreation department at Lakewood's many parks and community centers.

Commissioner Valdez shared that she too attended the Pan Am Fiesta with her family and very much enjoyed it. She mentioned it was great to see the event return to Mayfair Park.

Commissioner Veronica Lucio shared that she was able to attend the Youth Leadership Workshop hosted by Speaker Anthony Rendon and mentioned that the event was fantastic. She also attended the Older Adult Volunteer Luncheon and shared that it was an amazing event and that she was in awe of the many people who so generously volunteer their time.

Chairperson Allen commended Community Services Supervisors Joseph Vasquez and Kelly Garnetti, as well as Commissioner Nelson, for the fabulous job they did at the Youth Leadership Workshop.

#### REPORTS:

##### **1. Human Services Agency Report**

Executive Director Bill Sinko of Community Family Guidance Center shared information with the commission regarding the programs and services offered by the non-profit agency to the Lakewood Community. Mr. Sinko shared that the program helps Southeast Los Angeles County's under-served children and their families heal from trauma, abuse, emotional, behavioral and mental health issues through proven interventions and compassionate guidance. It was said that through the collaborative efforts of staff, the board, and other community members, the program provides a safe place where families affected by trauma, abuse and mental health issues can heal and restore their lives.

Mr. Sinko reported that the Community Family Guidance Center has 72 staff members when fully staffed and serves 28 cities. Staff consists of therapists, supervisors, and support staff, all of whom are committed to supporting children and the goal of promoting the success of families. He shared that the agency has been very busy, servicing over 500 children per week. It was said that in 2021, the agency saw 1,440 new children from several areas, including Lakewood, and administered 44,000 clinical hours of service free of charge. Mr. Sinko informed the commission that the program receives funding from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (Mental Health) and through Community Development Block Grants. He provided details regarding the Community Family Guidance Center's funded services, outpatient programs, and intensive and non-intensive programs.

Mr. Sinko shared that in 2021 the program assisted 80 Lakewood children, delivering 3,214 clinical hours of service to the Lakewood community. It was said that over \$600,000 of funds from the Mental Health contract were utilized to provide these services in Lakewood.

Lastly, Mr. Sinko reported on the many ways the program had successfully altered its services in order to continue to provide assistance during the pandemic.

Mr. Sinko confirmed for Commissioner Lucio that students interested in obtaining program services should inquire using the toll-free telephone number. He mentioned that a flyer containing information regarding the program, as well as the phone number, would be provided to the commission.

Mr. Sinko informed Vice Chairperson Spaseff that staff was working on enhancing the program's marketing efforts so that more people are aware of the many services offered. Vice Chairperson Spaseff thanked Mr. Sinko for his service.

Commissioner Nelson echoed Vice Chairperson Spaseff's sentiments and thanked Mr. Sinko and program staff for providing invaluable mental health services for children.

Mr. Sinko confirmed for Commissioner Lucio that program staff go to local schools and share information regarding the program and services offered.

Ms. Frost informed the commission that the Community Family Guidance Center was one of many non-profit organizations for which the city provides Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding through an application process. She explained that the RCS Department was responsible for applying for, managing, and allocating the CDBG funds.

The commission received and filed the Human Services Agency report.

## **2. Summer Programs and Catalog Preview**

Community Services Manager Nancy Hitt displayed slides and reviewed the many summer programs, classes, and events offered by the Recreation and Community Services Department as included in the written report. Ms. Hitt reported that the Recreation and Community Services catalog would be available online beginning Thursday, May 26, with residents receiving postcards directing them to the website to view the interactive online catalog. Additionally, she mentioned that a limited number of hard copies of the catalog would be available for pick up at city parks and community centers, Lakewood City Hall and Lakewood's libraries. Ms. Hitt shared that highlights for the summer include the return of the ever-popular Summer Concerts in the Park series and the Civic Center Block Party.

It was said that over 445 classes would be advertised in the summer recreation catalog. Ms. Hitt made note of new classes; the Finally It's Friday program; Summer Concerts in the Park; key dates for the Lakewood Youth Sports summer season; aquatics programming; and various other special events, as noted in the written report.

Ms. Hitt confirmed for Chairperson Allen that Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) game schedules would be distributed to the commission upon completion. She also informed him

that CPR instructors included all of the Community Services supervisors, as well as members of the aquatics personnel.

The commission received and filed the report on Summer Programs and Catalog Preview.

### **3. Capital Improvement Projects at Recreation Facilities**

Ms. Frost displayed slides and provided the commission with updates on capital improvement projects at recreation facilities as noted in the written report. Ms. Frost explained that capital improvements are projects of large size, fixed nature, or long life, which provide new or additional public facilities or services. Also included in the broad definition of the term are major replacements, reconstructions and procurement of large equipment such as furniture, vehicles, and heating and electrical systems. It was said that capital improvement projects are funded through a variety of federal, state, and local grants in conjunction with city general funds.

Ms. Frost explained that the program is strengthened by Lakewood's Measure L sales tax, a portion of which was intended to be used for capital improvements. The appropriation of funding is programmed to address critical infrastructure needs including electrical systems, roofs and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems; address outstanding critical maintenance needs at city parks; address accessibility per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and begin the planning and design for future projects.

Updates regarding projects that improve and/or enhance city recreation facilities were provided by Ms. Frost as noted in the written report. Projects included the Palms Park Community Center Renovation Project; the Weingart Senior Center Renovation Project; the San Martin Park Improvement Project; the Rynerson Park Picnic Shelter Installation Project; the Rynerson Park Restroom Improvement Project; Electrical, HVAC and Roof Improvements; the Mayfair Park Storm Water Capture Project; the McCormick Pool Boiler Replacement; the Nixon Yard Asphalt Improvement; the Recycled Water Conversion on Carson Street; and the Nature Trail Phase 3 Improvements.

Ms. Frost informed Vice Chairperson Spaseff that the Del Valle Park Tot Lot Replacement Project was not currently budgeted, although a playground design was in fact selected. She noted that the Los Angeles County Measure A per capita allocation for the current year, as well as the following year, would go towards funding the project.

Ms. Frost informed Commissioner Lucio that the Palms Park Community Center Renovation Project would not be complete for at least four years. She mentioned that staff was looking to secure additional grant funds and gather community input prior to the start of the project.

Ms. Frost reminded Chairperson Allen that the Lakewood Equestrian Center Project was a \$3 million dollar project. She shared that staff had applied for, and received, Measure A competitive grant funds totaling \$1 million dollars, from Los Angeles County for the

equestrian center. It was said that staff had since applied for a \$2 million dollar Clean California grant from Caltrans, but was unsuccessful in securing those funds. Ms. Frost mentioned that staff was awaiting results from two additional grant applications, one for the State of California Recreation Trails grant, and one for a grant from Congresswoman Linda Sanchez's office.

The commission received and filed the report on Capital Improvement Projects at Recreation Facilities.

**4. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 11**

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month of April and a listing of upcoming activities for June 2022.

The Commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Allen adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m. to Wednesday, June 8, at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary  
Recreation and Community Services Commission