



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
June 8, 2022

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Veronica Lucio.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of May 11, 2022. A motion was made by Commissioner Lucio and seconded by Commissioner Robert Nelson to approve the minutes from the meeting of May 11, 2022. The motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her remarks by thanking the commission for their attendance at the RCS Summer Kickoff event hosted at Monte Verde Park on Thursday, June 2.

Ms. Frost shared with the commission an image of a thank you poster that was created for Senior Park Maintenance Worker Ed Ceja by the mothers and children in the Tot Lot Program at Del Valle Park.

The commission was informed that the next Lakewood Celebrates would take place on Tuesday, June 14. Ms. Frost noted that Park Maintenance Worker Anthony Martinez would be introduced and Council Member Vicki Stuckey would be honored. The commission was asked to let their secretary know if they plan to attend.

Ms. Frost concluded her announcements by sharing that a Budget Development Study Session with City Council was held on Friday, June 3. She mentioned that the study session went well and noted that staff worked hard to keep the budget at status quo. It was said that the budget was set to be presented to the public at the June 14 City Council Meeting.

Assistant Director Kevin Bright provided information regarding programming and upcoming events. Mr. Bright pointed out that the Special Activities Calendar was full for the summer months, which he described as a refreshing sight after the discontinuation of the publication during the pandemic. He drew attentions to specific events such as the Senior Health and Information Fair; family events such as Fun-Tastic Family Nights; and youth opportunities like swim lessons and LYS and the Community Walks—which was said to have come about as suggestion from the Community Roundtables in 2020.

Mr. Bright shared that the popular Concerts in the Park series would return to Del Valle Park with a total of eight concerts on Thursday evenings, beginning June 16 and concluding on August 4.

The commission was invited to bear witness to a dynamic series of performers and enjoy a variety of food trucks.

Mr. Bright concluded his announcements by reminding the commission that the Block Party had been canceled in 2018 due to looming budgetary constraints, followed by back to back COVID cancellations in 2020 and 2021. It was said that on Saturday, June 25, beginning at 4 p.m., the Block Party would again host Lakewood residents in a day of community, family, fun and excitement. Twenty Lakewood eateries will offer food at the Taste of Lakewood, with proceeds supporting the Friends of the Lakewood Libraries, and headlining the stage at 5 p.m. will be the MVPs, delighting the crowd with contemporary and classic top-40s music. Lastly, Mr. Bright shared that a family fun zone would provide kids of all ages with inflatable attractions and games, with the main attraction, the fireworks display, beginning at 9:15 p.m.

Parks Superintendent Abel Andrade informed the commission that ERD staff had successfully aerated and fertilized all city parks in preparation for the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) season. He noted that the turf renovation at Mayfair Park had been completed after the Pan Am Fiesta, as promised. Mr. Andrade announced that on June 28, 29 and 30, the city, in coordination with the California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS), would host a certified Playground Safety Inspection Course at The Centre. He shared that he, ERD Supervisor Michael Cracium and Park Maintenance Lead Worker Kevin Arias would attend the training at no cost. Mr. Andrade echoed Ms. Frost's remarks regarding Park Maintenance Worker Ed Ceja and the amazing job he is doing with Del Valle Park's Tot Lot.

Commissioner Stacy Valdez shared that she enjoyed the Summer Kickoff event and thanked staff for a job well done.

Vice Chairperson Ted Spaseff thanked ERD staff for their hard work preparing Del Valle Park for the Memorial Day Ceremony, stating that the park looked great. He mentioned that the landscaping in front of Mayfair Pool also looked amazing. He shared that he recently attended a Community Car Show at Palms Park and commented that it was fun, and great to see so many people out enjoying the event. He commended staff for a job well done.

Commissioner Lucio thanked staff for their help with the Memorial Day Event. She shared that she really enjoyed the poem that was read.

Chairperson Allen echoed Ms. Frost's comment regarding the commissioners' attendance at the RCS Summer Kickoff event, stating that it is nice to have a supportive commission.

REPORTS:

1. Commission FY 22-23 Work Calendar Adoption

The Commission reviewed the FY 22-23 Work Calendar. Mr. Bright informed the commission of updates that had been made to the calendar, including the addition of the Fest-of-All Preview for the meeting of September 7, 2022, the shift of the Holiday Recreation Programs and Events report from the meeting of December 7, 2022 to November 9, 2022, and the omission of the Emergency Management Annual Report.

Mr. Bright recommended that the commission adopt the FY 22-23 Recreation Commission Work Calendar with the following revisions:

1. Move the Commission Reorganization to the meeting of August 10, 2022.

A motion was made by Chairperson Allen and seconded by Vice Chairperson Ted Spaseff

The secretary took roll and with a unanimous vote, the work calendar was adopted by the commission.

2. DASH Transit Annual Report

Community Transportation Supervisor Jessica Johnson displayed slides and provided information on the DASH Transit program as noted in the written report. She shared that DASH services have continued to operate in a modified service, which started in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. It was said that as federal, state, and local COVID-19 regulations began to evolve, DASH began to reintroduce services to customers. Services have since been expanded to clients in the Adaptive Recreation Program and to older adults seeking transport to the Weingart Senior Center for dine-in lunch service.

Ms. Johnson informed the commission that, per guidelines from Los Angeles County, DASH has resumed operating its vehicles at full capacity, however, both the driver and passengers are still required to wear a face covering, and vehicles are still equipped with protective barriers between the driver and passengers.

Ms. Johnson provided information regarding the new DASH Transit Passenger Application form, which was said to have taken the place of the old client information card. Information and details regarding the new application were provided as noted in the written report. It was said that all clients, old and new, were required to complete the updated version of the application to continue to utilize DASH services. Additionally, Ms. Johnson shared that DASH had introduced an online version of the application on the city's website, for clients and caretakers to register individuals for DASH services electronically.

The commission was informed that the DASH program had recently welcomed two new drivers and two new commercial drivers, who are licensed to operate the vans and buses in the fleet. Ms. Johnson shared that to ensure safety amongst the field of DASH drivers, department management, in conjunction with the Human Resources Department, have updated the city's random drug and alcohol testing program.

Ms. Johnson directed the commission's attention to a table within the written report, which provided an overview of ridership over four fiscal years, including the present fiscal year.

Lastly, Ms. Johnson provided additional transportation information, as well as information regarding Long Beach Dial-A-Lift, Access Services, and DASH services for Recreation programs and events as noted in the written report.

Ms. Johnson confirmed for Commissioner Nelson that the city remains consistent with LA County Department of Public Health (Public Health) mask guidelines for transportation and will continue to update as the county does.

Ms. Johnson informed Commissioner Lucio that DASH does not have the proper endorsement to transport children in DASH buses; therefore, staff would be unable to transport school bands to the Weingart Senior Center to provide entertainment.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff commended DASH staff for the wonderful job they did delivering frozen meals to seniors during the pandemic. He gave kudos to Ms. Johnson for creating the new DASH Transit Passenger Application.

The commission received and filed the annual report on Dash Transit.

3. Landscape and Turf Maintenance Annual Report

Environmental Resources Supervisor Mike McDade displayed slides and reported on the turf and landscape maintenance program as noted in the written report. Information regarding landscape maintenance that is scheduled weekly at the Lakewood Community Gardens and the Weingart Senior Center was provided. It was said that in addition to facility maintenance, the landscape crew was crucial in preparing for city-hosted events such as the Civic Center Block Party, Pan Am Fiesta, the Fest-of-All, Concerts in the Park, and the Lakewood Community Run. Mr. McDade informed the commission that the majority of landscape maintenance staff's work is calendared on a cyclical basis, as annual schedules help the team to be proactive; however, some responsibilities are performed as needed.

Mr. McDade reported that several landscaping improvement projects were completed in 2021 to beautify Lakewood. Projects were said to include landscape maintenance on Studebaker Road from Lemming Street to Centralia Street; on Lakewood Boulevard north of Del Amo; on Shadeway Road just outside the Nixon Maintenance Yard; and along Paramount Boulevard. Information regarding said projects was provided as noted in the written report.

Concerning turf maintenance, Mr. McDade shared that turf mowing crews were responsible for mowing, edging, blowing, fertilizing, aerating, and renovating over 200 acres of turf among city parks, community facilities, street panels, and center medians throughout Lakewood. It was said that in August of 2021, the department was notified by the contractor working on the Water Capture Project at Mayfair Park that there was more than 5,000 square feet of sod leftover from the installation of sod on Diamond #3 at the park. Mr. McDade provided details on how the excess sod was utilized at Mayfair Park, as well as at Phase II of the Nature Trail, as noted in the written report.

Mr. McDade displayed slides depicting photos of Mayfair Park before and after the Pan Am Fiesta. He explained that stress on the turf was visible after the event, and shared that

staff had recently completed aerating and fertilizing the turf to bring it back to its original pristine state.

Concerning irrigation, Mr. McDade reported that ERD was responsible for repairing and maintaining irrigation systems on all city-owned property. He reported that staff has continued their efforts to maintain aging irrigation systems in both the parks and city streets. It was said that several more old hydraulic watering systems were phased out and replaced with more efficient electric systems during the past year. He provided information regarding irrigation repairs on the north side of Del Amo Boulevard from Obispo Avenue to Allred Street; on the north side of Carson Street from Deeboyar Avenue to Maybank Avenue; and across Paramount Boulevard from Brock Avenue to Levelside Avenue.

Lastly, Mr. McDade provided information regarding the new abatement team initiated in September of 2021, also known as the Alley Crew as noted in the written report. It was said that since the program's inception, staff responds to and/or initiates approximately 205 requests for illegal dumping per month.

Commissioner Valdez thanked Mr. McDade and the Alley Crew for always being quick and efficient with alley cleanups.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff expressed his appreciation for Mr. McDade and ERD staff for all of their hard work and dedication.

Mr. McDade informed Chairperson Allen of the city's plans to become more drought-tolerant by retrofitting the irrigation system and by installing high-efficiency nozzles, and drip and subsurface irrigation. He noted that the installation of 37,000 square feet of turf throughout the city has greatly reduced the amount of potable water utilized by the city.

The commission received and filed the annual report on Landscape and Turf Maintenance.

4. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 12

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

The Commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter to Part-Time Employees of the Month, Angela Younger, April 2022 and Elias Martinez, May 2022.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Lakewood resident Fatima Gutierrez shared with the commission her appreciation for the new Pickle Ball courts that were recently installed at Mayfair Park.

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ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Allen adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m. to Wednesday, July 13, at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission