



**MINUTES**  
Recreation and Community Services Commission  
Adjourned Regular Meeting held  
October 12, 2016

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MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:01 p.m. by Chairperson Winnie Heiss

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Ben Delarosa

ROLL CALL: PRESENT:     Chairperson Winnie Heiss  
                                  Vice Chairperson Kirk Real  
                                  Commissioner Dave Allen  
                                  Commissioner Ben Delarosa  
                                  Commissioner Ted Spaseff

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of September 14, 2016. A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Kirk Real and seconded by Commissioner Dave Allen to approve the minutes. The motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

Assistant Director Valarie Frost began by thanking the Commission for their support of the Lakewood Education Foundation Golf Tournament helping to make this year's fundraising event one of the most successful. Ms. Frost provided an update on personnel in the Recreation Department which includes Chuck Martucci's promotion to Community Services Manager effective in January 2017 after Karen Plantz's retirement. Karen's retirement luncheon will be held on December 14 and invitations will be distributed to the Commission soon. Ms. Frost reported that Caitlynn Brown began as the department's newest Administrative Clerk last month, noting that she has worked for the city part-time since 2005 at the pools, community centers and parks. Ms. Frost happily announced that the Recreation Program Coordinator position previously held by Abraham Joven was offered to and accepted by Catherine Schad today. Ms. Frost mentioned that the recruitment process for a Community Services Supervisor and an Administrative Assistant 1 are currently underway to fill the vacancies created by the promotions of Chuck and Catherine.

The College Fair was held at Mayfair Park on October 4. Ms. Frost reported that the event was attended by over 250 high school students and their parents, and that over 40 colleges were present to promote their schools.

Ms. Frost then previewed upcoming programs and events which included the Lollipop Lane Craft Boutique on October 15 at Mayfair Park from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and the grand opening of the two new playgrounds at Bolivar Park at 10 a.m. also on October 15. A Benefits Information Fair will be held at the Weingart Senior Center from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on October 17. A retirement celebration for Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe is scheduled for October 19 at The Centre. On October 28 a Fun-Tastic Family Night featuring a juggler will take place at The Centre. To close out the month, Recreation staff is gearing up for the traditional Halloween

Carnivals at eight city parks on Monday, October 31. Four of the parks, Bolivar, San Martin, Del Valle and Palms, will once again create age-appropriate scary haunted houses.

Events scheduled in November were also mentioned by Ms. Frost and include a flu shot clinic at the Weingart Senior Center on November 8, the Lakewood Youth Sports awards ceremony for volleyball and flag football on November 9, and the Southern California Special Olympics Fall Games on November 12 and 13. Invitations to the annual Award of Valor luncheon scheduled for November 16 at The Centre will be distributed soon. To support the Project Shepherd program, the city's Turkey Softball Tournament will be held on Saturday, November 19 at San Martin Park.

Vice Chairperson Kirk Real stated that he attended the College Fair and once again found it to be extremely well organized. He mentioned that attendance seemed to be a bit low compared to previous years, but attributed the decline to Lakewood High School's back to school night being held the same evening. Vice Chairperson Real also reported that he attended the October 11 City Council Meeting at which the Mayfair Park Water Capture Project was presented and approved. He expressed his pleasure with the project, noting that it will enable staff to use water resources even more efficiently.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff reported that he participated in the Lakewood Education Foundation Golf Tournament on Monday. He commented that many new additions to the tournament this year were great and he expressed his appreciation for all the hard work that staff put in to make the event so fun and successful.

#### REPORTS:

##### **1. Park Maintenance Annual Report**

Environmental Resources Supervisor Cam Castillo displayed a slide presentation highlighting many of the park maintenance staff members to supplement the information provided in the written report. Mr. Castillo named each staff member shown in the slides and explained the responsibilities of each at their assigned facilities. After the slide presentation, Mr. Castillo invited the three Environmental Resources Division staff member present to the podium to introduce themselves. Senior Park Maintenance Worker Joe Sheldon introduced himself noting that he is assigned to Palms Park and has been employed with the city for nearly 29 years. Jim Piacenti, the Senior Park Maintenance worker assigned to Mayfair Park, reported that he has been with the city for nearly 28 years. Both men expressed their love and pride for their work and the city. Todd Bennington introduced himself as a Park Maintenance Worker with 15 years at Lakewood. Todd stated that he also enjoys his work and that he looks up to Joe and Jim on the job. Mr. Castillo concluded his report by stating that this staff is the best he has ever had and that they really put their hearts into their work.

Vice Chairperson Real reported that he drove by Mayfair Park on the way to tonight's meeting and commented on how heavily it was being used. Despite the heavy use, staff maintains the parks in beautiful condition. He noted that he continually receives comments from the public regarding how great our parks are. Vice Chairperson Real expressed his pleasure in the longevity of the staff, and appreciates all that they do. He asked that those present share the Commission's comments and appreciation with their coworkers.

Commissioner Dave Allen stated that the longevity of staff makes a difference in the city and it is also what makes a family.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff thanked the Park Maintenance Workers present at the meeting adding that the pride they take in their work is evident in the condition of the parks. He added that the city takes pride in staff because staff makes the city successful. Commissioner Spaseff stated that the Commission, City Council and the community all appreciate and are very proud of the city staff.

Chairperson Winnie Heiss echoed the comments of her fellow commissioners and thanked Mr. Castillo for bringing Joe, Jim and Todd to the meeting.

The Commission received and filed the report.

## **2. Adaptive Recreation/Special Olympics Annual Report**

Community Services Supervisor Chuck Martucci displayed a slide presentation and expanded on information provided in the written report. He noted that in 1981, the city's inaugural year of the Adaptive Recreation Program, Jimmy, pictured in many slides, was only eight years old, and Chuck himself was a Recreation Leader. Mr. Martucci stated that in 1988, when he was assigned responsibility of the Adaptive Recreation Program, he wanted to create an environment for the participants that allowed them to be mentored, and to receive social and athletic opportunities, and to be able to do all these things with friends. These goals have been met. The program offers many holiday theme parties, trips and dances. Other activities are enjoyed at Bloomfield Park in the Club House dedicated to the program. Participants can play board and video games, enjoy the snack bar and hang out with friends.

In 1991, the city started a Special Olympics program and now the program has over 120 registered athletes. Mr. Martucci stated that with the help of staff and volunteer coaches, Lakewood's Special Olympics teams have won numerous medals and a good time was had by all whether or not they won. The bocce team and the program's first individual golf gold medal winner of the Special Olympics Summers Games were recognized at this year's Lakewood Youth Hall of Fame banquet. Mr. Martucci reported that a bowling team comprised of six certified volunteer coaches and 20 bowlers was formed this year. Practice fees, uniforms and equipment for the Lakewood Special Olympics program is supplemented by an annual fundraising event. This year's event raised over \$5,000 with the generous support of the city employees and the families of program participants. Mr. Martucci concluded his report stating that it has been a pleasure and joy to be able to work with staff and participants in such a great program.

Commissioner Spaseff stated that other cities have commented to him on the success of our Adaptive Recreation and Special Olympics programs. He added that he has personally seen the social and physical growth of the program participants at the annual fundraising event. Commissioner Spaseff thanked Mr. Martucci for all he has done for these programs and allowing his passion to take it to the next level.

Commissioner Allen noted that he remembers when Chuck started the Special Olympics program and added that he loves the bowling team's name, Split Happens.

Vice Chairperson Real commented that Chuck is leaving very big shoes to fill after his promotion, adding that we are indebted to him for his leadership to grow the programs with spark, passion and drive. Commissioner Real thanked Chuck for providing so many real life experiences for the program's participants and volunteers.

Commissioner Ben Delarosa reported that he attended the Special Olympics Fundraiser last month and it was once again a great event. He thanked Chuck for all that he has done and noted that he has touched his family through these programs.

Parks Superintendent Philip Lopez commented that the contribution to the lives of the program participants that Chuck has made are apparent. The changes that he has made in the lives of others is less apparent, but just as significant. Mr. Lopez explained that his son participated in Lakewood Youth Sports as a child where he was able to participate in games played against Lakewood's Special Olympics athletes. This experience changed his son's life and likely the lives of many others with the same experience. Philip expressed his appreciation for Chuck's passionate efforts.

Chairperson Heiss expressed her admiration for Chuck and all that he has done for so many.

The Commission received and filed the report.

### **3. Activity ZONE Report**

Assistant Director Valarie Frost reported on information provided in the written report regarding after school activities. She noted that the drop-in program provides activities to school-aged children on weekday afternoons during the school year, and special programs and hours during spring and winter breaks as well as during summer vacation from school. Attendance for the 2015-16 school year, including vacation periods, totaled over 42 thousand visits to the program as indicated on the table in the report.

The Commission received and filed the report.

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

A written report was provided describing the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month of September 2016, and a listing of upcoming activities for November 2016.

The Commission received and filed the report.

### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

1. Letters to Jeffrey Casillas and Michael Schultz, Part-Time Co-Employees of the Month of August 2016.

Commissioner Real thanked Ms. Frost for the well-written and personalized letters.

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ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Winnie Heiss adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m. to November 9, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Barbara Di Iorio, Secretary to the  
Recreation and Community Services Commission