



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
May 9, 2018

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:00 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Dave Allen

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Winnie Heiss

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

ABSENT: Chairperson Kirk Real

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Commissioner Winnie Heiss and seconded by Commissioner Ted Spaseff to approve the minutes from the meeting of April 11, 2018. The motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her remarks by thanking the commissioners for their support throughout her career in Lakewood, noting that she has known many of them since she was a teenager. She stated that she would not be in this position of leadership without their mentorship and modeling of civic responsibility. Ms. Frost continued by stating that Lakewood is an ideal bedroom community, where residents feel safe and secure when they come home. Residents feel confident that they are raising their children in an environment where parks and schools have an important place in child rearing, and trust the small businesses that support our day-to-day needs, as well as the big businesses that fuel our economy. She added that Lakewood is a community of volunteers - from Recreation Commissioners to members of the Teen Action Committee, collectively the young and the mature work together to ensure a strong community where people are proud to call Lakewood "home." Ms. Frost assured the Commission that she will work hard to support the City Council in their efforts to build upon past successes, and fully intends to work collectively with staff, volunteers and community services organizations, to best serve the city.

Ms. Frost introduced Kevin Bright as the department's Assistant Director. She explained that Mr. Bright has a wealth of experience having joined the department in 2003. As a Community Services Supervisor, Kevin managed the city's youth and adult sports programs and supervised San Martin, Boyar, Palms, Bloomfield, and Mayfair Parks at various times while in that position. When promoted to the position of Community Services Manager, he managed several department functions including the DASH Transportation, the administration of grants and agreements, park programs, aquatics and the city's youth and adult sports programs. Ms. Frost stated that Mr. Bright will do very well in this new leadership position.

Ms. Frost provided information regarding recent promotions and revised assignments in the department. Joe Sheldon, a 30-plus year employee, was promoted to Lead Worker in the Environmental Resources Division. He assumes this position after the retirement of Luciano Villegas. Steven Hernandez was also promoted, taking on the position of Senior Park Maintenance Worker at the Civic Center complex. Alex Bauman has taken on new leadership roles in the department and will now assume management of sports, aquatics, facility rentals and park programs. Community Services Supervisor, Mark Freeman is leaving Lakewood to take a job in the City of Garden Grove. Mark will be missed, but we are happy that he will work closer to home. Barbara Di Iorio has been promoted to assist the City Manager's office, and will replace Alma Varela upon her retirement in June. Alma's retirement celebration is scheduled for Thursday, June 14 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at The Centre in the Maple Room.

Ms. Frost reported that, on Tuesday, May 8, the City Council approved the installation of a sewer main at Rynerson Park. She explained that the sewer lines will be connected to the existing southerly restroom buildings and one new pre-fabricated restroom building. The new restroom will be located at the north end of the parking lot just south of the Little League fields. Although planned improvements at Rynerson Park had also included two new picnic shelters, fiscal priority has been placed on ensuring adequate restroom facilities at the park. The project is underfunded, and the current plan is to demolish the columns of the two picnic shelters that are currently without roofs, and place picnic tables on the existing concrete slabs. This would provide visitors a place to gather. Progress at Rynerson Park should be visible this summer.

Highlights of a few important dates were provided by Ms. Frost. The Pan Am Fiesta will open Thursday evening, May 10, with \$1 ride night and run through Mother's Day, and the Welcome and Flag Ceremony will take place early on Saturday, May 12. Commissioners were asked to confirm their attendance to the Welcome Ceremony with their secretary. RSVPs for the Lakewood Teen Action Committee Awards Banquet, on Tuesday, May 15, were also requested of the Commission. Other events include the Summer Orientation and Training Program scheduled on Thursday, June 7 at Monte Verde Park, and the Special Olympics Summer Games at California State University, Long Beach on Saturday, June 9 and Sunday, June 10. Ms. Frost noted that Lakewood will have a bocce team competing for gold at the Summer Games, and that a full schedule of events can be provided upon its availability.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff congratulated Kevin Bright on his promotion to Assistant Director. Commissioner Spaseff stated that he is excited for the future of the department, noting that staff has done a great job preparing a succession plan for the continued success of the department.

Commissioner Winnie Heiss thanked staff for planning such a wonderful retirement event for Lisa Litzinger.

Vice Chairperson Dave Allen commented on the El Comienzo Luncheon, noting that the students were very impressive while addressing the guests at the event. He also mentioned his pleasure with the Pan American Association's incorporation of a very fitting tribute to Joe Arambel within the scholarship program.

REPORTS:

1. Community Family Guidance Center – Agency Report

Community Services Manager, Nancy Hitt introduced Community Family Guidance Center Executive Director, Bill Sinko, and provided information regarding his professional background. Mr. Sinko distributed a pamphlet, flyer, and statistical information regarding Community Family Guidance Center (CFGC). He explained that CFGC was founded in 1976 and is a 501(c)3 agency with the mission to help Southeast Los Angeles County's underserved children and their families heal from trauma, abuse, emotional, behavioral and mental health issues through proven interventions and compassionate guidance. He noted that CFGC has 75 employees, most of whom are bilingual, with an executive team consisting of nine people. Mr. Sinko explained that he handles the business side of the organization and works closely with a co-lead, the Chief of Clinical Services, who handles the clinical side of the organization. CFGC also has a Board of Directors, comprised of 14 volunteers.

Mr. Sinko reported that CFGC runs an intensive and a non-intensive wing as part of their program, to cover all aspects of mental health for children. He noted that, while parents and teachers may be consulted on cases, the clients of CFGC are always children. Mr. Sinko reported that the current demand for this service is the highest it has ever been in the history of the agency, as bullying, neglect and trauma are on the rise. CFGC specializes in treating trauma on an out-patient basis, with 80% of the clients having had experienced some type of trauma, and approximately 50% of those trauma cases involve sexual abuse. Mr. Sinko reported that in FY 2016-17, CFGC provided over 20,000 hours of clinical work to 1,750 new clients. Last year, CFGC saw 64 Lakewood residents, equating to approximately 2,000 clinical hours. He noted that referrals to the program come from parents and schools in the area, as well as from the Department of Children and Family Services, and from the Department of Mental Health.

Mr. Sinko stated that CFGC brings a powerful tool to the community in their contract with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. This \$6.4 million contract equates to \$311,000 to treat children in the City of Lakewood. He expressed his appreciation for the CDBG Block Grant afforded to CFGC by the City of Lakewood, and stated that it helps fill in the gaps not covered by the contract. He noted that nearly 85% of funds go to direct services. All services are provided at no cost to the clients. Mr. Sinko concluded his report by stating that staff has been a pleasure to work with, and appreciates everyone on the Lakewood team.

Commissioner Heiss expressed her appreciation and respect for the valuable service CFGC provides at no cost to the clients.

Vice Chairperson Allen stated that CFGC has provided an important service in the community for many years by aiding in the mental health and safety of children. He added that this work is very much appreciated.

The Commission received and filed the report.

2. Summer Programs and Catalog Preview

Assistant Director of Recreation and Community Services, Kevin Bright displayed slides and reported on classes and programs offered this summer, as noted in the written report. Mr. Bright reported that the summer catalog features Professor Fun enjoying a summer concert in the park with residents. He also made note of new classes; the Finally It's Friday program offering family friendly activities every Friday throughout the summer; key dates for the Lakewood Youth Sports summer season; and various other special events.

Mr. Bright reported that the Storm Water Capture Project at Mayfair Park will get underway as early as May 14 with fences going up as early as May 21. This will affect the layout for the LYS Opening Day/Public Safety Expo scheduled for June 16, but it is still expected to be a great day. All the usual components of the event will be held.

Details noted in the written report regarding aquatics programming, and staff training were reviewed by Mr. Bright. He pointed out that the staff Summer Orientation event is scheduled for Thursday, June 7 at 6 p.m. at Monte Verde Park, and requested that Commissioners let the secretary know whether or not they plan to attend.

Commissioner Spaseff was provided with an explanation of the new Stroller Barre class, at his request. Ms. Frost clarified for Commissioner Spaseff that the band, The Answer, will headline the Block Party this year rather than kick off the Summer Concerts in the Park series.

The Commission received and filed the report.

3. Civic Center Block Party Preview

Community Services Manager, Alex Bauman provided a preview of the upcoming Civic Center Block Party and displayed slides. Mr. Bauman reported that the Civic Center Block Party is scheduled for Saturday, June 30 with all of the familiar components, including entertainment, the Family Fun Zone, Taste of Lakewood, and fireworks. Details regarding all aspects of the event, including logistics, street closures, parking, and staffing and security, were all reviewed, according to the written report.

Commissioner Spaseff commented that The Answer is performing at the Block Party and at an August Summer Concert in the Park and believes this to be an appropriate amount of time. Commissioner Spaseff thanked all staff for the hard work that goes in to this very special community event.

Ms. Frost stated that approximately 25,000 people attend the Civic Center Block Party each year, in response to Vice Chairperson Allen's question. Vice Chairperson Allen stated that this one-day event, with 200 staff working is a big deal, and expressed his confidence that everyone will do a great job, as always.

The Commission received and filed the report.

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 2018.

The report will be filed.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter to Part-Time Employee of the Month, Estrella Meza for the month of March 2018.

There were no comments and the letter will be filed.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Kirk Real adjourned the meeting at 6:41 p.m. to June 13, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

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