



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
September 12, 2018

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Ted Spaseff

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Commissioner Kirk Real and seconded by Commissioner Winnie Heiss to approve the minutes from the meeting of August 22, 2018. The motion was approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Assistant Director Kevin Bright began his remarks by reporting that the summer season was officially over. He expressed appreciation for the Recreation and Community Services staff for all of their hard work over the course of the season. Mr. Bright went on to report that the Patriot Day Flag Lowering Ceremony had taken place on Tuesday, September 11, and had a remarkable turnout with over 200 people in attendance. The event was said to have been a wonderful tribute to those who died during the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, as well as those who have died while fighting the war on terrorism since. Highlights included "The National Anthem" and "God Bless America" sung by Heather Atkins, remarks from Mayor Steve Croft, prayer and a moment of silence led by Pastor Tim Buzbee, and a duo of trumpeters from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, who concluded the evening while playing taps as the flag was lowered.

Mr. Bright then went on report that on Monday, August 27, the city took full and complete ownership of the northwest section of Bolivar Park. Since then, the Environmental Resources Division staff has begun aerating and repairing the turf and landscape to bring it back to Lakewood standards. With the end of Daylight Saving Time fast approaching, ERD staff is prepared to apply winter seed to help ensure the grass stays green and healthy, despite minimal sunlight.

Moving forward, it was reported that the bid for the sewer line project at Rynerson Park was approved at a recent Council Meeting. There were nine bids ranging from approximately \$225,000 to \$1,000,000. Public Works Department staff vetted the low-bid contractor and found them to be a qualified and responsible bidder, thus approving the bid. With the previously purchased restroom facility for Rynerson Park scheduled for installation in December, the Public Works Department staff is working diligently to develop a timeline to begin the installation of the sewer lines as soon as possible.

Mr. Bright then discussed upcoming events including the Special Olympics Fundraiser scheduled to take place from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Friday, September 14, at the Lakewood Youth Center and Del Valle Park. The menu was said to include a Hawaiian feast from The Loft Hawaiian Restaurant. Mr. Bright stated that the Lakewood Special Olympics Dirtbags would again receive recognition that evening for their accomplishments at the recent U.S. Special Olympics Games in Seattle, Washington. The evening would conclude with softball, baseball and bocce games between the Special Olympics athletes and Lakewood City Employees. It was reported that on Tuesday, September 25, the Dirtbags would yet again be honored for a final time at Lakewood Celebrates.

Next, Mr. Bright informed the Commission that LYS league play was set to begin on Saturday, September 15, at all Lakewood parks. Twenty-eight football teams, seven volleyball teams and eight volleyball teams registered to play this season. Mr. Bright expressed delight in the growing number of volleyball teams this season after the city decided to offer it for the first time last year. Volleyball games were said to take place in the Hoover Middle School Gymnasium.

It was reported that the 2018 College Fair was scheduled to take place on Tuesday, October 9, in the Weingart Ballroom at The Centre. The College Fair is a free event where local high school students and their parents can obtain information from representatives of over 50 colleges and universities. Allison Tutoring and College Path will offer presentations to help prepare teens for college life. All students in attendance will be eligible to win one of four \$250 scholarships—two scholarships were provided by Assemblymember Anthony Rendon's Office, and two were provided by the Lakewood Teen Action Committee. Over 500 students and parents are expected to attend.

Mr. Bright concluded his remarks for the evening by introducing the Commission to Community Services Supervisor, Matt Perea, who was in the audience. Chairperson Dave Allen welcomed Mr. Perea stating that he would be a great addition to the RCS team.

Commissioner Winnie Heiss then introduced her guest, her husband, Phil Heiss, who was also in the audience.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff began his comments by expressing his delight with the visual aesthetics at Bolivar Park since the city regained ownership. He stated that since the last Commission Meeting and tour, the ERD staff has done a fantastic job in returning the park back to its aesthetically pleasing state.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff then shared a recent experience at Bloomfield Park involving the park's Recreation Leader IV, Susan Peebles. He stated that on a recent visit to the park, he engaged in conversation with Ms. Peebles regarding both the Adaptive Recreation and the Special Olympics programs. He expressed his appreciation for her enthusiasm towards these programs and asked that staff relay his sentiments and admiration.

Commissioner Kirk Real commented on the Patriot Day Flag Lowering Ceremony, stating that he was very pleased with the turnout. He expressed thanks to all staff involved in making the event a great one.

Commissioner Heiss expressed her appreciation to the Commission's Secretary, Michelle Williams, for her assistance in organizing the annual facilities tour at the last Commission Meeting, stating that the tour was very enjoyable and informative.

Chairperson Allen echoed Commissioner Heiss' comments, stating that the minutes Ms. Williams produced regarding the last Commission Meeting were very comprehensive and wonderfully written. He also expressed his appreciation to Mr. Bright for putting together the tour, stating that it circumnavigated many different areas that were of importance to the Commission.

REPORTS:

1. Department Annual Training Program

Community Services Manager Chuck Martucci delivered the report on the Recreation and Community Services Department's annual training program. He reported that the annual training program was designed to accommodate both full and part-time staff training needs. The 2018-19 program educates staff in the areas of general safety, healthy work practices, and awareness of workplace hazards. This plan was said to be composed of assigned trainings from the city's Safety Committee along with courses tailored by the RCS Program and Environmental Resources Divisions. It was reported that 59 full-time employees and 307 part-time employees received these diverse trainings. Trainings were said to be given by the city's safety officer and our department's safety committee representative. The safety trainings comply with state mandated regulations that require all California employees to maintain injury prevention programs and cover topics such as ladder safety, fire prevention, and heat stress. In-house department designed trainings cover topics such as football field layout, wading pool operations, new recreation leader trainings, ball field maintenance, and a Halloween carnival in-service.

Mr. Martucci reported that training was also provided for Lakewood Youth Sports coaches and officials, for all three sports seasons, covering rules, field and full dress practicals, and mid-season evaluations for all officials. In addition, quarterly trainings focusing on various trending topics, pertinent to part-time job roles and responsibilities, were said to be provided to all part-time staff. Finally, the Lakewood Aquatics Program was said to have 19 total trainings presented to lifeguards and swim instructors.

The Commission was informed that a key component of the department's training compliance is documentation. Every employee is required to sign a roster and document time spent in trainings that are documented. Mr. Martucci then stated that a list of planned trainings, for both the Program Division and the Environmental Resources Division, have been included in the report for the Commission's review. It was reported that on Wednesday, September 19, the contracted city safety officer will train all full-time staff in a refresher training for the Injury and Illness Prevention Program. The supervisors would in turn train all of the part-time staff at each facility to meet the current month's training requirement. It was stated that during this time, affected Environmental Resources Division field staff would receive training in lead and asbestos awareness. CPR and First Aid training for all city hall staff was said to begin in October.

Mr. Martucci mentioned that the RCS Department also provides training for all city hall staff

in every department on Emergency Management.

Commissioner Kirk Real commented, stating that he liked the layout of both the RCS Program Division Training Calendar and the Environmental Resources Division Training Calendar; he mentioned that the format made it easy to understand.

It was then confirmed for Chairperson Dave Allen that Mr. Martucci was the department's safety committee representative for the Program Division, and that Michael Cracium was the safety committee representative for the Environmental Resources Division.

Chairperson Allen expressed his appreciation for the training program stating that it is vital to what we do and how we do it.

2. Fall Programs and Catalog Preview

Community Services Manager Nancy Hitt displayed slides and reviewed the many programs, classes, and events offered for fall and winter by the Recreation and Community Services Department as noted in the written report. Ms. Hitt reported that the Fall/Winter Recreation Catalog was delivered to Lakewood homes over the Labor Day weekend, and includes over 575 classes. The cover was said to be designed by an in-house graphic designer and features a photo of the nature trail covered with leaves containing photos from major fall programs including, Halloween, Project Shepherd, and LYS Flag Football.

Ms. Hitt described programs scheduled for the fall such as, Movie Night Under the Stars featuring *The Sandlot*, at Lisa Fernandez Field on Friday, October 12, the College Fair on Tuesday, October 9, to be held at The Centre, and the Lakewood Youth Sports flag football, volleyball, and volleyball program. Residents can look forward to the Lollipop Lane Craft Boutique on Saturday, October 20, as well as Halloween Carnivals at all parks on Wednesday, October 31. Leareal Whitney was said to be a new instructor offering cooking classes for both adults and children at the Weingart Senior Center and on Sunday, January 20, there will be a trip to the Pantages Theatre in Los Angeles to see popular musical, *Wicked*.

The After-School Activity Zone was reported to have begun the week of August 27. Trained staff at eight parks offer homework assistance, organized games, and supervised activities for school-age children. The Lakewood Youth Center and Teen Resource Center were said to be open Monday-Friday starting at 3 p.m. Daily drop-in activities and many special events are organized including, scary movies and popcorn, a Turkey Day Gaming Tournament, Saturday Night Lights 5-on-5 co-ed Flag Football Tournament, a Holiday Trivia Bowl, and a College Fair.

Ms. Hitt reported that during the winter months, the community will come together to help one another through the Lakewood Project Shepherd Holiday Assistance program. Registration for the program will be held at the Burns Community Center and Palms Park Monday, November 5 through Sunday, November 18. Food and Teddy Bear gifts will be distributed December 13-15. Santa will visit Lakewood's parks on December 22 and kids can enjoy hot chocolate and make a holiday craft while waiting to get their picture taken with

Santa. The Winter Break programs at the parks will be held December 26 through January 4, at which staff will plan fun, holiday themed activities to keep kids busy while on winter break from school.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff commented stating that he is very proud of the catalog and the way it is designed, pointing out how easy it is to navigate. He congratulated Ms. Hitt on a great job.

Commissioner Real echoed Vice Chairperson Spaseff's comments stating that the catalog looks great and that the change in the design of the cover was a nice improvement. He expressed his appreciation for the photos on the cover that depicted people and programs from within our city, and recommended that we enter the cover into an appropriate competition.

Commissioner Ben Delarosa commented stating that he downloaded the catalog on his mobile device and expressed that he too was impressed with the new design.

3. Human and Senior Services Programs Annual Report

Ms. Hitt provided information regarding programs, activities, and services offered at the Weingart Senior Center and the Burns Community Center as printed in the written report. She reported that the City of Lakewood offers a variety of programs and partnerships in order to provide services to residents who need assistance. Many of the programs are offered directly by city staff, while other services are provided by partner agencies in and around the city. The Burns Community Center opened in 1976 and even after 42 years, the center continues to meet the changing needs of the community.

Ms. Hitt reported that in 2017, the Project Shepherd Extension Program provided assistance to 132 families and 462 people, and the holiday program helped 340 families. Throughout the year, 323 boxes of food were distributed, 18 families received assistance with water bill payments, and 17 families received grocery store gift cards. Ms. Hitt pointed out that the number of families who receive assistance with their water bill payments continues to go down each year.

It was stated that the Lakewood Regional Medical Center employees, physicians, and visitors were very active this year raising money and donating breakfast cereal for their Healthy Over Hungry Cereal Drive. Over 25,000 individual servings of breakfast cereal were donated and delivered to the Burns Community Center Project Shepherd Food Bank. In addition, Tenet Health, the parent company of Lakewood Regional Medical Center, matched employee contributions for a grand total of \$18,941 in donations to Project Shepherd. Ms. Hitt expressed her appreciation for the generosity of Lakewood Regional Medical Center and Tenet Health.

Project Shepherd was said to have received generous community response to a request for "back-to-school" backpacks for Lakewood children in need. Many residents donated backpacks and school supplies throughout the months of July and August. The program was said to have received impactful donations from Candlewood Smiles, the Rotary Club of Lakewood, Lakewood First United Methodist Church, Farmers and Merchants Bank, Macys,

Allison Tutoring, the Lakewood YMCA, and Lakewood Regional Medical Center. Backpacks and school supplies were distributed to 275 children on Saturday, August 18.

Ms. Hitt reported that in conjunction with the backpack distribution, the Burns Community Center hosted a Community Connect Event. Residents and backpack recipients received information from SoCal Gas, Edison, 211 Los Angeles County, WIC, the City of Lakewood Water Resources Department, the City of Lakewood Loan Program, the City of Lakewood Recreation and Community Services Department, Lakewood Meals on Wheels, and Human Services Association. Participants learned ways to save money on their utility bills and inquired about different resources to help their family.

It was stated that in 2008, the city entered into a contract with Nifty after Fifty to provide health and wellness programs designed for people age 50+. Ms. Hitt explained that the second floor of the Burns Community Center is used by Nifty after Fifty for an array of programs and services. She reported that Nifty after Fifty currently has 626 members, 202 of which are Lakewood residents. Lakewood members were said to receive a \$10 discount on their monthly membership fee.

Ms. Hitt informed the Commission that the Burns Community Center Renovation Project was almost complete, with an estimated completion date of Friday, October 19. The project was said to include improvements to the lobby, restrooms, and assembly room on the first floor, a reconfiguration of the Meals on Wheels area, a new elevator to comply with ADA regulations and standards, new air conditioning units, and an update to the exterior of the building. Currently, the upstairs restrooms are being expanded and improved to meet ADA regulations, and the old elevator shaft will be transformed into a pantry for Project Shepherd. Ms. Hitt reported that the Environmental Resources staff has begun work on the new landscaping around the building and parking lot.

It was reported that while the building is under construction, most active plus classes have been moved to other facilities for the duration of the project, with a few classes remaining at Burns. Ms. Hitt shared that staff was looking forward to bringing all of the classes back to Burns in the spring. Programs that remain at Burns while it is under construction were said to include, Mothers at Work Children's Center, the Project Shepherd Program, Lakewood Volunteer Day, the Teens in Lakewood Care Program, Oversight of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funded service agencies, and adult volunteer referrals. It was reported that Palms Park continues to offer information and referrals to area agencies and organizations for individuals needing services not provided by the city.

Ms. Hitt went on to report that the Weingart Senior Center was dedicated in 1981 and provides services and programs for Lakewood's senior population over the age of 50. The Senior Center was designed to combine both human services and recreational services. Ms. Hitt provided information on the low-cost programs and services that are currently offered at the Weingart Senior Center as printed in the written report. An Alzheimer's Educational Series provided by Assemblymember Anthony Rendon's office was said to be taking place at the Weingart Senior Center on Wednesday, September 19 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Ms. Hitt stated that Case management continues to be an integral part of the programming offered at the Weingart Senior Center. She explained that the case manager provides assistance, free of charge, to individuals over the age of 50 providing assistance with weekly job searches and housing referrals. Older adults can also receive referrals for assistance with affordable meal services, housing, MediCal, Medicare, insurance programs, as well as veterans and homeless/indigent services. It was reported that during the past fiscal year, 471 individuals received case management services.

Ms. Hitt went on to say that Lakewood continues to address the human services needs of its residents by providing these services through the RCS department or contracting with local agencies to provide other resources.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff expressed his fascination with the number of programs offered all year long and stated that he appreciates all of the hard work the department gives year round. He recommended that a calendar be added to the catalog detailing upcoming programs and activities, to help draw attention to activities that residents may not otherwise search for.

Commissioner Real stated that although the Pathways Volunteer Hospice program was founded as a hospice, it has expanded far beyond that. He expressed that residents are lucky to live in Lakewood as the services that the city offers cover so many bases. He stated that this is one of the reasons that he is so proud to be a member of the RCS Commission.

Mr. Bright then answered for Chairperson Allen that the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Burns Community Center was tentatively targeted for Saturday, October 27.

4. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 3

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month August 2018 and a listing of upcoming activities for October 2018.

Commissioner Winnie Heiss expressed her sentiments about the Patriot Day Flag Lowering Ceremony stating that the evening was wonderful and that the prayer was very appropriate. She expressed that it was a very moving and wonderful program.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff commented stating that RCS did a wonderful job with the Patriot Day Flag Lowering Ceremony and noted that the department was recognized at a recent Council Meeting for a job well done.

The Commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter to Craig Lane and Erica Pueblos, Part-Time Co-Employees of the Month for July 2018.

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ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Dave Allen adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m. to October 10, 2018 at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission