



Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
June 12, 2019

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Kirk Real.

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

ABSENT: Commissioner Winnie Heiss

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of May 8, 2019. A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Ted Spaseff and seconded by Commissioner Ben Delarosa. Minutes were approved as submitted with Commissioner Kirk Real abstaining.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her remarks by thanking the commission for their attendance at the annual Summer Orientation and Training. Ms. Frost then provided an update from a recent council meeting stating that the council had approved a balanced budget with just over one million dollars in cuts. The Recreation and Community Services Department was said to have made cuts totaling \$130,000. Ms. Frost reported that staff would present the new overall Recreation and Community Services budget to the commission at next month's meeting. She stated staff endeavors to have all of the programs and services that residents have come to expect, despite the budget cuts and challenges. Lastly, Ms. Frost reported that the city council met two weeks prior to develop a set of goals for the council to achieve during this term. She highlighted the major goals that the council will push forward in the next fiscal year. Goals were said to include, developing a plan for revenue stabilization, developing a public safety strategic plan, endeavoring to maintain local control, developing an economic development goals plan, and lastly, developing an infrastructure capital improvement project (CIP) plan that also identifies ways that staff can strategize to invest in and refurbish city facilities.

Assistant Director Kevin Bright provided information regarding programming and upcoming events. Mr. Bright reported that on Saturday, June 15, the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) season, currently embarking on its 63rd year, would open with the 17th annual LYS Opening Day Ceremony. He reported the event would begin at 10 a.m. with the traditional parade of participants onto the Lisa Fernandez field, followed by an address from the mayor and the LYS oath. Following the formal event, participants will play on the free inflatable attractions and wander through the Public Safety Expo, all of which will take place on the east side of the facility due to the ongoing construction with the storm water capture project. It was said that Meals on Wheels would raise funds by providing Austyn's Burgers and Scooter's Italian Ice food trucks. He reminded the commission that reserved parking for the event would be available in the Stephen Foster Elementary School parking lot.

Next, Mr. Bright reported that aquatics programs at both Mayfair and McCormick Pools would begin on Saturday, June 15, with recreational swim and a minimal schedule of lessons at McCormick, with a full schedule of lessons beginning at both pools on Monday, June 17. Also on June 17, summer Zone programs begin at each park facility and MVP Day Camp will kick off the first week of summer with a trip to Six Flags Magic Mountain. On Thursday, June 20, the first concert of the summer was said to be taking place at Del Valle Park featuring the classic rock band, The Answer. Cocina Fresca, Austyn's Burgers, and Paradise Cookies will all be on site selling delicious food and treats in support of Cub Scout Pack 34, along with Manna's Kettle Corn who will be at every concert. Lastly, Mr. Bright mentioned that the annual Senior Health Fair, in its 28th consecutive year, would be taking place at the Weingart Senior Center on Friday, June 21. The fair was said to begin at 10 a.m. and will feature a bevy of booths targeting the aging population with health screenings and health related informational opportunities. It was said that the offices of State Assembly member Anthony Rendon and Congresswoman Linda Sanchez would both host a booth as well.

Parks Superintendent Philip Lopez reported that staff would soon be working with Golden State Water to irrigate a dirt panel on Studebaker Road, across from Rynerson Park. Mr. Lopez informed the commission that the cost for the project, estimated at around \$15,000, was waived by Golden State Water, however, the city will still be required to pay a water consumption fee. After the low-water irrigation system is installed, staff will put in drought-tolerant plant material.

Next, Mr. Lopez shared that Barkshire Laser Leveling had recently completed laser-grading two baseball fields, one at Palms Park and one at Bloomfield Park. He explained that the company comes out to level the field to create a nice flat surface before material is laid on the field to prevent high and low areas, preventing wet spots from accumulating. He mentioned that additional fields are scheduled to be laser-graded in the coming years.

Commissioner Ben Delarosa inquired about the medians containing artificial turf along Del Amo Blvd. He asked if staff had an opinion on how it was working and if that could be an option for the dirt panel on Studebaker Road. Mr. Lopez informed him that it has saved staff a lot of time, and mentioned if water was not so easily accessible to the dirt panel, that option may have been considered. He added that the one-time cost of installing artificial turf would be substantially more than the cost to install irrigation.

Commissioner Kirk Real echoed Ms. Frost's comments about the Summer Orientation and Training stating that it was an exciting evening. He said the enthusiasm was high for the Family Feud style trivia game, and thanked staff for the opportunity to attend. Next, he shared that he was able to attend the Lakewood Teen Action Committee (LTAC) Recognition and Awards Banquet. He mentioned the teens were very enthusiastic and the event was impressive.

Chairperson Dave Allen asked that staff please extend kudos to Community Services Supervisor, Kelly Garnetti, for doing a marvelous job hosting the LTAC Recognition and Awards Banquet. He also commented on the Memorial Day ceremony stating that it was awesome. He thanked the RCS staff for their part in hosting the event and mentioned the keynote speaker was fantastic. Vice Chairperson Ted Spaseff echoed Commissioner Real's comments regarding the Summer Orientation and Training, stating that each year staff is very creative in coming up with new ways

to educate staff and create relationships. He said that Family Feud was great and the questions were very pertinent. He thanked staff for all of the hard work they put in to the event. He then commented on the summer catalog, stating that it was excellent as always and thanked staff for all the hard work that goes in to producing it. Lastly, he shared that he was excited for this summer's Concerts in the Park series, stating that the classic rock band, The Answer, was a great choice for a kick-off band.

REPORTS:

1. **FY 2019-20 Recreation Work Calendar Adoption**

Assistant Director Kevin Bright presented the commission the FY 2019-2020 Recreation Commission Work Calendar. He noted that a copy of the work calendar had been provided in the agenda packet. The department staff was said to have reviewed the calendar and made changes. Mr. Bright noted that the department had maintained the standard second Wednesday of each month for the Commission Meeting. He mentioned that all of the same reports from the prior fiscal year had been maintained with one exception, in May 2020, the Playground Inventory report was replaced with a report on Capital Improvement Projects at Recreation Facilities.

Next, Mr. Bright reminded the commission that at the July 10 Commission Meeting the annual reorganization will take place, the RCS Department Annual Budget Report will be presented, and the RCS supervisors will make their presentations to the commission. Secondly, he announced that at the August 14 Commission Meeting the annual facilities tour will take place. He informed the commission that an agenda will be provided to them in the coming weeks. Lastly, he noted that the Patriot Day ceremony would take place on the evening of the September 11 Commission Meeting. He mentioned that the commission would need to discuss a plan for that meeting, as the event would overlap. Ms. Frost mentioned that moving the meeting to the normal 7 p.m. was an option to be considered, as it would follow the Patriot Day ceremony.

Mr. Bright recommended that the commission adopt the FY 2019-2020 Recreation Commission Work Calendar as proposed. The secretary took roll and with a unanimous vote, the work calendar was adopted.

The Commission received and filed the report.

2. **DASH Transit Annual Report**

Community Services Manager Chuck Martucci displayed slides and presented the Commission with the DASH Annual Report. Mr. Martucci reported that DASH had purchased two new 16-passenger buses in the 2018-19 fiscal year to replace two older high mileage buses. He stated that DASH has been in the process of procuring and replacing an older fleet of vehicles over the past five years, starting with six new accessible vans in 2014. These two new buses were said to complete the replacement of the older vehicles. The new Dash fleet now consists of two accessible vans that seat five passengers and accommodate one wheelchair, and six paratransit buses that seat 16 passengers and accommodate one wheelchair. It was said that the new fleet should allow DASH to operate for many years before repairs are required and vehicle replacement becomes imminent.

Mr. Martucci displayed a slide depicting two tables providing an overview of fiscal year changes in ridership for fiscal year 2017-18 and 2018-19. Table A was said to depict changes in the number of registered clients, annual roundtrips, operational days, and annual miles. Table B was said to show a breakdown of ridership by type of patron for that same period. Mr. Martucci mentioned that DASH had begun working on a client database purge this year. A letter was sent to each DASH client requesting an update on current information including address and phone number, current emergency contact information and any changes with clients' mobility. It was said that this purge is performed every few years and allows staff to identify clients who may no longer live in the service area or may no longer need DASH services. It also gives staff a more accurate accounting of active users in the database and provides staff with the knowledge to better serve clients who may need extra time or care in transporting due to changes in mobility.

Lastly, Mr. Martucci reported on the successful Recreational Travel Program. He mentioned it was a very popular program with residents and non-residents alike. He noted that 11 trips were scheduled in the past year, 10 of which were sold out and had lengthy waiting lists, and pointed out that there were no trip cancellations due to low enrollment. Trips were said to include a visit to the Hollywood Bowl featuring the Go-Go's—with the Los Angeles philharmonic and a spectacular firework show—as well as trips to the Pageant of the Masters, the Griffith Observatory, the King Tut Exhibit at the California Science Center, the Newport Harbor Christmas Boat Parade, the Pantages Theatre to see performances of *Wicked* and *Cats*, the Dodger Stadium Behind-the-Scenes Tour, the Pompeii Exhibit at the Reagan Presidential Library, the Carlsbad Street Fair, and the Getty Villa in Malibu. It was said that staff was looking forward to planning many more trips in the coming year and exploring new and exciting destinations throughout Southern California.

Mr. Martucci concluded his report by stating that DASH remains the primary transportation provider for Lakewood's senior and disabled population. By providing referrals and links to additional services such as Access and Long Beach Dial-a-Lift, staff is able to give Lakewood's senior and disabled residents more options to connect them to essential services that enhance their quality of life and allow them to live independently.

Mr. Martucci then introduced Paratransit Communication Operator Ana Maria Masoe. Ms. Masoe serves as the lead part-time dispatcher for the DASH Transit program. She provided the commission with an overview of her role with DASH. She shared that she has been a DASH employee since 2002. Her duties were said to include opening the office in the mornings, taking reservations and cancellations over the phone, communicating with the drivers, and assisting with registering new clients.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff thanked Ms. Masoe for all of her hard work and stated that she is doing a fantastic job as the face for DASH.

Commissioner Real mentioned he noticed in the statistics that there seemed to be a somewhat significant decline in the number of roundtrips and the total miles, he inquired as to whether or not that was reflective of the recent purge. Mr. Martucci explained that was a reflection of the registration and noted that it was cyclical. Mr. Martucci then clarified for Commissioner

Real that the reason the wheelchair users declined by about 50% from the prior year was due to the fact that many of those users are no longer physically able to use DASH services. Mr. Martucci also clarified for Commissioner Real that DASH does not pick up patrons who reside in nursing homes.

Commissioner Delarosa inquired as to whether or not any DASH buses use alternative fuel. Mr. Martucci informed him that all DASH buses use regular gas at this time. Mr. Martucci confirmed for Commissioner Delarosa that old DASH buses were sold in auction after all decals have been removed.

Mr. Martucci confirmed for Chairperson Allen that DASH currently has four dispatchers and approximately 18 part-time drivers.

The Commission received and filed the report.

3. Landscape & Turf Maintenance Annual Report

ERD Supervisor Mike McDade displayed slides and reported on the turf and landscape maintenance program. Mr. McDade reported that ERD staff services over 200 city bus stops twice per week, removes illegally dumped items from 45 alleyways and performs turf and landscape renovations throughout the city. Service requests and work orders requesting pest control, landscape maintenance and irrigation repairs were also said to be a part of the weekly work schedule. He shared that a majority of the work assigned to the landscape and maintenance crew was clearing right-of-ways.

Mr. McDade informed the commission that the city had recently purchased a new reel mower. He explained that the advantage of this type of mower was that it gets a nice tight cut on the grass. Currently only one person has been designated to operate the mower in order to minimize the possibility of it being damaged. It was said that staff had also purchased a new riding mower that was set to arrive before the fiscal year ends.

Next, Mr. McDade shared that the Landscape and Turf Maintenance crew had recently been dealing with issues concerning the homeless. He displayed photos illustrating a recent incident where a homeless encampment was discovered on a city owned site. Mr. McDade shared with the commission that the Lakewood High School football team was able to clear the site of all trash and debris during the annual Lakewood Volunteer Day event and staff have since been maintaining it.

Mr. McDade then displayed photos and shared that maintenance staff had recently completed a turf renovation project at Bolivar Park. Following the storm water capture project in June 2018, the turf was left in poor condition. The first step in repairing the damaged area was to aerate and fertilize. Next, seed and topsoil were applied to initiate new turf growth. Through the efforts of many staff members and the subsequent monitoring by the park maintenance staff, the turf was attractive and resilient in time for the busy summer season.

Next, Mr. McDade displayed a slide showing an area along Del Amo Blvd. where staff had completed irrigation maintenance and repair as well as a conversion from hydraulic valves to

electric. He then introduced Landscape and Maintenance Lead Worker Kevin Arias to the commission. Mr. Arias reported that every year the department's goal is to improve the efficiency of the irrigation system by repairing, maintaining, and ultimately replacing old systems with new ones. He noted that recently staff had run into issues during the process of converting from hydraulic to electric irrigation equipment. Every panel was said to have only one power source, with no power source available on the opposite side of the panel. It was said that over the years the lines had been compromised to feed the other panel. Mr. Arias noted that a typical solution was to install a battery operated valve controller, which does not rely on the old and problematic equipment, however, that too proved problematic over time because the batteries had to constantly be changed.

Mr. Arias then presented to the commission the new Dig Light 4000, which was said to be a solar powered irrigation controller. He mentioned that it was a great piece of equipment, stating that it was completely waterproof and environmentally friendly. He informed the commission that a Dig Light 4000 was installed on the south service road panel of Del Amo Boulevard between Obispo Avenue and Paramount Boulevard in response to receiving several reports from residents about the water running at times other than scheduled. The original hydraulic system was said to be aged and unreliable. Considering a successful hydraulic-to-electric irrigation equipment conversion on Carson Street the previous year, it was the clear choice to perform the same type of conversion on the problematic panel on Del Amo Blvd. As there was no power being supplied to this panel, utilizing solar energy was the alternative solution for lack of power available to the 13,000 square foot area. The project to install a solar device was planned and completed between March and May 2019. Since then, additional conversions have been completed on turf panels on Carson Street between Palo Verde Avenue and Woodruff Avenue and on Del Amo Boulevard at Hayter Avenue.

Mr. Arias then shared with the commission an old galvanized head that was completely covered in tree roots. He passed it around so that the commissioners could take a closer look at just one of the many problems the landscape and maintenance crews come across.

Moving forward, Mr. McDade reported that the ERD maintenance staff recently undertook the large-scale landscape renovation at Burns Community Center following the renovation of the building. He stated that the project was planned to be carried out in three phases with the first beginning in late September, 2018. The three phases included the parking lot and the north and south sides of the building on Clark Avenue. Each phase was slightly different in complexity but in all required the placement of 90 tons of rock and boulders, 7000 square feet of newly seeded turf, fifteen new trees and fresh plant material installed into nearly 10,000 square feet of flowerbeds. Modern and efficient irrigation systems were installed in each phase, promoting best practices in the use of water. Mr. McDade shared that this year ERD landscape and maintenance employee, Todd Sescher, won the Employee-of-the-Year award due in part to this project. He commended Mr. Sescher for his hard work, sharing that the city had saved a substantial amount of money thanks to his efforts. Mr. McDade concluded his report with time-lapse video footage of the construction at the Burns Community Center from start to finish.

Mr. Arias confirmed for Vice Chairperson Spaseff that the new Dig Light 4000 was mounted

onto a pole near the valve and secured with a concrete base to prevent vandalism and theft. Vice Chairperson Spaseff then commented on the recent issues concerning the homeless and expressed his concern for staff's health and safety when dealing with the cleanup of encampments. He inquired as to whether or not the city was able to request tax monies to assist with the cleanup of homeless encampments. Ms. Frost mentioned that the Public Safety Department was currently looking in to securing homeless dollars from the county. She noted that Lakewood does not have as big of a problem with the homeless as surrounding cities and stated that staff was working to get the county to realize the issue. She added that Mr. Lopez was currently working to develop a personal protective equipment (PPE) uniform for staff to wear when performing cleanups of homeless encampments.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff complimented ERD staff for getting the Lisa Fernandez field back into shape after the Pan Am Fiesta just in time for LYS Opening Day.

Mr. Lopez confirmed for Chairperson Allen that it was in fact protocol to have a sheriff come out when dealing with homeless encampments. He stated that the sheriff would go out to give the homeless a 72-hour notice to vacate. After that timeframe, ERD staff heads out to clean up the encampment and remove any remaining items left behind. Staff then trim the bushes so that homeless are unable to hide behind them.

The Commission received and filed the report.

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 2019.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter to Employee of the Month – Jason Lai, April 2019

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 7:09 p.m. to July 10, 2019 at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission