



MINUTES  
Recreation and Community Services Commission  
Adjourned Regular Meeting  
September 11, 2019

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MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 5 p.m. by Chairperson Ted Spaseff.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Dave Allen.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Commissioner Dave Allen and seconded by Commissioner Kirk Real to approve the minutes from the meeting of August 14, 2019. The motion was approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her remarks by thanking Chairperson Spaseff, Commissioner Allen and Commissioner Real for their attendance and support at a recent council study session regarding the Lakewood Equestrian Center. She reminded the commission that the city was in the process of securing a new concessionaire for the Lakewood Equestrian Center and was currently in discussion with the proposed concessionaire and considering ideas proposed by council. She mentioned that at a recent council meeting staff's intention was to get a signed agreement with the proposed concessionaire; however, City Council was not satisfied with the terms of the agreement. It was noted that staff was currently in the process of attempting to rework the terms of said agreement.

Next, Ms. Frost acknowledged Community Services Manager Chuck Martucci, who was recently inducted into the Long Beach City College Alumni Hall of Fame. She informed the commission that the Viking Alumni Hall of Fame would induct its Hall of Famers on Wednesday, November 6 at The Grand event center in Long Beach. She asked that the commission RSVP to their secretary if they wish to attend.

Ms. Frost then reported on upcoming programs and events. On Friday, September 13, the Lakewood employee fundraiser supporting Special Olympics was said to be taking place at Del Valle Park at 5:30 p.m. She informed the commission that this important fundraiser would include a fun evening of dinner, spectating and playing sports. She mentioned that family and friends were welcome to attend and participate. It was said that the next Play at Palms event would also be taking place on Friday, September 13, and would feature Susie Hansen's Latin Band. Next, it was reported that on Monday, October 14, the Lakewood Education Foundation Golf Tournament would be taking place. Ms. Frost noted that in past years the commission had generously purchased a tee sign for the event and expressed her hopes that the trend would continue this year as well. On Tuesday, October 15, the College Fair was said to be taking place at The Centre in the Weingart

Ballroom from 6 to 8 p.m. The annual College Fair provides a forum for collegiate representatives to interact with potential students and parents to discuss admission requirements, application deadlines, campus life, and financial assistance programs.

Lastly, Ms. Frost announced that she, along with City Manager Thaddeus McCormack, have hosted several budget presentations for community stakeholders, particularly stakeholders in local community groups, to make them aware of the city's current budget challenges and inform them on how to join the conversation. She informed the commission that flyers were sent out to residents informing them of how to share their ideas and priorities for the community.

Chairperson Spaseff commended staff for their presentation at a recent council study session and for all of their hard work during the process of attempting to secure a new concessionaire at the Lakewood Equestrian Center. Next, he shared that he was able to attend last year's College Fair with his granddaughter and mentioned that the visit prompted a trip to Montana State University, where she plans to attend one day.

#### 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 2019-20 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 the RCS 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, an all-hands summer orientation, and a Halloween carnival in-service.

Mr. Martucci reported that comprehensive training was provided for Lakewood Youth Sports coaches for all three sports seasons, covering park LYS procedures, sportsmanship, and positive ethics. Training was also said to be provided for all sports officials, for the 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, August 14, the contracted city safety officer trained all full-time staff in a refresher training for fire safety and fire extinguisher use. The supervisors in turn have trained all of the part-time staff at each facility to meet the current training requirement. CPR and First Aid training for all city hall staff was said to begin in October.

Finally, Mr. Martucci mentioned that the RCS Department continues to provide training for all city hall staff in every department on Emergency Management.

Mr. Martucci confirmed for Commissioner Real that there are in fact times throughout the year when trainings are held together for both the Program staff and the ERD staff, however, they are mostly held separate due to schedule conflicts.

The Commission received and filed the report.

## **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 600 classes. The cover was said to feature a photo of the Active+ Walking Club participants in front of the newly remodeled Burns Community Center.

Ms. Hitt described programs scheduled for the fall such as, new Active+ classes, Play at Palms events on the second Friday of the month at Palms Park, F&M Bank free financial workshops, and on Saturday, December 14, a travel trip to the Mission Inn Festival of Lights. The After-School Activity Zone was reported to have begun the week of August 15. Trained recreation staff, at eight parks, supervise "The Zone" providing homework assistance, organized games, and supervised activities for school-age children. Additionally, a full schedule of teen programs was said to be offered at the Lakewood Youth Center and the Teen Resource Center at Bloomfield Park. It was noted that both teen centers are in operation Monday through Friday starting at 3 p.m., offering daily drop-in opportunities and many special event nights.

Ms. Hitt reported that the LYS program continues to be a core focus area of recreational opportunities for youth. She mentioned that this season, both volleytennis and flag football are offered, and the LYS Program will again offer a volleyball league for girls ages 10 to 17. Also this fall, LYS basketball signups will take place December 7-21. Teams will begin practice in January, with league play beginning in late January. In addition to LYS, multiple contract classes offer fee-based sports opportunities such as tennis, karate, gymnastics, soccer, and ice hockey.

Ms. Hitt reported that after the remodel of the Burns Community Center and the departure of

Nifty After Fifty, staff has been working diligently to secure a full schedule of classes, seminars and activities for the active older adult population. In addition to step aerobics, yoga, stretching and walking club, and chair volleyball that already have a following, new classes such as Active+ Line Dance, Active+ Zumba and Gentle Pilates have been added.

It was said that several health and wellness events were scheduled this fall season. To start, the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Older Adults Benefits Fair takes place at Weingart Senior Center on Monday, October 21 from 10 a.m. to noon. Secondly, a free walk-in flu shot clinic, co-sponsored by the Los Angeles County Health Department and the City of Lakewood, will be held on Tuesday, October 22 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Weingart Senior Center and a Lung Health Workshop, sponsored by BREATHE California of Los Angeles County, will be offered at the Burns Community Center on Monday, September 30 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Ms. Hitt noted that the fall issue of the catalog promotes several special events including the Play at Palms series of events featuring a different event at Palms Park on the second Friday of each month. The series was said to begin on Friday, September 13 with a Concert in the Outfield featuring the Susie Hansen Latin Band. Movie Nights will be offered on October 11, with Monsters, Inc., and January 10 with Dumbo, and a Harvest Festival will debut on November 8. The Lollipop Lane Craft Boutique will once again take place at Mayfair Park, on Saturday, October 19 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Lakewood's Halloween carnivals will take place at eight parks on Thursday, October 31 from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Next, Ms. Hitt reported that children would have a plethora of choices for enjoying winter vacation. Park staff will plan fun and creative holiday-themed activities to keep children busy when school is on winter break. It was said that the highlight of the season is when Santa Claus visits the parks on Saturday, December 21. Kids will get to make holiday crafts and enjoy a cup of hot chocolate while waiting to get their picture taken with Santa.

Additionally, Ms. Hitt mentioned that Project Shepherd families could sign up for holiday assistance November 4-17 at the Burns Community Center and Palms Park. Lakewood students will have an opportunity to be involved by donating food and grocery store gift cards through their school's Holiday Dinner Food Drive, which benefits Project Shepherd. Children enrolled in the program can request individualized gifts through the Teddy Bear Tree Program. Community members, employee groups, churches, and businesses throughout the city traditionally fulfill gift requests for this holiday giving program. It was said that food and gifts would be delivered December 13 and 14.

Commissioner Real shared that he is very pleased to see the expansion of structured activities to east Lakewood. He thanked staff for making an extended effort.

Vice Chairperson Delarosa suggested that staff look into adding an adult class called "Stop the Bleed" to the catalog.

The Commission received and filed the report.

### **3. Human and Senior Services Programs Annual Report**

Community Services Supervisor Sabrina Junkin provided information regarding programs, activities, and services offered at the Weingart Senior Center and the Burns Community Center as printed in the written report. Ms. Junkin reported that in 2018, the Project Shepherd Extension Program provided assistance to 111 families and 391 people, and the holiday program helped 301 families. Throughout the year, 315 boxes of food were distributed, 13 families received assistance with water bill payments, and 13 families received grocery store gift cards.

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. Ms. Junkin stated that this year 42 boxes 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 \$12,610 in donations to Project Shepherd.

Next, Ms. Junkin reported that in anticipation of the school year, Project Shepherd received generous community response to a request for “back-to-school” backpacks for Lakewood children in need. Many residents and businesses donated backpacks and school supplies throughout the months of July and August. Backpacks and school supplies were distributed to 305 children on Saturday, August 17.

It was said that in November of 2018, the Burns Community Center finished the major renovation project that provided many upgrades to the building. In December of 2018, long time tenant Nifty after Fifty declined to renew their lease occupying the second floor. Ms. Junkin noted that with the completion of the renovation, and the departure of Nifty after Fifty, new programming has been instituted and the center has a full slate of Active+ classes in the downstairs activity room as well as in the upstairs open fitness space.

Next, Ms. Junkin reported that the Weingart Senior Center continues to provide services and programs for Lakewood’s senior population over the age of 50. Services and programs were said to include fitness classes, a variety of dance, art, handicraft, and other recreation programs, free seminars, free and low cost special events, a mobile book checkout provided monthly by the Iacoboni Library, and several assistance programs.

Ms. Junkin concluded her report by informing the commission that case management continues to be an integral part of the programming offered at the Weingart Senior Center. She noted that the case manager provides assistance, free of charge, to individuals over the age of 50. Using the facility’s internet access, as well as its Wi-Fi capability, the case manager conducts weekly job searches and offers referrals for services such as MediCal, Medicare and insurance options, as well as veterans and homeless/indigent services. It was noted that during the past fiscal year, 473 individuals received case management services.

Commissioner Heiss stated that she is amazed by all of the services offered by the department and mentioned that she is proud to be a resident of Lakewood. She thanked staff for all of their hard work.

Commissioner Allen shared that he is pleased to see what the department does in the area of senior and human services. He commended staff for a job well done.

Chairperson Spaseff mentioned that he is always very impressed at how the RCS department manages to care for all residents. He added that the many activities and programs offered gives those with fewer social opportunities a sense of worth. He thanked staff for doing such an outstanding job.

The Commission received and filed the report.

**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 2019 and a listing of upcoming activities for October 2019.

The Commission received and filed the report.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

1. Letters to Gaby Vivanti and Kristina Veneciano, Part-Time Co-Employees of the Month for July 2019

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Vice Chairperson Delarosa suggested that the meeting be adjourned in memory of those who died on September 11, 2001 and in honor of the public safety officers and military personnel who are still on the front lines in the fight against terrorism. He asked that those present partake in a moment of silence.

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Ted Spaseff adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m. to October 9, 2019 at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary  
Recreation and Community Services Commission