



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting held
June 8, 2016

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:00 p.m. by Chairperson Ben Delarosa

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Kirk Real

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

ABSENT: Commissioner Dave Allen

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of May 11, 2016. A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Winnie Heiss, and seconded by Commissioner Ted Spaseff to approve the minutes. The motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Assistant Director Valarie Frost expressed appreciation for the presence of commissioners at the Summer Orientation training on June 2, noting that their attendance demonstrates support for the department's effort to train and prepare staff for the busy summer season. Ms. Frost also thanked commissioners for attending the grand opening of Airplane Playground at Del Valle Park on Saturday, May 21. The event souvenir, a balsa wood airplane, was distributed to commissioners.

Ms. Frost announced that RCS staff members Karen Plantz, Nancy Hitt, and Caitlin Cariaso were all recognized on May 19 at the Women in Leisure Services, Gamma Chapter annual awards banquet. Karen was honored with the Mary K. Petersen Memorial Merit Award, the organization's most prestigious recognition. Nancy and Caitlin both won service awards for their coordination of chapter events and scholarship opportunities for students majoring and/or working in the field of recreation.

Details on upcoming events in June and July were provided by Ms. Frost. The events included the Special Olympics Summer Games to be held at Cal State Long Beach on June 11 and 12 at which, men's and women's basketball teams and a unified golf team from Lakewood Special Olympics will participate; the city's Senior Health Fair will take place on June 17 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Weingart Senior Center; and Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) Opening Day and Safety Expo will be held at Mayfair Park on June 18. Also on June 18, both Mayfair and McCormick Pools will open for daily recreation swim sessions, and summer park programs and camps begin on June 20. Summer Concerts in the Park begin on June 23 at 6:30 p.m. and will continue each Thursday evening for eight consecutive weeks at Del Valle Park. The Civic Center Block Party will be on Saturday, June 25.

Ms. Frost continued with announcing the series of Finally It's Friday events that debuts on June 24 with Movie Night Under the Stars featuring the movie "Minions," and continues with Lakewood's Summer Fair on July 8, Shakespeare by the Sea featuring "Cymbeline" on Friday, July 15, a FUN-tastic Family Night scheduled for July 22, and Family Game Night on July 29.

Other activities in July include a Save a Life special event scheduled for Saturday, July 16 at Mayfair Pool from 9 to 11 a.m. The event will promote water safety and emphasize safety around water for children and parents, offer free swimming lessons for kids, CPR demonstrations, life jacket fittings, and activity stations. On Wednesday, July 20 from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Burns Community Center, a Survive for 7 disaster planning program will teach residents the basics of preparing for emergency situations.

Lastly, Ms. Frost reminded the Commission that the July 13 meeting will include reorganization of the Commission and will feature the all-hands presentations, during which Supervisors and Managers will share their declarations of fun.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff congratulated staff for an outstanding job on the Summer Orientation training event. He noted that all of the activities were so creative and the event is a great way to get the summer started and staff motivated. He also commended staff for the grand opening of Airplane Playground. He mentioned that he drives by the park daily and it is always packed with people enjoying the new playground. Commissioner Spaseff thanked staff for a tremendous job on the playground, the grand opening, and the Summer Orientation event.

Commissioner Kirk Real echoed Commissioner Spaseff's comments regarding the Summer Orientation training and the opening of Airplane Playground. He stated that he is amazed at the number of people at the playground each time he passes. He continued by describing the unique experience he had on Saturday, June 4, while passing Mayfair Pool. After noticing the full parking lot, he pulled in and found that Lakewood's RCS Department was hosting a CPRS District 10 aquatics training program. He learned so much, and was astounded at the amount and level of lifeguard training that was being administered at the event led by Nicole Duran. He added that it was a magnificent training and that the people in the Lakewood community should be well pleased with the level of training that the city's lifeguards receive. He expressed his appreciation to Nicole and the entire aquatics staff. Ms. Frost advised the Commission that Nicole Duran is solicited for her professional opinion and expertise on aquatics issues from people throughout Southern California. Ms. Frost added that recently, Nicole initiated the idea, and worked with the city's Public Information Office, on a water safety page for the city's website. The page includes water safety tips for residents on how to keep people safe around personal pools.

REPORTS:

1. FY 2016-2017 Recreation Commission Work Calendar Adoption

Assistant Director Valarie Frost directed the commission's attention to a revised version of the Recreation Commission FY 2016-2017 Work Calendar that was distributed. She explained that the only revision was the removal the Commission FY 2016-2017 Work

Calendar Adoption item from the July 13, 2016 meeting, since that action will take place today. Ms. Frost requested review of the document and recommended adoption by the commission if no changes are required.

Commissioner Spaseff commented that every year, there is discussion whether or not to hold a meeting in December. He suggested that the commission discuss at this time the possibility of not holding a meeting in December noting, that it is a very busy time for staff. He also suggested that the December meeting only has one item scheduled and suggested that it could simply be moved to the November meeting. Ms. Frost pointed out that not all commissioners are present tonight to participate in discussion and the final decision. She suggested that the commission approve the calendar as presented today and, at the October meeting, discuss moving December's item to the November meeting and consider, at that time, cancelling the December meeting.

There being no further discussion or comments, Commissioner Ted Spaseff made a motion and Commissioner Kirk Real seconded the motion to adopt the Recreation Commission FY 2016-2017 Work Calendar. The motion was carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

2. DASH Transit Annual Report

An overview of program elements and statistics for the Dependable Accessible Senior Handicapped (DASH) program was provided by Community Transportation Supervisor Janet Mondragón according to information included in the written staff report. She pointed out that the increase in registered clients resulted in approximately 1,100 additional trips this year. Ms. Mondragón pointed out that there has been an increase in the number of clients using wheelchairs, and a decrease in the number of clients with other mobility aids such as a walker or a cane. These changes can be attributed to modifications in the mobility of current DASH users, as very few of the new clients use wheelchairs. Ms. Mondragón noted that only one wheelchair can be accommodated per vehicle, per ride, which requires additional boarding, securing, and disembarking time, and resulted in an adjustment in the way rides are scheduled.

The driver hiring process and training program were reviewed according to the written report. Ms. Mondragón described the remodel and expansion of the DASH offices that took place this year. DASH moved in to the beautifully remodeled office space in April. The new space includes a dispatch operations area which is insulated for sound reduction, a reception area for assisting the public, a private office for the DASH Supervisor, and a staff break room for drivers and dispatchers with bulletin boards and mailboxes.

Ms. Mondragón provided information on some of the excursions that have taken place as part of the travel program over the past year. The travel program continues to be successful and Ms. Mondragón invited and encouraged commissioners to participate and experience a fun outing that is offered to the community.

Vice Chairperson Heiss commented that she had opportunity to participate in one of the travel trips recently and that it was so well organized. She added that Janet has such a calm demeanor while guiding participants on and off the bus.

Commissioner Real agreed with Vice Chairperson Heiss noting that he too had a great experience on a trip recently. Commissioner Real requested that a stop at Palms Park be included on the Commission Tour in September to see the remodeling of the facility building. Ms. Frost responded that it is the department's intention to include Palms Park on the tour to show the gymnasium, the supervisor's office, and the DASH offices.

Chairperson Delarosa asked to be reminded what DASH stands for. Ms. Mondragón responded that DASH stands for Dependable, Accessible, Senior and Handicapped.

The Commission received and filed the report.

3. Civic Center Block Party Preview

Community Services Manager Alex Bauman displayed slides and provided information regarding the Civic Center Block Party scheduled for June 25. Mr. Bauman stated that the key components of the event will once again feature entertainment, the Family Fun Zone, Taste of Lakewood, and a fireworks spectacular. He continued by announcing that the live entertainment will be kicked off by DJ Ted on the stage from 4 to 5 p.m. and then headlined by The MVP's from 5 to 9 p.m. Mr. Bauman explained the layout and location of all components of the event, including the expanded Family Fun Zone area. He explained that, by expanding the area, there will be extra space for the crowd to enjoy the attractions, as the number of attractions will not be largely increased.

Mr. Bauman reported that the Taste of Lakewood will once again benefit the Friends of the Lakewood Libraries beginning at 4 p.m. and ticket sales ending at 8 p.m. Presale food tickets will be sold at City Hall and both Lakewood libraries beginning on June 13. Foggia Italian Deli and Market is the contributing platinum sponsor of this element of the event. There will be 20 Lakewood restaurants and eateries on Clark Avenue. Two picnic areas will be provided for attendees.

The fireworks extravaganza will once again be produced by Fireworks America at 9:15 p.m. The choreographed display will be complemented with synchronized patriotic music for those in close proximity to the main stage and Costco parking lot near the launch site. Mr. Bauman noted that prime viewing areas of the fireworks are on Hardwick Street and in the Home Depot and Albertsons parking lots.

In summary, Mr. Bauman stated that nearly 100 city staff, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Los Angeles County Fire Department and CARE Ambulance will all be onsite to ensure a safe and clean event for all in attendance to enjoy once again.

The Commission thanked Mr. Bauman and received and filed the report.

4. Activity ZONE Annual Report

Community Services Manager Kevin Bright reviewed information provided in the written report regarding after-school programs. He explained that although statistics show a moderate decline of about 6.5% in participation, research does not reflect a trend over the past few years, even with any one park in particular. He pointed out that Mayfair Park continues to account for over 50% of the total program attendance. Mr. Bright commended staff at the park for continuing to put on a rigorous and thriving program that challenges the kids and provides fun opportunities, keeping them coming back year after year. Staff at Mayfair Park have worked creatively to stay on budget while still providing maximum supervision and fun activities for the participants.

Mr. Bright explained that overall, the program continues to provide resident youth a place to belong after school and during school vacation periods. Community Services Supervisors work together to develop a curriculum each season based on evaluation notes from previous years while staying current with trends, similar to camp style settings, to create a dynamic program. Mr. Bright noted that the Activity ZONE provides a secondary benefit to program participants, by marketing other city recreation programs, such as the All-City Track Meet, and Lakewood's Summer Fair, and scheduling activities to conclude each day in time for Lakewood Youth Sports games and team practices.

In conclusion, Mr. Bright stated that, although the program does not replace a formal day care, staff is confident and proud to provide a safe place for youth to find social and interactive opportunities in a setting where parents can feel comfortable with the trained and qualified supervision.

There being no comments, Commission received and filed the report.

5. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 12

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

Commissioner Real expressed his appreciation for the inclusion of food vendors for Summer Concerts in the Park, in this particular report. The Commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter to Part-Time Employee of the Month, Josue Ramos – April 2016.

Vice Chairperson Heiss commented that the letter was very well done.

The Commission received and filed the letter.

RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES – June 8, 2016

Page 6

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Commissioner Spaseff thanked all of the Managers and asked that his appreciation be passed on to the rest of the staff for the outstanding work, especially through the summer when there is an event nearly every day of the week. It's an honor to be on the commission in a community that does so much for the residents. Ms. Frost thanked Commissioner Spaseff for the kind words.

Commissioner Real complimented Mr. Bright on his introduction of the summer catalog and programs at last month's meeting, as well as Director Lisa Litzinger's presentation of the same information to the City Council. Commissioner Real stated that after receiving the summer catalog in the mail a few days after the council meeting, he realized how much more superb it is compared to the verbal report provided at a meeting. He continued by commending the staff who compiles all that goes in to each season's catalog to turn it in to a work of art.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Ben Delarosa adjourned the meeting at 6:44 p.m. to July 13, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

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