



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting held
July 13, 2016

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Ted Spaseff

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

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa Litzinger, Director
Valarie Frost, Assistant Director
Alex Bauman, Community Services Manager
Kevin Bright, Community Services Manager
Nancy Hitt, Community Services Manager
Karen Plantz, Community Services Manager
Camilo Castillo, ERD Supervisor
Mike McDade, ERD Supervisor
Nicole Duran, Community Services Supervisor
Mark Freeman, Community Services Supervisor
Gay Givens, Community Services Supervisor
Jonathan Gorne, Community Services Supervisor
Sabrina Junkin, Community Services Supervisor
Chuck Martucci, Community Services Supervisor
Joe Vasquez, Community Services Supervisor
Abraham Joven, Recreation Program Coordinator
Mike Cracium, Park Maintenance Lead Worker
Luciano Villegas, Park Maintenance Lead Worker

OTHER – REORGANIZATION OF COMMISSION OFFICERS:

Nominations were opened for Commission Chairperson for a term of one year. Commissioner Kirk Real moved and Commissioner Ted Spaseff seconded the motion to nominate Winnie Heiss to serve as Chairperson. Upon unanimous roll call vote, the motion was approved.

Nominations were opened for Commission Vice Chairperson for a term of one year. Commissioner Dave Allen moved and Chairperson Winnie Heiss seconded the motion to nominate Kirk Real to serve as Vice Chairperson. Upon unanimous roll call vote, the motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of June 8, 2016. A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Kirk Real and seconded by Commissioner Ben Delarosa to approve the minutes. The motion was carried by a roll call vote with Commissioner Dave Allen abstaining.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Lisa Litzinger previewed upcoming programs and events which included this week's Concert in the Park featuring Escape, a Journey tribute band, Family Nights for residents at both pools, which will be held every Friday evening through the end of August, Shakespeare by the Sea's performance of *Cymbeline*, a free water safety event called Save A Life at Mayfair Pool, Survive for 7, FUN-Tastic Family Nights at The Centre, Family Game Night, and Parents Night Out, Kids Night In. She also noted, that the LYS Awards Ceremony and Family Play Day will be held on August 6 at Bolivar, Del Valle, Mayfair and Palms Parks, and the Greater Lakewood Chamber of Commerce Car Show is scheduled for August 14 at Mayfair Park.

Ms. Litzinger shared that at a recent city council meeting, it was announced that Lakewood Regional Medical Center donated over 1,125 boxes of cereal and \$16,626 to Project Shepherd. The medical center ran a campaign called Healthy Over Hungry. Hospital staff donated cereal boxes and money to benefit Project Shepherd as part of this campaign. Monetary donations totaled over \$8,000 and the medical center matched their staff's donations.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff mentioned a few of the events that he attended recently commending staff on what a great job was done on each of them. The Senior Health Fair at the Weingart Senior Center, LYS Opening Day, the Block Party, and Summer Concerts in the Park each were well planned and managed. His grand children also participate in Monte Verde Day Camp and come home very excited with very positive comments. Commissioner Spaseff wanted to make it clear to staff that their hard work is really very appreciated by the community.

REPORTS:

1. RCS Department Organization/Budget/CIP

Director Litzinger explained the different documents included in the Organization, Budget and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) folder. The contents of the folder includes an updated organizational chart, a current chart of all recreation facilities and their amenities, and the budget report document. She elaborated on the FY 2017 Budget Report, noting that this report is an accumulation of information regarding all of the divisions within RCS including the purpose of each division and some of the activities planned within each division. The budget breakdown, by division and appropriations, is shown on the first page of the report. She pointed out that not all of the money comes from the General Fund, but that some of it comes from propositions, grants and donations. Ms. Litzinger stated that the Recreation budget is approximately \$12.7 million, which makes it the second largest budget in the city behind Public Safety, and reflects the importance the City Council and community place on recreation. Ms. Litzinger invited commissioners to contact her any time with questions regarding the department's budget.

Next, Ms. Litzinger drew the commission's attention to the Park Related CIP Projects document in their folder. She explained that annual facility projects are budgeted for every fiscal year. Each project was briefly described. If funding for these projects are not depleted, the money carries forward to the next fiscal year. These projects often change throughout the year due to changing needs and to ensure fiscally responsible use of the funds.

New facility projects make up the rest of the Park Related CIP Projects document. Ms. Litzinger announced that the city received an \$11 million grant from CalTrans for a Water Recapture Project at Bolivar Park. This project entails installation of underground capture tanks that collect water from the storm drains. In the tanks, the water will go through some filtration and then be used to irrigate the park, some medians, and some water will be stored as well. The work will take place on the north side of the park and will affect two picnic shelters. These two picnic shelters will be replaced as part of the project, and the city will replace the third shelter. Construction of the Bolivar Park Water Recapture Project will begin in the fall, and is anticipated to last nine months to a year. The city has since received another \$15 million grant to do the same type of project at Mayfair Park. Planning for this project has begun, but construction will not begin until the project at Bolivar Park is complete.

Ms. Litzinger continued by describing details of the remaining projects. The Burns Community Center will be improved to address several issues including the bubbling of the floor in the activity room, as well as problems with the elevator. Because the elevator is not ADA compliant, nor can it be made ADA compliant in its current location, a new elevator will be constructed on the outside of the building. The activity room will be slightly expanded and the area used by Meals on Wheels will be updated and improved. In addition to the improvements to the building, the landscape around the building will be updated by removing some of the mounds, using artificial turf in some areas, and drought tolerant landscaping and irrigation. Construction for this project is expected to take approximately nine months to a year and will begin in January 2017.

Other projects include renovation of the Equestrian Center, replacing park monument signs at some facilities, and new flooring and furniture at the Weingart Senior Center. An architect has been hired to review and provide design concepts for the Mayfair snack bar, Rynerson Park shelters and restroom, and the floors and patio door system at Monte Verde Park. The architect will also provide costs estimates for these projects. Funding for these projects will be requested in future budget processes. Funds for these types of projects can also come from grants and bonds. A bond in support of parks will be on the ballot in November 2016. If this bond passes, Lakewood would likely receive money for these types of projects.

Ms. Litzinger explained that The Centre will receive some refurbishments with funds from the Community Facility Fund. Not all of the projects listed will be completed in this fiscal year, however carpeting and re-covering the room dividers are top priority. A small outdoor event space, for 100 to 150 people, is also being planned to help satisfy requests for outdoor weddings to be held at The Centre, which will further increase revenue.

Vice Chairperson Real stated that he visited the Weingart Senior Center last week and noticed that some of the new furniture has already arrived. He recommended that people stop by to take a look because it changes the entire entry area and it is new, fresh, clean, beautiful and very welcoming. He continued by stating that he learned that the City of Bellflower has also received a Water Recapture Project grant. Bellflower's project site is at Mayfair High School, in Lakewood. He added that he finds the intergovernmental connection very interesting and is happy with the working relationships that will ultimately benefit many communities. Ms. Litzinger confirmed that the benefits of the Water Recapture Project does extend beyond the project site and its city limits.

With no further questions or comments, Ms. Litzinger prefaced the next part of the report by noting that the entire Recreation and Community Services staff present make everything happen. She added that RCS has the best staff, in the city and in the state because these people really care about what they do, putting their heart and soul into their work.

Assistant Director Valarie Frost explained that the department has made a Declaration of Fun this summer to deliver great recreation programming and family-friendly events at which residents can learn, stay active, forge new memories and build on long lasting friendships. Lakewood's Fun Team, comprised of lead workers, facility supervisors and the department's program coordinators, then each made a brief introduction of them self while displaying slides showing them having fun times at work and in their personal life. Ms. Frost pointed out that it is clear from the presentations, that the RCS staff epitomizes fun at work and still manages to find time for fun when away from their duties in Lakewood. In conclusion, each Community Services Manager and Environmental Resources Division Supervisor introduced them self and noted which members of the "Fun Team" they supervise. Ms. Frost then thanked the commission and encouraged them to always vote for fun.

Following the presentation, Chairperson Heiss affirmed that this was the best of this particular presentation that has ever been given. It made her feel as though each person was having fun and genuinely enjoys and cares about their job. She thanked the staff adding that that the city is very fortunate to have such a great staff working to make the city wonderful.

Commissioner Spaseff noted that this is always his favorite meeting of the year. He truly appreciates the hard work of all present and their staff, and found it very evident that this is not just a job, but a passion for this group.

Vice Chairperson Real agreed with Chairperson Heiss and Commissioner Spaseff's comments. He said that he felt overpowered by the strength of the staff, adding that one of the most satisfying things to him is to see the number of staff present who have risen through the ranks of the department. He stated that hearing the presentations given from each member of staff brought the department's organizational chart to life.

Commissioner Allen commented that this group is truly a family, filled with leadership, empowerment, trust and people working together as a team. He stated that this staff is the quintessential recreation department in the state, without question.

Commissioner Delarosa agreed with his fellow commissioners. He finds the “coming through the ranks” as mentioned by Vice Chairperson Real very inspiring. He stated that it would be interesting to see a timeline of each staff member’s career with the city. He thanked the staff for everything that they do.

Vice Chairperson Real added that when he interacts with commissioners and staff from other cities at events such as the CPRS Conference, he has found that Lakewood’s recreation program, even through tough economic times, emerges and continues to be well-respected. He feels that the community would come apart if the department came apart, and thinks that the city council clearly recognizes that, which is one of the reasons they continue support of the department.

2. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 1

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

Chairperson Heiss mentioned that she was amazed to see the number people who participate in the many activities offered.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter to Part-Time Employee of the Month, Tyler Bautista – May 2016.

The Commission received and filed the letter.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Winnie Heiss adjourned the meeting at 7:14 p.m. to August 10, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

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