



MINUTES  
Recreation and Community Services Commission  
Adjourned Regular Meeting  
April 14, 2021

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MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Kirk Real.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Stacy Valdez.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Chairperson Winnie Heiss  
Vice Chairperson Kirk Real  
Commissioner Dave Allen  
Commissioner Ted Spaseff  
Commissioner Stacy Valdez

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of March 10, 2021. A motion was made by Commissioner Dave Allen and seconded by Commissioner Ted Spaseff to approve the minutes from the meeting of March 10, 2021. The motion was carried by unanimous roll call vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her remarks by informing the commission about the upcoming vaccine clinics held in Lakewood. Ms. Frost reported that the city would be hosting three vaccine clinics. It was said that on Saturday, April 17, 150 vaccines would be available for distribution at the Weingart Senior Center; on Monday, April 26, 100 vaccines would be available for distribution at the Burns Community Center, and finally, on Wednesday, April 28 and Thursday, April 29, 1,000 vaccines would be available for distribution at Palms Park. She noted that a flyer would soon be sent out to the community, and posted in the e-magazine, to notify residents of the vaccine clinics. It was said that all appointments for the clinics on April 17 and April 26 were filled.

Next, Ms. Frost reported that on Wednesday, April 21 the department would host the Older Adult Volunteer Drive Through event at the Weingart Senior Center. It was said that volunteers would receive a certificate, a mug, and a Starbucks gift card as a thank you for their volunteer service to the community. The commission was asked to inform their secretary if interested in attending.

Ms. Frost shared that registration for Lakewood Youth Sports would be opening for registration for the baseball/softball/t-ball season beginning on Saturday, April 24 and concluding on Saturday, May 1.

Next, Ms. Frost informed the commission that two drive-in concerts were scheduled at Lakewood Center on Thursday, June 17 and 24. She noted that an additional six outdoor concerts would be offered from July 1 to August 5 at a park location to be determined by state and county health/safety protocols.

Additionally, Ms. Frost reported that Mayfair Pool will open on Memorial Day weekend and will be operated by city staff. The YMCA will again provide community aquatic programs at

McCormick Pool throughout the summer. It was said that staff hoped to open wading pools in late June.

Ms. Frost concluded her announcements by sharing that a report would be added to the May commission agenda to provide information on the Lakewood Equestrian Center Master Plan. She explained that the report would be given by the project's grant coordinator and lead architect, and noted that the commission would be asked to provide feedback on the report presentation.

Chairperson Kirk Real shared that he had the opportunity to watch and participate in the first public hearing concerning the proposed districting of city council districts. He informed his fellow commissioners that a second hearing containing the same information would be held on Tuesday, April 27 at 5:30 p.m.

#### REPORTS:

##### **1. Virtual Pan Am Fiesta Preview**

Community Services Supervisor Irving Montenegro provided information on the 2021 Virtual Pan Am Fiesta as noted in the written report. Mr. Montenegro reported that a Virtual Pan Am Fiesta would return in 2021 with access from the city's website beginning Thursday, May 6, and concluding on Sunday, May 9, 2021. It was said that the 2021 Virtual Pan Am Fiesta would highlight all special event elements, including virtual carnival rides, midway games, favorite carnival treat recipes and videos, entertainment, the Children's Cultural Booth, and recognition of the Pan American Ambassadors. Details were provided regarding each virtual element as noted in the written report. Mr. Montenegro informed the commission that the virtual webpage would also formally introduce the 2021 Pan Am Ambassadors to the community. It was said that scholarships were to help pay for future college or trade school costs and are awarded in the range of \$500 to \$1,500

Vice Chairperson Real shared that he had the opportunity to help select the recipients of the Pan Am Ambassadors Scholarship awards and mentioned that it was a very exciting and rewarding experience.

The Commission received and filed the report on the Virtual Pan Am Fiesta.

##### **2. Sports Programs Annual Report**

Community Services Supervisor Jonathan Gorne provided information regarding Lakewood sports programs as noted in the written report. Mr. Gorne informed the commission that the annual review of the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) and Adult Sports programs would focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the 2020/2021 season, modifications to non-profit group use of athletic fields, and alternatives to Lakewood's traditional youth and adult sports programs that were implemented. It was said that the LYS and Adult Sports programs were both heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Gorne reported that starting in mid-March, the 2020 LYS Basketball season was suspended with one week left to play. The 2020 Adult Sports Spring season was suspended at the same time, and eventually canceled.

Mr. Gorne shared that the restrictions on youth and adult sports, put in place by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health), caused the 2020 LYS baseball/softball/t-ball season, the 2020 LYS flag football/volleytennis/volleyball season and the 2021 LYS basketball season to be canceled. The summer and fall 2020 Adult Sports seasons were also canceled. He reported that in late August, Public Health announced changes to the guidelines governing the return to play in youth sports, which allowed for individual teams to engage in skills, drills and conditioning exercises. This allowed for five non-profit organizations to be granted field permits for September through December 2020. It was said that the change in guidelines from Public Health also provided the city an opportunity to run programming. Thus, staff devised a seven-week LYS Sports Skills clinic, which ran on Saturdays from October 17 through December 5 at Bolivar Park. Details regarding the clinic were provided as noted in the written report. Mr. Gorne shared that in total, 166 children participated in the Flag Football/Volleyball Skills Clinic.

It was reported that a surge in COVID-19 cases in November and December 2020 resulted in a brief delay in the resumption of sports programs. Mr. Gorne shared that the situation improved enough by late January to allow issuance of field permits to non-profit groups, and the ability to offer a second LYS Sports Skills clinic, this time focused on basketball. It was said that non-profit groups began utilizing fields in February, with eight total organizations receiving permits. The LYS Basketball Skills Clinic started on February 23 and ran through April 10. Details regarding the clinic were provided as noted in the written report.

Concerning the adult sports league, Mr. Gorne reported that in late February 2021, guidelines changed again, allowing for the resumption of competition for certain sports, including baseball and softball. For the first time adult sports were allowed to resume. Registrations for a modified adult sports season were offered in the beginning of March, with 14 total adult softball teams signing up, and 13 women's volleytennis teams. Mr. Gorne mentioned that the adult sports leagues began the week of April 5, and will run through mid-June.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff expressed his enthusiasm that sports registrations were finally resuming after so long. He shared that he was glad staff had exercised their abilities to the fullest extent by organizing sports skills camps.

Chairperson Winnie Heiss thanked Mr. Gorne for his very thorough presentation and for all of his efforts to keep sports going in Lakewood during the pandemic.

The Commission received and filed the report on sports programs.

### **3. Park Maintenance Spring/Summer Report**

Environmental Resources Division Supervisor Michael Cracium provided information on park maintenance during the spring and summer as noted in the written report. Mr. Cracium reported that playground maintenance was a top priority in the City of Lakewood. He informed the commission that litter was promptly removed and playground equipment was inspected for damage daily in order to provide the public with a safe environment for their

enjoyment. It was said that during the 2020-2021 fiscal year, over fifty tons of sand were added to Boyar and Biscailuz Park's school age playgrounds.

Mr. Cracium reported that the Lakewood park maintenance group has remained committed to doing its part to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. He noted that sanitizing all public areas including, playgrounds, restrooms, and activity rooms multiple times throughout the day remains a top priority at city parks. Other maintenance activities at parks were said to include caring for baseball diamonds, and replacing base plugs, home plate and pitching rubbers as needed. Mr. Cracium shared that the city's wading pools were closed during the summer of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and would remain closed into the summer of 2021. He shared that park maintenance personnel would continue to ensure pools are free of leaves and trash, and monitor their condition despite the closure.

Mr. Cracium informed the commission that the light equipment operator (LEO) was trained to operate tractors, loaders, and the backhoe, and is licensed to operate a forklift. Other responsibilities were said to include separating and loading trash and green waste into large dumpsters at the maintenance yard, and mowing tall, native grasses around the nature trails especially along walking paths to prevent the flora from encroaching.

Mr. Cracium confirmed for Commissioner Allen that green waste is taken from the maintenance yard by EDCO.

Chairperson Heiss thanked Mr. Cracium and ERD staff for all of their hard work in keeping the city's parks clean and beautiful.

Commissioner Spaseff congratulated Mr. Cracium on the announcement that he had achieved his bachelor's degree. He echoed Chairperson Heiss' comments and thanked the ERD staff for doing a great job keeping the parks in fine shape. He shared his excitement that LYS would be returning to the parks in the summer.

Commissioner Stacy Valdez shared her delight at seeing children return to play at the park. She shared that she grew up playing with LYS and loves to see the program still going strong.

Vice Chairperson Real shared that he often drives past the Mayfair Park baseball fields. He commended staff for keeping the fields in pristine condition even with the Mayfair Park Storm Water Capture Project in full swing.

Assistant Director Kevin Bright confirmed for Vice Chairperson Real that Long Beach City College's baseball team would no longer be utilizing Lisa Fernandez field.

The Commission received and filed the report on park maintenance.

#### **4. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 10**

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department

Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month March 2021 and a listing of upcoming activities for May 2021.

The Commission received and filed the report.

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter to Part-Time Employee of the Month – Destiny Smith – February 2021

#### ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Frost introduced the RCS department's newest intern, Sophia Bean. She shared that Sophia is a Lakewood resident, who graduated from Saint Joseph High School and is currently a recreation major at California State University Long Beach.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Vice Chairperson Kirk Real adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m. to May 12, 2021 at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary  
Recreation and Community Services Commission