



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
May 12, 2021

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Dave Allen.

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

ABSENT: Chairperson Winnie Heiss

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of April 14, 2021. A motion was made by Commissioner Allen and seconded by Commissioner Stacy Valdez 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 announcing that the Park Development Committee had convened on Thursday, May 6 to discuss the following three agenda items.

1. Staff presented recommendations for use of per capita funding provided by the State of California Prop 68 program and the Measure A program organized Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District. The committee approved staff's recommendation to use the voter-approved funding for the replacement of playground equipment in the tot lot play area at Biscailuz Park and the school-age and tot lot play area at Boyar Park. Additionally the committee asked that staff replace the Bloomfield Park school-age playground if the city was not awarded a competitive grant for that project. Should the city be awarded a competitive grant through the State's Prop 68 competitive grant opportunity then staff will replace the tot lot play equipment at Del Valle Park.
2. Secondly, the committee was asked to give staff direction as to the submission of a Measure A competitive grant. The committee directed staff to submit a competitive grant for a project at the Lakewood Equestrian Center.
3. Lastly the committee reviewed the facility rentals program at city parks. Upon recommendation, the hourly rate to rent the city's athletic fields, pools and activity rooms will increase by about 25% beginning July 1, 2021. As a note for the Commission, facility rental rates have not increased since 2008. Additionally, permit holders will be required to provide general commercial liability insurance with coverage of at least \$1 million per occurrence and \$2 million general aggregate. Lastly, the security deposit has been reduced to \$150 per rental since insurance is required. All changes will begin July 1, 2021.

Regarding L.A. County's Public Health protocols for hosting indoor and outdoor events, Ms. Frost reported that while the county is in the yellow tier of the Blueprint for a Safer Economy, many of

the protocols for private events require significant oversight for city staff and for event organizers. She informed the commission that the RCS Department would continue to refrain from permitting private rentals of recreation facilities by the general public until state and county health protocols loosen. It was said that neighboring cities, including Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, and Paramount were also refraining from such permitted use. Ms. Frost mentioned that while the protocols were prohibitive for the general public's use, TGIS, the city's exclusive concessionaire for The Centre, was hosting outdoor events for under 100 guests at Monte Verde Park. She noted that TGIS had not held any events to date, however, she shared that they were prepared to take on the responsibility of coordinating a safe and healthy experience for clients. Additionally, Ms. Frost shared that picnic shelters were available on a first-come, first-serve basis for use by up to three households coming together for an outdoor gathering.

It was reported that at a recent city council meeting, the Council approved the award of bid to abate and demolish several dilapidated structures at the Lakewood Equestrian Center. Ms. Frost shared that a project schedule would be provided to the department.

Next, Ms. Frost reported that the City of Lakewood and EDCO Waste Services were teaming up to sponsor a free disposal event. Residents can securely shred sensitive documents and safely dispose of unwanted e-waste and batteries. Residents can also get up to three free bags of mulch. The event is scheduled for Saturday, May 15 from 9 a.m. to noon in the parking lot behind City Hall and Iacoboni Library.

Ms. Frost announced that the Greater Lakewood Chamber of Commerce had partnered with Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, Lakewood Center, and the City of Lakewood to offer a drive-thru food giveaway event on Wednesday, May 19th from 9 a.m. to noon at Lakewood Center. Pre-registration is not required and the event is open to all members of the greater community.

The Commission was informed that they would later receive a report on programs and activities scheduled for the summer. Ms. Frost noted that included in the report was a note regarding the annual summer kick off meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 3 outdoors at Monte Verde Park. She respectfully notified the Commission that their attendance at the training would be limited. It was said that due to COVID-19 restrictions, staff requests that the Commission attend only the opening session of the training. Ms. Frost requested that the chair of the Commission provide an official greeting to the staff. She asked that immediately following introductions and announcements, the Commission proceed to exit the park so that the training staff can maintain physical distancing and adhere to the maximum number of guests allowed for an outdoor gathering.

Regarding the Memorial Day Ceremony, Ms. Frost announced that L.A. County Public Health had given approval for the city's plan for an in-person event. It was said that attendees would be asked to wear masks and maintain social distancing. She noted that there would be a ticket reservation system employed for designated seating. It was said that the event would feature two quartets of the Golden Sands Chorus, the Color Guard from Lakewood High School, usual representatives from Lakewood veterans groups, and a trumpeter for Taps. A keynote speaker has yet to be

confirmed. Ms. Frost announced that publicity for the event would begin once the reservation system was ready. She asked the commission to inform their secretary if they would like to reserve seats.

REPORTS:

1. Human Services Agency Report

Community Services Manager Nancy Hitt introduced Darren Dunaway, Associate Director of the Human Services Association. Mr. Dunaway thanked the commission for allowing him to present. He then displayed slides and provided the commission with an overview of the programs and services this agency offers to the Lakewood community. Services were said to include senior services such as an Alzheimer's Day Care Resource Center (ADCRC), home based care, homemaker employment, care management programs, a Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP), linkages, telephone reassurance, home delivered meals, congregate meals, and Census outreach. Mr. Dunaway provided in depth information on each service provided as detailed in the slideshow.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff thanked Mr. Dunaway for his presentation. He mentioned that he was not aware of the many services the Human Services Association offered to seniors. He shared that the commission had recently assisted with distributing meals to seniors during the Valentine's Day drive through event, and mentioned that he continues to assist with the packaging and delivering of meals to Lakewood seniors on weekly basis. He added that the seniors he delivered to were very appreciative for the program, and noted that he was impressed with the variety and quality of the meals offered.

Mr. Dunaway confirmed for Commissioner Allen that program funding was not affected during the pandemic as the program received a stimulus check from the government.

Mr. Dunaway informed Vice Chairperson Real that the Alzheimer Day Care Resource Center would be reopening circa September 1.

The Commission received and filed the report on human services agency.

2. Lakewood Equestrian Center and Open Space Regional Master Plan

Ms. Frost reported that the Conservation Corps of Long Beach authored a grant application submitted to the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) to develop a master plan for the Lakewood Equestrian Center and surrounding open space, inclusive of Rynerson Park, the abutting San Gabriel River trails and the Campfire Demonstration Parcels located north of Carson Street in Long Beach. She shared that at their February 2020 meeting, the RMC board unanimously approved the allocation of \$342,320 from Proposition 68 funding to develop a master plan for the areas named.

Ms. Frost then introduced to the commission Kayla Kelly-Slatten, Grant and Project Coordinator for the Lakewood Equestrian Center and Open Space Regional Master Plan Development, Monica Carlos with the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI), and

Glen Dake, Landscape Architect for the project. She shared that Ms. Kelly-Slatten and Mr. Dake would present an update to the Commission regarding the master plan development.

Ms. Kelly-Slatten thanked the commission for the opportunity to present. She shared slides and provided information regarding the Lakewood Equestrian Center and Open Space Regional Master Plan. Ms. Kelly-Slatten explained that the objective of the project was to develop a Master Plan for the Lakewood Equestrian Center, Rynerson Park, and nearby San Gabriel River Trail using a community-based engagement process focusing on recreational access for disadvantaged communities, best management practices of open space, and water quality and conservation. She shared that the funding amount was \$312,015 and stated that the project was on target for completion in June of 2021. The master plan objectives were said to be access and connectivity, sustainable site planning and natural resource use, expansion of water conservation efforts, habitat protection and mitigation, disadvantaged community outreach, and partnerships and collaboration. Project partners were said to include the Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB), LANI, the City of Lakewood, and DakeLuna Consultants. Ms. Kelly-Slatten explained that the opportunities presented throughout the master plan process focused on multiuse, outdoor access, and safety and security.

The commission was then provided with a brief overview of the stakeholder engagement and project activities. Ms. Kelly-Slatten shared that project staff had hosted seven Project Steering Committee Meetings and four Technical Advisory Committee Meetings. It was said that two community meetings were held in December of 2020 and two more were scheduled later in the month. A community survey was said to have been completed over a six week timeframe, garnering 1,170 responses, and it was said that three community focus groups were conducted with Boy Scout parents, neighborhood watch, and equestrian users. Special project meetings were also held with the Watershed Conservation Authority, the LA County Parks and Recreation Department, and concessionaires. Topics discussed at the Public Steering Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee meetings were said to be opportunities and constraints, accessibility, circulation and security, grading, drainage, and stormwater capture, connectivity and barriers, and land-use organization.

Ms. Kelly-Slatten shared that the next steps were to host a youth focus group, continue with senior engagement, host two additional community meetings, review a draft master plan and prepare for a master plan submission. She explained that once the master plan is approved, the project would seek competitive grant opportunities to implement the master plan over a 20 to 30 year timeframe.

Mr. Dake thanked the commission for the opportunity to present. He shared slides and provided information on safety and image improvements as detailed in the slideshow. Mr. Dake explained that goals of the project were as follows:

- Improve security at the equestrian center and on the trails by supporting natural surveillance and horse watching,
- To develop history, nature and “rural-life” uses on the equestrian center site,

- To work for a better fence and conduct fence maintenance on the LA County Flood Control channels,
- To install new area lighting and improve area lighting throughout,
- To move horse boarding and concessions to a safer center and move rings to a visible perimeter, and
- To improve fence and gates to promote day-time access and reduce conflicts between visitors and horses.

He shared there was also an opportunity to install a covered arena to replace the current arena. Mr. Dake discussed land use and circulation and displayed slides with aerial maps of the equestrian center. He informed the commission of the proposed ideas for each area. Ideas were said to include reorganization of the parking lot, development of group picnic areas, improvements to signs, and improvements to grading and drainage conditions, stormwater treatment, and management of stormwater sediment. A Camp Shiwaka Master Plan slide was shared with the commission detailing the master plan vision for the camp. Plans were said to include outdoor education areas and a bike stop/rest area.

Vice Chairperson Real thanked Ms. Kelly-Slatten and Mr. Dake for their comprehensive report.

Commissioner Spaseff shared that he participated in the recent community outreach survey. He described the equestrian center as a great asset to the city that can be embellished and made better. He expressed that he loved the idea of the entertainment area and suggested it be a combination of simple and elegant to accommodate a variety of events. He mentioned it might help to draw new people to the equestrian center. He also liked the idea of a native garden and suggested it include educational aspects that could make it a field trip site for local schoolchildren.

Commissioner Valdez expressed her delight over the idea of having an additional space at which weddings could be held in addition to The Centre. She shared that she loved the idea of incorporating wildlife signs on the trails to educate the public on the various types of wildlife and plants.

Commissioner Allen asked if it would be an achievable project with Southern California Edison (SCE) maintaining land restrictions within their easement. Ms. Frost informed him that while it may not be easy, the Technical Advisory Committee includes a representative from SCE, which has enabled staff to receive answers to questions and advice from them.

Vice Chairperson Real mentioned that enhancing signage would be very helpful and shared he was glad to see it was part of the plan. He suggested a name change for the equestrian center to better encompass all that it will have to offer at the completion of the project.

Commissioner Spaseff suggested that a handout to accompany the slideshow would be a great

addition when presenting the master plan to City Council.

The Commission received and filed the report on the Lakewood Equestrian Center and Open Space Regional Master Plan.

3. Summer Programs and Catalog Preview

Community Services Manager Nancy Hitt reviewed the many programs, classes, and events offered for summer by the Recreation and Community Services Department as included in the written report. Ms. Hitt shared that over 275 classes would be advertised in the summer recreation catalog. Additionally, she shared that new in-person summer camps including Beginning Golf, Flag Football, Mini-Hawk Multi-Sport and Skyhawks Soccer would take place at Monte Verde Park. It was said that the Summer Concert series would kick off with two drive-in concerts at Lakewood Center on Thursdays, June 17 and 24. Details regarding the concerts were provided as noted in the written report. In July, she shared that the concert series would continue with six outdoor concerts, at a location to be determined. The commission was informed that staff was prepared to offer live outdoor performances in line with Public Health guidelines. It was said that option one was to return concerts to Del Valle Park if restrictions are loosened; option two, with tighter restrictions, was to hold concerts at Mayfair Park on Lisa Fernandez Field for a more controlled environment with pre-registration requirements.

Regarding family programs, Ms. Hitt reported that Fun-Tastic Family Nights were scheduled for June 25 and July 30. Regarding the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) summer season, Ms. Hitt noted that teams would be organized at each park with nearly 1,000 youth participating citywide. It was said that the 2021-2022 season would mark Lakewood Youth Sports' 65th year; to celebrate this milestone, staff will coordinate a closing day event similar in scope to what has been typically available at the annual opening day celebration. Important league dates were provided as detailed in the written report.

Ms. Hitt reminded the commission that the impacts of canceled recreation programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic led to the creation of Camp Circle, a revised version of the city's popular Summer Day Camp Program. She explained that Camp Circle would be offered at Mayfair Park, Palms Park and the Lakewood Youth Center for up to 12 participants at each site. Masks are required of both staff and participants and sanitization and hand washing will occur numerous times throughout the day. She shared that staff was working on a varied schedule of fun activities throughout the day while ensuring staff and participant safety.

Next, Ms. Hitt reported that Mayfair Pool was scheduled to open for the 2021 summer season on Tuesday, June 1 for pre-summer swim lessons. On Saturday, June 19 weekday programming will begin. Programs were listed as noted in the written report. It was said that new aquatic programming had been added on Sundays, featuring water aerobics and lap swim for adults 50 years and older. Program registration for summer activities will be accepted online beginning May 22. Additionally, Ms. Hitt announced that the Lakewood Family YMCA would again offer aquatic programming at McCormick Pool during the summer.

Lakewood residents will be afforded aquatic opportunities at McCormick Pool at the same rates as YMCA members. It was said that wading pools were not yet allowed per Public Health protocols.

Finally, Ms. Hitt shared that staff would participate in a slate of organized trainings during the summer season including Basic Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED classes, aquatics staff training, facility staff meetings, Virtual Bloodborne Pathogens Certification Training, new recreation leader training, and the Summer Kick Off for recreation leaders.

Commissioner Spaseff thanked staff for doing a great job during a difficult time. He shared his excitement to see programs evolving back to the usual events. Ms. Hitt confirmed for him that residents prefer in person classes over virtual, adding that in person classes have better participation.

Vice Chairperson Real expressed his excitement to see plans for a summer concert series and for the return of LYS. Ms. Frost confirmed for him that fees for contract classes were set by the instructors. She mentioned there were no plans to increase fees at the time.

The Commission received and filed the report on summer programs and catalog preview.

4. Capital Improvement Projects at Recreation Facilities

Community Services Manager Alex Bauman displayed slides and provided information on capital improvement projects at recreation facilities as noted in the written report. Mr. Bauman reported that capital improvements are projects of large size, fixed nature, or long life, which provide new or additional public facilities or services. Also included in this broad definition of the term are major replacements, reconstructions and procurement of large equipment such as furniture, vehicles, and heating and electrical systems. Mr. Bauman reported that after months of study and review, the Lakewood City Council adopted a \$4.2 million Capital Improvement Program (CIP) focused on critical city facility needs. This program was said to be a combination of infrastructure renewal and replacement, small and large projects, and an opportunity to study the future needs for Palms, Del Valle and Bolivar Parks and the Nixon Maintenance Yard. The commission was informed that this ambitious program was made possible by Lakewood voters who approved Lakewood's Measure L sales tax proposal, a portion of which was intended to be used for capital improvements. It was said that the initial appropriation of funding was programmed to address critical infrastructure needs.

Mr. Bauman announced that he was representing the RCS Department on the Capital Improvement Projects Committee headed up by the Public Works Department. He shared that he is involved in monthly committee meetings, project site visits, and available to work on various assignments or tasks with which Public Works needs assistance. He shared that he provides updates to RCS Department staff as well as feedback, or concerns, on specific projects during the meetings.

Next, Mr. Bauman displayed slides and provided updates on current projects, upcoming

projects, and completed projects as noted in the written report. Projects included the Water Capture Project at Mayfair Park, the San Martin Park Project, Rynerson Park picnic shelters, Pillars of the Community art piece at The Centre, electrical infrastructure improvements, HVAC improvements, roof improvements, Weingart Senior Center improvements, roller shades at The Centre, Civic Center ADA doors, and the Mayfair Park picnic shelter re-roof.

Lastly, Mr. Bauman informed the commission that Public Works staff had created a Capital Improvement Projects website which allows department members to get up-to-date information on CIP projects, timelines, budgets and more. He described the website as a very useful tool.

Commissioner Allen expressed his appreciation for the passing of Measure L. He mentioned that the residents would be very happy with the improvements.

Vice Chairperson Real echoed Commissioner Allen's comments. He stated that many facilities have aged and continue to get adequate use. He shared his excitement at the idea of upgrading and improving park infrastructure, and mentioned that it would make the residents happy.

The Commission received and filed the report on ~~park maintenance~~.

5. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 11

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month April 2021 and a listing of upcoming activities for June 2021.

The Commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter to Part-Time Employee of the Month – Jeremiah Skipps – March 2021

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Vice Chairperson Kirk Real adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m. to June 9, 2021 at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission