



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
October 10, 2018

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:00 p.m. by Chairperson Dave Allen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Delarosa

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of September 12, 2018. A motion was made by Commissioner Winnie Heiss and seconded by Commissioner Kirk Real. Minutes were approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Assistant Director Kevin Bright began his remarks by expressing his gratitude to the Commissioners for their attendance at the College Fair on Tuesday, October 9. He mentioned that Community Services Supervisor, Kelly Garnetti, did a fantastic job with her first edition of College Fair. Over 450 attendees and 74 schools were said to have attended the event.

Mr. Bright went on to report on upcoming programs and events. On Monday, October 15, at 10 a.m., the Older Adults Benefit Fair will be held at the Weingart Senior Center. Information will be provided to attendees related to Medicare concerns, and various health insurance representatives will be present to help understand the best choice for each individual. On Tuesday, October 16, also at Weingart Senior Center, there will be a free flu shot clinic from 1 to 3 p.m. Finally, on Wednesday, October 17, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at Mayfair Park, there will be a Head-to-Toe Health Clinic provided by Lakewood Regional Medical Center in conjunction with the Recreation and Community Services Department. Seniors, 55 years and older, will receive free screenings for blood pressure, body mass index, bone density, cholesterol, thyroid function, and glucose.

It was reported that the 26th Annual Lollipop Lane Holiday Boutique will be held at Mayfair Park on Saturday, October 20, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be over 115 arts-and-crafts booths with a variety of items for sale. Parking will be available in the parking lot at Mayfair Park and city hall. A shuttle service will run from City Hall to Mayfair Park at 15-minute intervals between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. It is anticipated that over 3,500 people will attend this popular event. Then, as always, Halloween carnivals at eight parks, will continue to provide a safe environment for Lakewood's costumed-candy-collectors on October 31. Four parks; Bolivar, Del Valle, Palms, and San Martin, will also feature haunted houses in addition to carnival games and stage contests. Mayfair and Bolivar Parks will also have inflatable attractions for a small cost. Carnivals were said to run from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Finally, it was reported that registration for the Project Shepherd Holiday Program will be held from Monday, November 5 to Sunday, November 18 at both the Palms Community Center and the Burns Community Center. Around 350 families are expected to request assistance. Teddy Bear trees will be distributed in November to all parks, community centers, city hall, and throughout the community. Approximately 1000 youth are expected to be provided gifts through the Teddy Bear program.

Parks Superintendent Philip Lopez provided an update on Rynerson Park, stating that the new restroom facility would be delivered in early December. He informed the Commission that a contract was recently awarded to First Class Plumbing for the installation of a new sewer line that will support the restroom facilities. It was said that the southerly pedestrian bridge along the West San Gabriel River would be temporarily fenced off while the sewer line is installed. Mr. Lopez then provided an update on Bolivar Park, stating that the turf was coming in nicely. He reported that, unfortunately, due to colder weather, the turf would not grow as plush as it would during warmer summer months. He assured the Commission that by next summer the turf and the new t-ball field would be in pristine condition for children to play on. Mr. Lopez went on to provide the Commission with an update on the Burns Community Center. It was stated that staff would soon be finished with phase I of the landscape project. He reported that six golden trumpet trees were planted near the rear entrance of the building and that several crepe myrtle trees were planted along the center median, near the rear parking area. For phase II, Environmental Resources staff, along with the Water Department staff, worked to dig out the beginning of a dry creek bed. He explained that a variety of stones would be placed aesthetically in and around the dry creek bed as well as drought tolerant plants and materials. It was reported that a drip irrigation system would also be installed. Mr. Lopez informed the Commission that staff was looking to complete both phases by the end of October.

Director Valarie Frost reported that at a recent City Council meeting, Council Members approved a two-year agreement with Thank Goodness It's Sofia (TGIS) to provide catering and concessions services at Monte Verde Park. The concessionaire, whom currently serves as the exclusive concessionaire for The Centre, has been permitted advance reservation privilege for private events at Monte Verde Park. It was reported that TGIS would take reservations at their office for events no more than 18 months in advance. The days granted to them include the first and third Saturday; the second and fourth Sunday; and all Fridays within each month. It was stated that dates reserved for City and City-sponsored events, scheduled for the benefit of the public, are exempt from their use. In consideration, the concessionaire will pay the City a flat rate of 20% for the gross sales of food and non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages. Ms. Frost informed the Commission that the primary driver for entering into an agreement with TGIS was not financial, however staff predicts that the City could realize about \$19,000 more per year, with a conservative estimate of four TGIS events per month. Ms. Frost pointed out that permission to provide alcohol at Monte Verde Park was exclusively granted to TGIS, and that permittees who reserve the facility, opting to cater the event themselves, are not allowed to provide alcohol at their event. She informed the Commission that staff would provide a report to the Park Development Committee in 6 months as to the progress of this venture.

Ms. Frost went on to report that the Council had also approved the First Amendment to the rental agreement with Lakewood Meals on Wheels. After a year-and-a-half of construction, the Burns

Community Center remodel project is nearly complete and Meals on Wheels will move back to the facility on Friday, October 12. Building improvements required staff to amend the agreement. Ms. Frost stated that the newly remodeled kitchen affords ample space for meal preparation, therefore the assembly room, which is granted in the current agreement is no longer space that will be permitted to Meals on Wheels. Additionally, it was reported that the city purchased a new steam table for food preparation. The First Amendment formally indicates that the City owns the equipment and is responsible for basic maintenance.

Ms. Frost then highlighted a few calendar items for the Commission. A Park Development Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 22 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Executive Board Room. On the agenda is Rynerson Park Improvements and the Lakewood Equestrian Center Contract Renewal. On Tuesday, October 30, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Executive Board Room, there is a Council Community Promotions Committee meeting scheduled. On that agenda is the 2019 Civic Center Block Party. RCS Staff will make a presentation to the Council on a revised layout and event format that aims to provide cost savings. On Monday, November 5, department staff has organized a Community Assistance Focus Group. Ms. Frost explained that the objective of the meeting is to gather various agencies who provide services to low-income residents and homeless individuals in our community. She reported that social service agencies, community service organizations and City staff would share information regarding the programs and services they each provide.

Moving forward, Ms. Frost announced that it was not too late to purchase a field sign or register a softball team for this year's Project Shepherd softball tournament scheduled for Saturday, November 17, at San Martin Park. She informed the Commission that their secretary would assist them should they be interested in purchasing a field sign or registering a team. Ms. Frost concluded her announcements with a final update regarding the Burns Community Center. She explained that although she had previously asked Commissioners to reserve Saturday, October 27, for a potential ribbon-cutting event, the event will be held on either Monday, November 12, or Saturday, November 3. She reported that once the date was confirmed, the secretary would notify the Commission.

Commissioner Kirk Real shared that he had recently driven past the Burns Community Center and decided to drive into the lot to take a glance at the progress. He stated that the landscaping looked nice and sharp, and pointed out that the trees planted near the sidewalk leading to the front entrance were very nice. He expressed that he was very impressed with the progress and he thanked Park Superintendent Philip Lopez and the Environmental Resources Division staff for all of their hard work.

Ms. Frost then confirmed for Vice Chairperson Ted Spaseff that the city would block out dates available for reservation by TGIS, and that TGIS would take care of making their own reservations. Vice Chairperson Spaseff then commented on the turf renovation at Bolivar Park expressing that he was very impressed with the landscaping at the park, stating that it looks one-hundred percent better. He then went on to comment on the College Fair, mentioning that it was a fantastic event, stating that staff did a wonderful job. He shared that he was able to speak with several of the college representatives at the fair and that he heard nothing but positive feedback from them all. He concluded his comments by expressing sentiments about the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS)

program, mentioning that he has recently attended several of his grandson's flag football games, and commending staff for providing such a great program for the youth.

Commissioner Winnie Heiss commented stating that the College Fair was very well organized. She mentioned that it was apparent that every college representative in the room was very excited to be there. She thanked staff for such a well-organized and wonderful event.

Chairperson Dave Allen also shared his sentiments about the College Fair stating that the event was perfect. He shared that he too was able to speak with several vendors at the fair and mentioned that he also received great feedback. He commended Community Services Supervisor Kelly Garnetti, stating that she did a marvelous job at her first attempt at the College Fair. He then thanked Community Services Manager Chuck Martucci for creating this event many years ago.

Commissioner Ben Delarosa also attended the College Fair. He expressed that it was his second time attending this event and stated that he really enjoyed the bigger venue. He suggested that next year staff provide the attendees with a tote bag in which to carry the many flyers they receive. He concluded his comments by sharing that while on his running route, he noticed that the trees that were planted at Palms Park, along Norwalk Boulevard, were growing in very well. He expressed that they were a great addition to what used to be a huge empty space.

REPORTS:

1. Park Maintenance Program Annual Report

Environmental Resources Supervisor Mike Cracium displayed slides and highlighted a few items from the written report. He reported that in May, two baseball fields were laser leveled, one at Del Valle Park, and another at Mae Boyar Park. He showed slides with photos of staff using a sod cutter to create a perfect arc to help with the transition from the dirt to the grass. He also displayed slides with photos of staff training on a stand-up aerator. He explained that these aerators were used all throughout the city, in narrow areas where the larger aerator does not fit.

Mr. Cracium went on to report that in early June, staff held a ball diamond training to enforce watering and dragging of the ball diamonds. He showed slides of ERD Supervisor Mike McDade demonstrating proper ball diamond dragging technique.

The Light Equipment Operator (LEO) was said to be a unique assignment, playing an important role in park maintenance programming. Mr. Cracium explained that the LEO is responsible for aerating and fertilizing sports fields during spring and summer to promote turf vigor and health. This year the LEO has spread 2,500 pounds of grass seed and over 10,000 pounds of fertilizer throughout city parks.

Mr. Cracium concluded his report by stating that Lakewood parks continue to be extremely popular and highly visited by residents of all ages. It was explained that heavy use of athletic fields, game courts and playgrounds increases the demand for park maintenance service and staff. The Environmental Resources Division's park maintenance branch is proud of its role in the success of public recreation programs and is committed to continuing to provide a safe and pleasant experience to all who visit.

Mr. Cracium confirmed for Chairperson Dave Allen that the city was devising a plan to repair or replace its aging irrigation system. He informed the Commission that staff was currently attempting to transition to smart clocks. He explained that this system was already in place at both Bloomfield and Monte Verde Park, and mentioned that staff planned to implement the same system at Biscailuz, Bolivar, and Cherry Cove Parks in the near future.

2. Adaptive Recreation and Special Olympics Annual Report

Community Services Manager Chuck Martucci introduced Community Services Supervisor Joseph Vasquez to the Commission. He stated that Mr. Vasquez would be providing the report on Adaptive Recreation and Special Olympics. Mr. Vasquez began his report by stating that since January, the adaptive recreation program has served 225 adaptive individuals, and the Special Olympics program has served 807 athletes. Both the Adaptive Recreation and Special Olympics programs continue to be held at Bloomfield Park.

Mr. Vasquez reported that the Adaptive Recreation Program (ARP) meets every Tuesday, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Recreation staff plan, implement, and supervise weekly activities for participants in the drop-in program. Activities include arts and crafts, athletics, life skills workshops, special events, and small trips to local businesses. Life skills workshops were said to include a class on handling money, which is an invaluable skill for adaptive participants. The program was said to be free, aside from a small fee for special parties and field trips. Additional program support comes from the Lakewood DASH Transit program, which provides free transportation to and from the program for Lakewood resident participants.

Mr. Vasquez then presented slides with photos of ARP and Special Olympic participants enjoying fun activities such as crafting, bowling, and playing in the arcade. He also showed photos of participants enjoying two newly added events, the Dinner and a Movie Night event, and the ARP Pool Party at McCormick Pool, followed by an end of summer barbeque. Finally, the brand new “End of Summer Luau” dance was reported to have been an inclusive opportunity. Lakewood’s contract Hula class came to Bloomfield Park to give a special performance to the ARP participants, and even led an instructional class on how to “dance with your hands”.

The report continued with a presentation of photos of the Lakewood Special Olympics Dirtbags Softball Team in Seattle, Washington, where they won a silver medal in the Special Olympics U.S.A. Games. When not competing in the tournament, the Lakewood Dirtbags were able to enjoy some sightseeing while in Seattle. Mr. Vasquez displayed slides of the Olympians visiting the Space Needle, taking a stroll through Pike Place Market, attending a baseball game, and experiencing the many sites of the Emerald City. Photos were also presented of the Dirtbags being honored for their silver medal win at several different events throughout the city.

Mr. Vasquez concluded his report stating that Lakewood staff had organized its annual LAMP/LCEA Special Olympics Fundraiser on Friday, September 14. The event raised nearly \$4,000 to purchase new equipment for Lakewood teams, and the athletes enjoyed dinner and spirited sports competition against City staff and City Council Members in the sports of

basketball, softball, and bocce.

Commissioner Heiss commented stating that it almost brings her to tears to see what staff has done for the individuals in this program. She expressed her appreciation to all staff involved in the program for their hard work and dedication.

Commissioner Real echoed Commissioner Heiss's sentiments. He expressed his admiration for Mr. Vasquez's willingness to step up and accept the responsibility for this program with the same high level of enthusiasm as his predecessor, Mr. Martucci.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff expressed that he is extremely proud of the city's Adaptive Recreation and Special Olympics Programs. He stated that the impact goes beyond the individuals who are a part of the program, mentioning how much of a relief it must be for the parents of these adaptive individuals to be able to provide a safe and trusted environment for them to play and thrive. He expressed his appreciation for the enthusiasm of the staff involved in the program.

Chairperson Allen thanked both Mr. Vasquez and Mr. Martucci for all of their hard work, stating that Mr. Martucci created a legacy when he started this program many years ago.

3. Activity ZONE Annual Report

Community Services Manager Alex Bauman began his report stating that the department's Activity Zone, a free drop-in program for elementary school-aged children and pre-teens, continues to provide recreation activities after school and during school vacation periods. During the school year, the program was said to be offered at eight city parks, Monday through Friday, from 3 to 5 p.m., with a flexible schedule to accommodate early dismissal days, and holidays. During the summer months and vacation periods, programs were said to be offered from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Recreation fun includes playground games, arts and crafts, and homework help.

Mr. Bauman reported that an activity schedule is produced for the fall, winter vacation period, spring, spring vacation period, and summer vacation period. He informed the Commission that Activity Zone flyers provided throughout the year were included in the report for their review. The flyers were said to highlight daily activities offered at city parks and special events that may be of interest to children and families.

After-school programs provide a valuable resource to working Lakewood families and for children looking for fun and social opportunities outside of the home. Mr. Bauman reported that awareness of the department's free after-school program is paramount, therefore a strong marketing campaign includes an online component where parents can view and print activity calendars for each season. Staff was said to distribute the schedules to Lakewood's elementary schools, and flyers are also available at City Hall, recreation facilities, and at Lakewood's two libraries.

Mr. Bauman reported that while we did see site specific increases at Mayfair and Palms Parks, the Activity Zone program as a whole in 2017-2018 did see a 13% decrease in attendance

from the 2016-2017 total of 32,677. He mentioned that attendance for 2017-2018 school year was provided in the table accompanying the report.

Mr. Bauman confirmed for Vice Chairperson Spaseff that the city does in fact promote the ZONE program at all Lakewood schools by means of delivering flyers, which are distributed at the start of each season throughout the year.

Commissioner Real inquired as to why the attendance numbers drop significantly at Mayfair Park during the winter vacation period. Mr. Bauman explained that many of the children who attend the school near Mayfair do not live in the area and therefore they do not attend the ZONE program during the vacation periods.

4. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 4

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month September 2018 and a listing of upcoming activities for November 2018.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letters to Co-Part-Time Employees of the Month, Madison May and Priscilla Reyes – August 2018.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Dave Allen adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m. to November 14, 2018 at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission