



Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
March 13, 2019

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Ted Spaseff.

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

ABSENT: Commissioner Ben Delarosa

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of Feb. 13, 2019. A motion was made by Commissioner Kirk Real and seconded by Commissioner Winnie Heiss. Minutes were approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Parks Superintendent Philip Lopez reported that a new information kiosk was built at Home Run Dog Park on Saturday, March 9. Mr. Lopez explained that Lakewood resident and Boy Scout in Troop 67, Liam Kennelly, designed and built the kiosk in order to fulfil the requirements of becoming an Eagle Scout. Liam gathered funds for materials to complete this project by reaching out to family, friends, and dog park visitors for cash donations that he deposited into a Go-Fund-Me account. He also organized a recycling event. Environmental Resources staff added decomposed granite to the kiosk area on Monday, March 11 to give the entire project a clean look.

Next, Mr. Lopez informed the commission that the contractor was scheduled to complete construction on the center bridge at Rynerson Park in approximately two weeks. He mentioned that after the bridge was complete ERD staff would work to renovate the turf at the park. He stated work would commence in about one month and would include fine grading, irrigation repair work, and seed and toppe. In four to six months, it was said that staff would complete a light motor seeding and toppe for a second time.

Assistant Director Kevin Bright provided information regarding programming and upcoming events. He stated as clocks changed over the past weekend, it signals, in many ways, the unofficial kickoff to spring. With more daylight hours in the evenings, parks are sure to see more activity. As such, park hours have been extended, with facilities closing an hour later at 6 p.m. if no field or room permits require staffing, in which case staff may be present until permits conclude. Mr. Bright reported that Arbor Week was in full effect, with performances scheduled at all Lakewood elementary schools from March 11-14. This year's theme was said to be based on the movie *Spiderman: Into the Spiderverse*.

On Saturday, March 30, Mother-Son Mayhem will take place at Monte Verde Park from 5 to 8 p.m., while the ever popular Daddy-Daughter Date Night will take place the following Friday, April 5, from 6 to 9 p.m. at The Centre. Both events will feature a dinner, and contests with prizes.

Staff have marketed a “glow” theme for each this year, creating a lit-up experience with glow sticks, glow necklaces, glow centerpieces and strategically placed up-lighting to create a fun mood. The events are titled Ready, Set, Glow for Mother-Son Mayhem and Glam and Glow for Daddy-Daughter Date Night.

Next, Mr. Bright informed the commission that the annual Lakewood Youth Sports Coaches Recognition Dinner and Angels game was originally scheduled for Saturday, April 6; however, due to a change in game time, it was switched to Saturday, April 20. He noted that the recognition had been moved to ensure a well-attended and appropriately appreciative evening for the volunteers, and mentioned the event would take place at Palms Park in lieu of the Lakewood Youth Center. The commission was asked to RSVP to their secretary if interested in attending.

Next, Director Valarie Frost reported that in a continuing effort to connect residents in the Palms Park neighborhood, the RCS Department had hosted two Friday night outdoor movie events, the first was held on Friday, February 1, and the second on Friday, March 8. The event was said to have taken place on the western portion of the park, creating an opportunity for residents in the area to acquaint themselves with the park facility. Public Safety Department staff and community service organizations were on hand to interact with residents. Ms. Frost pointed out that providing wholesome activities for families would help to invigorate the park and allow the grounds to be utilized as intended. She noted that a spring car show series would be featured on the second Friday of the month in April, May and June.

Next, Ms. Frost reported that following direction from the Park Development Committee, which convened on Tuesday, Feb. 26, the City of Lakewood was accepting proposals for the improvement, operation and maintenance of the Lakewood Equestrian Center. The current contract terminates on Monday, Sept. 30, 2019, and the city was said to be seeking an experienced and qualified concessionaire to manage the full service equestrian boarding and training operation at the site. A request for proposals has been circulated, targeting publications in which prospective concessionaires might seek opportunities, and a schedule has been posted demonstrating requirements of the proposal. Two site visits were said to have been made available for proposers to visit the equestrian center on Saturday, March 9, and an alternate on Wednesday, March 13, both taking place at 11 a.m. Ms. Frost informed the commission that following submissions, a committee of staff, Park Development Committee members and the RCS Commission Chairperson will be evaluating proposals and interviewing the top candidates in hope of finding the ideal fit for both the concessionaire and the City of Lakewood.

It was reported that at a recent City Council meeting, council members approved a contract with Fleming Construction to remove the urban stream and the pillars of community in front of The Centre. Ms. Frost noted that the Legends of Lakewood and the contents of the pillars would be reimagined at an undetermined location within The Centre. Construction would commence on Monday, April 1.

Ms. Frost then provided updates from a recent Council Study Session. She informed the commission that following the series of Budget Advisory Group meetings, the City Manager requested permission to contract with Fairbanks, Maslin, Maullin and Metz (FM3) for public opinion surveys and community outreach to engage the broader community on what city services

and needs are of most importance. He also requested authorization to contract with Lew Edwards Group to get the community's feedback on service priorities in a statistically organized way. She reported that council authorized the city manager to proceed with agreements with both firms

Ms. Frost concluded her report by highlighting a few upcoming calendar items for the commission; the next Park Development Committee Meeting was said to be scheduled for Thursday, March 14, at 6 p.m. in the Executive Board Room. On the agenda is the proposed second story use of the Burns Community Center. The Community Promotions Committee will meet on Monday, March 18, at 3 p.m. in the Pan Am Room to discuss the Proposed Fireworks Display for 2020. The CIP Council Committee Meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 25, at 5:30 p.m. in the Executive Board Room, and lastly, Lakewood Celebrates and the Mayoral Transition will take place on Tuesday, March 26 beginning 5:45 p.m.

Commissioner Kirk Real congratulated Parks Superintendent Philip Lopez and the ERD staff on a wonderful job on the landscape at the Burns Community Center. He mentioned it greatly enhances the drive down Clark Avenue. He shared that he also had the chance to attend the recent Park Development Committee Meeting and complimented staff on their superb presentation.

Chairperson Dave Allen mentioned that the request for proposals for the Lakewood Equestrian Center was impeccable. He applauded the staff involved with putting it together.

Vice Chairperson Ted Spaseff shared that he was in attendance at the recent Lakewood Youth Hall of Fame Banquet and commended staff on a job well done, stating the event was excellent as always. He shared that he also had the chance to attend the Retired NBA Players Association Basketball Clinic that took place on Thursday, March 7, at Bloomfield Park, provided to Lakewood's Special Olympians, saying it was a great program, the participants loved it, and it was a fun and exciting time for all. Lastly, he commented on the Lakewood 5K run stating that staff did a great job coordinating the event. He expressed his appreciation for Commissioner Ben Delarosa for participating in the five-mile run and representing the RCS Commission well.

Commissioner Winnie Heiss expressed her appreciation for all of the wonderful programs the city has to offer, stating that it is a privilege to live in the City of Lakewood.

Chairperson Allen welcomed two guests who were in the audience, Remy Dupart and Sarah Gorgano, both whom are students majoring in recreation at California State University Long Beach.

REPORTS:

1. Volunteer Program Update

Community Services Supervisor Caitlin Carioso provided information regarding the many ways that Lakewood's volunteers are celebrated during National Volunteer Month. She noted that many of the Recreation and Community Services Department's programs could not be done without the assistance of hundreds of volunteers who give their time, energy and effort to help others.

The report was supported by a slide presentation, and highlighted statistical information on the number of volunteers and number of volunteer hours for each program. Programs included: Lakewood Youth Sports, Lakewood Volunteer Day, Lakewood Meals on Wheels; specialty classes, and the nutrition program at the Weingart Senior Center; Tech Talk, and the Book Club at the Burns Community Center; Teens in Lakewood Care; the Junior Life Guard program, and Project Shepherd.

Ms. Cariaso reported that volunteers would be celebrated at a few events in April. The 24th annual Lakewood Volunteer Day is scheduled for Saturday, April 13. Volunteers will be treated to lunch at the Youth Center after spending the morning working at project sites throughout the city. The Older Adult Volunteer Recognition Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, April 17. This event recognizes volunteers from various organizations and will honor Jerry and Georgia Wendt as the 2018 Older Adult Volunteers of the Year. Lastly, Lakewood Youth Sports volunteer coaches will be thanked at a recognition night that includes lunch at Palms Park and a trip to an Angels' baseball game on Saturday, April 20. Statistical information from 2018 was provided for each of these programs.

Ms. Cariaso concluded her report stating that volunteers have put in countless hours to enhance many of the city's programs, and have provided a positive impact to the health and well-being of the community.

Chairperson Allen commented that Lakewood is blessed to have so many volunteers.

The Commission received and filed the report.

2. The Centre Operations Annual Report

Community Services Supervisor Gay Givens provided information regarding the operation of The Centre over the past year, as noted in the written report. She pointed out that in 2018, approximately 1,900 events and 220 classes were held at The Centre, recreation classes generated over \$64,387 in gross revenue, and Thank Goodness It's Sofia (TGIS), the concessionaire at The Centre, paid over \$309,000 in rent to the city. TGIS continues to cater to a variety of events and receive high ratings on overall customer satisfaction by clients.

Ms. Givens informed the commission that the The Centre team continues to work closely with TGIS to maintain the facility's position in the marketplace. Last year, TGIS held two Chef's Table events at The Centre. This event was said to be a free tasting for prospective new clients and feature specialty food items and a presentation by the company's president. Additionally, The Centre and the TGIS logos were revised in 2018. The new logo is featured on new patio umbrellas purchased in 2018, and the revised Centre brochures.

To conclude the report, Ms. Givens stated that city staff, along with the TGIS team, remain committed to providing exceptional guest satisfaction in an attractive professional atmosphere.

Commissioner Real asked why TGIS paid less in rent during 2018. He inquired as to whether the new facility in the City of Bellflower had contributed to the decline. Ms. Givens informed

him that the city was not currently feeling any pressure from the new facility in Bellflower. She informed him that the rent is derived from a percentage of their food and beverage sales. She mentioned that a major reason for the decrease in revenue for the year was due to recent facility improvement projects at The Centre where staff had to block off time that would have otherwise been available for reservation by clients.

Vice Chairperson Spaseff said the city's close relationship with TGIS has been financially beneficial over the past 11 years. He stated that both their service and their food has always been excellent. He inquired as to whether or not they have booked any events at Monte Verde yet. Ms. Frost informed him that no reservations have been made thus far.

The Commission received and filed the report.

3. Vandalism Annual Report

Community Services Manager Alex Bauman provided a summary of vandalism statistics on city facilities in 2018. A three-year comparison of statistics related to vandalism of Recreation and Community Services facilities was included with the written report. Mr. Bauman explained the process for reporting and recording of incidents, which includes estimates of loss to the city. Review of these records helps to identify potential trends, allowing city staff to take appropriate preventative measures.

Next, Mr. Bauman reviewed the various types of vandalism, number of incidents at each facility, and the cost associated with each loss. In 2018, there were 40 incidents totaling an estimated \$33,049.19 in direct damage or loss to the city. This represents a decrease of 27 incidents from 2017's total of 67. Even with fewer incidents, the estimate of loss for 2018 demonstrates an increase of 17.9% from the prior year.

Of all the facilities, Mayfair Park and "city streets" reported the most incidents at six occurrences each, which were increases from the prior year. While there was a significant decrease in the number of occurrences compared to last year, costly incidents attributed to the increase in overall damage. Mr. Bauman noted the fence repairs at Mae Boyar Park along Del Amo Blvd. and on the pedestrian bridge due to a vehicle crash accounted for nearly \$10,000 on its own. Additionally, over \$5,000 in damage on city streets was reported in 2018, which represented a 95% increase from 2017. This includes damage to light poles, city vehicles and other miscellaneous equipment.

Notably, graffiti incidents decreased by 48% from 2017 to 2018, from 33 incidents to 17 in 2018. He noted that graffiti remains the department's single most frequent classification of vandalism. Miscellaneous property damage refers to damage caused to fixtures, buildings and other assets. It is estimated that the city spent \$12,075 in 2018 on ten incidents to manage this type of vandalism.

Mr. Bauman informed the commission that vigilance at Lakewood recreation facilities will continue to be a priority with continual reporting to the sheriff's department, the expedient removal of graffiti, and staff's diligence in monitoring facilities throughout business hours.

Mr. Bauman clarified for Chairperson Allen that the 14 thefts listed in the 2018 Vandalism Report were in fact stolen city property and not items belonging to residents visiting an RCS facility. Ms. Frost assured Chairperson Allen that the city would receive restitution from vehicle crash at Mae Boyar Park.

The Commission received and filed the report.

4. RCS Part-time Staff Recruitment Annual Report

Mr. Bauman displayed slides and provided information on the RCS part-time staff recruitment process as noted in the written report. He reported that the department trains and hires over 100 new employees annually for parks, maintenance, transportation, pools, and the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) program. Currently there are 253 part-time employees working in RCS. He mentioned that included in the report was a chart detailing new employees hired for each area of responsibility within the department in 2018.

It was reported that every April potential recreation leader candidates attend an assessment center held at Palms Park. The recreation leader assessment center consists of three group exercises evaluating candidates listening skills and ability to follow direction; organization and problem solving skills; ability to think critically; conflict resolution and customer service; oral communication aptitude; ability to work well with others and willingness to participate. Candidates that successfully demonstrated the criteria listed above are then invited to participate in an oral interview. Mr. Bauman noted that new employees must attend a series of trainings designed to educate them on the department's various policies and procedures. Individual supervisors then provide additional training to their staff to review facility and program specific information. Prior to working, new employees must also obtain certification in CPR, First Aid, and AED usage.

For aquatics recruitment, candidates are required to pass a swim test prior to being considered for employment. Upon successful completion, Lakewood provides in-house trainings for all certifications mandated by the American Red Cross. New employees are then required to shadow returning staff members to familiarize themselves with the department's standards for facilitating aquatics programs. Each summer, 60 part time aquatics staff work between the two pool locations.

Mr. Bauman reported that unlike most cities, Lakewood continues to recruit and train its own sports officials for all youth and adult sports programs. Recruitments take place three times a year, prior to the start of each Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) season. All candidates must pass a written examination, prior to employment. The examination covers the rules and regulations of the current sport season, and tests each individual on the proper mechanics used when in the field. Candidates are required to attend pre-employment rules and mechanics trainings, to help prepare them for the examination. Once employed, officials must attend a pre-season on-field practical to practice the new skills learned. Following the practical, new officials will begin the season working lower level, non-competitive divisions. Each sport season is unique with regard to recruiting part-time officiating staff.

Mr. Bauman reported that DASH has developed a successful recruitment program for its employees. With customers in mind, DASH looks to recruit individuals with great customer service skills and a willingness to work with the population served. New drivers are hired to operate accessible vans requiring only a class C, non-commercial license. During this time, drivers are expected to become familiar with routes, improve personal driving skills, and learn proper customer service standards. Once complete, DASH provides an in-house training for drivers to obtain a class B, commercial license, allowing them to operate any vehicle within the DASH fleet. During their training period, new drivers are shadowed by an experienced DASH driver, and evaluated at the conclusion of every shift. A final evaluation is conducted by the DASH supervisor, prior to becoming an independent driver. In order to ensure drivers continue to live up to DASH standards, the supervisor conducts yearly performance evaluations of each employee, and assigns additional training when needed.

To conclude his report, Mr. Bauman stated that the department continues to recruit, train, and evaluate the most qualified recreation employees who are committed to the department's high standards of customer service and program implementation.

The Commission received and filed the report.

5. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 9

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month of February and a listing of upcoming activities for April 2019.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter to Employee of the Month – Alexis Hagman, January 2019

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 6:55 p.m. to April 10, 2019 at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission