



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
February 12, 2020

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6 p.m. by Chairperson Ted Spaseff.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Kirk Real.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Chairperson Ted Spaseff
Vice Chairperson Ben Delarosa
Commissioner Kirk Real

ABSENT: Commissioner Dave Allen
Commissioner Winnie Heiss

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Due to lack of a quorum which included commissioners present from the meeting of January 8, 2020, the approval of the meeting minutes of January 8, 2020 was tabled to the meeting of March 18, 2020.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her remarks by informing the commission that the Burns Community Center would be open as a Voting Center, for a total of eleven days, beginning Saturday, Feb. 22 until Tuesday, March 3. Beginning Saturday, Feb. 29, Bloomfield and Biscailuz Parks will also open as four-day Voting Centers. Voting hours will be 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. through Monday, March 2, and then on Election Day, Tuesday, March 3, voting hours will be extended to 6 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Next, Ms. Frost mentioned that several California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS) events would be held during the month of March. The CPRS Conference will take place in the City of Long Beach from Tuesday, March 10 through Friday, March 13. On Tuesday, March 10, City of Lakewood staff, led by ERD Manager Mike McDade, will host a Park Development Operations Symposium at Mayfair Park. The CPRS Welcome Reception will take place on Wednesday, March 11, during the same time as the regularly scheduled RCS Commission Meeting. Ms. Frost noted that the commission would need to decide whether to proceed with the scheduled RCS Commission Meeting that evening or to adjourn to a different time or day. On Friday, March 13, Ms. Frost mentioned that the City of Lakewood would be recognized at the annual CPRS Awards and Recognition Banquet for receiving the 2019 California Park & Recreation Society Award of Excellence for the Burns Community Center in the Excellence in Design/Facility Design category. Finally, on Thursday, March 26 the CPRS Awards and Installation Banquet will be held at The Centre from 5 to 9 p.m. It was said that two Lakewood volunteers would be recognized that evening including Lakewood business West Coast Arborists and Disaster Communications Services Volunteer Bob Brammer. The commission was asked to inform their secretary if interested in attending any of the CPRS events.

Assistant Director Kevin Bright provided information regarding programming and upcoming events. Mr. Bright reported that the Play at Palms outdoor event series begins on Friday, Feb. 14

with a showing of Disney’s live-action version of the family favorite The Lion King. Pre-event kids’ activities were said to begin at 6 p.m. with food trucks encouraging a fun outdoor meal. The movie will begin promptly at 7 p.m. Over 150 attendees are expected. On Tuesday, Feb. 18, staff will host the first Survive for 7 class of 2020, where residents are educated on how to prepare to take care of their homes and loved ones for seven days following a major disaster. The class will take place at the Burns Community Center beginning at 6 p.m. On Monday, Feb. 24, the Lakewood Youth Hall of Fame Banquet will take place in the Weingart Ballroom at The Centre. Mr. Bright noted that Alex Bauman would give a comprehensive report later in the evening. He asked that the commission confirm their attendance with their secretary. The annual Arbor Day presentations for Lakewood elementary schools were said to begin on Monday, March 2. The theme is Toy Story 5, a continuation of the fourth Toy Story iteration recently in theaters. It was said that the schedule was currently being finalized and would be provided to the commission upon completion.

Next, Mr. Bright reported that on Saturday, March 7, the Lakewood Run, supported by the Lakewood Sheriff’s Station, would take place along the streets of Lakewood. Though not an RCS event, staff assistance and equipment will be lent to community safety partners so the community can enjoy a healthy outdoor fun run. Mr. Bright noted that there would be a 5k and 10k competitive run, a 1k fun run and a 5k walk to ensure all skill and ability levels can participate. Check in is at 6:30 a.m. with the first events commencing at 8 a.m.

Finally, the annual Earth Walk event will take place on Saturday, March 14 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Monte Verde Park. The trail through Monte Verde will be lined with booths hosted by vendors supporting earth-friendly topics, such as water conservation, pest control, recycling opportunities, and more. Kids completing their Passport to Planet Earth will receive this year’s stuffed toy Sebastian the Sea Turtle.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff commended Ms. Frost for her presentation at the previous night’s council meeting.

REPORTS:

1. Emergency Management Annual Report

Community Services Manager Chuck Martucci provided information regarding the many aspects of the city’s emergency management program during 2019, as noted in the written report. Mr. Martucci began by providing information regarding community engagement and training. He noted that in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, Lakewood continues to offer the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. It was said that the free 21-hour program educates residents about disaster preparedness and basic disaster response skills for dealing with a serious crisis situation. Lecture and hands-on exercises were said to cover topics such as fire safety, light search and rescue, psychological first aid and disaster medical operations. The goal of CERT is to help residents be better prepared to respond and cope with the aftermath of a disaster. Additionally, Mr. Martucci mentioned the program develops a pool of trained civilians who can be recruited as auxiliary responders. The 2020 CERT class was held Jan. 24 – 26. Twenty-six students graduated from the course.

The Survive for 7 disaster planning program was said to be offered three times annually to Lakewood residents at no cost to the participant. The program educates residents about emergency preparedness and offers the skills they might need to survive in the first week following a catastrophe. Over 150 residents were trained in the Survive for 7 programs in 2019. It was said that 2020 classes were planned for Tuesdays, February 18, July 7 and October 13.

Mr. Martucci reported that on Saturday, November 9, Lakewood hosted its second annual Emergency Preparedness Fair. The fair was held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Burns Community Center. The fair consisted of seven presentations, 16 informational vendor booths, four interactive emergency response vehicles and free emergency giveaways. Participating agencies included the American Red Cross, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and various departments of the County of Los Angeles, Bloomfield Animal Hospital and Disaster Communications Services. The City of Lakewood's Water Resource Department also had a booth and gave a well-received presentation on water purification and an overview of the Lakewood well system. The fair saw 342 attendees participate in event elements.

Next, it was announced that the Emergency Management team has been working with the Area E Disaster Management Area Coordinator (DMAC), David Ashman, to conduct a citywide emergency response exercise on Wednesday, May 6. It was said that over 50 Lakewood staff who hold roles and responsibilities in the Emergency Operations Center will participate in this exercise. In order to assemble a quick, effective and organized staff response to an emergency situation, all full time employees are trained annually to be first responders. Annual training was said to be provided each spring to provide staff members with the basic knowledge and equipment to mobilize using a comprehensive checklist system. Mr. Martucci noted that in 2019 all part time personnel were added to the annual training roster. Seven employee response training sessions were said to be planned for 2020 and will once again include all full-time and part-time city employees. As part of the city's ongoing emergency preparedness training, all full-time and part-time Recreation and Community Services staff, are given initial training and recertification classes in CPR, First Aid and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training. All field staff and city hall personnel are also afforded the opportunity to obtain initial training and recertification classes. An employee's certification is good for two years for both CPR and First Aid.

Mr. Martucci discussed how the City of Lakewood works in concert with their emergency management partners to remain compliant and informed. He explained that the goal of informing and educating employees and community members through training opportunities in the field of emergency preparation and emergency management while adhering to updated policies and procedures will always be implemented into the diverse community programming that Lakewood has to offer.

Mr. Martucci confirmed for Commissioner Kirk Real that in 2019 the Public Safety Department, in conjunction with the Lakewood Sherriff's Department, provided staff with new training on how to respond during active shooter situations. He noted that in addition to the active shooter training, a "Stop the Bleed" training was also presented.

The Commission received and filed the report.

2. Pest Management Program Annual Report

Community Services Manager Michael McDade displayed slides and provided information regarding efforts made to control weeds, insects, and other pests throughout the city. Mr. McDade began by informing the commission that Mr. Will Harrison from Target was promoted within his company and will no longer be working with the city in his current capacity. He noted that a new person would be assigned to take over soon.

Mr. McDade reported that in 2019, many trees in Southern California suffered an attack by an invasive pest identified as tree scale. He explained that scale feeds on trees by sucking sap and ultimately causing what is referred to as honeydew. The honeydew was said to be a combination of undigested sugar and water that has passed through the insect's digestive system. Once honeydew is secreted from the pest, it causes a sticky residue to form on anything in its path beneath the tree. It was said that the city received a significant increase in the amount of requests for treatment of dripping residue from trees in 2019 particularly with magnolia grandiflora trees. ERD worked closely with the Tree Division of the Public Works Department to respond to service requests and diagnose the pest. Mr. McDade declared that the collective effort by both divisions saved many trees from the threat of disease and removal. He then passed around a small tree limb containing tree scale for the commission to observe.

Next, Mr. McDade explained that glyphosate is a component found in the well-known product marketed as RoundUp. He noted that this year Lakewood ceased the use of glyphosate. It was said that staff was tasked with finding an alternative method or product to control the growth of weeds. He mentioned that although there are several organic alternatives available, most come at increased costs. Furthermore, the lasting effect of the results produced by organic products is only half as long as that of glyphosate products. It was said that weed abatement is typically applied to any given area three times per year, whereas the organic products need to be applied 5-6 times per year to achieve the same results. Mr. McDade pointed out that in addition to the troubling price and efficacy differences, the organic products still pose a health threat. He explained that glyphosate products such as RoundUp are labeled with a caution label, which according to OSHA means, "if the precaution is not taken, it may cause minor or moderate injury." It was said that some of the newer organic products increased to a warning label which is defined by OSHA stating that "if the warning is not heeded, it can cause death or serious injury." The department was said to be currently using two non-organic products called Cheetah-Pro and Reward for the control of weeds, both were said to be much more cost effective than the organic products.

Mr. McDade continued, stating that as in past years, the gopher population at city parks continued to be a problem in 2019. Problem areas were said to include street turf panels, medians and parks; especially Rynerson and Bloomfield Parks. The licensed spray applicator continues to work to minimize the presence of gophers throughout the city, and Park Maintenance personnel fill and compact holes created as to maintain safety in public spaces. It was said that setting traps and placing bait blocks followed by a carbon monoxide process has proven to be the best practice.

Commissioner Real commended Mr. McDade and the entire ERD staff for all of their hard work.

Mr. McDade confirmed for Chairperson Spaseff that ERD staff at times assists the Tree Department staff with minor requests.

The Commission received and filed the report.

3. Lakewood Youth Hall of Fame Preview

Community Services Manager Alex Bauman displayed slides and provided a preview of the Lakewood Youth Hall of Fame 2019 inductees. Mr. Bauman informed the commission that the 39th Annual Lakewood Youth Hall of Fame Banquet would be held Monday, Feb. 24, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at The Centre. It was said that the annual program recognizes the athletic achievements of high school and collegiate athletes who live in Lakewood or attend school in Lakewood. Awards will be presented for Performer of the Year in each sport, various Special Achievement awards, including Scholar Athlete of the Year, and the crowning of the Co-Athletes of the Year. Mr. Bauman informed the commission that the Hall of Fame Board of Electors convened Jan. 9, 2020, to select the 2019 Athlete of the Year and honors for other athletes and coaches. Each year, representatives from Lakewood-based high schools and area colleges, as well as members of the community, are invited to submit nominations and detailed information on athletes' achievements for the consideration of awards. Mr. Bauman explained that the selection of awards was done by a volunteer panel of community members and school administrators. He noted that in addition to Athlete of the Year, the Board of Electors considers nominees for Performer of the Year in 18 sports and seven additional Special Achievement categories.

It was announced that on Jan. 9, the Hall of Fame Board of Electors selected Mayfair High School basketball player, Joshua Christopher, as the 2019 Athlete of the Year. Mr. Bauman stated that Joshua averaged 25 points, 7.8 rebounds and 3 steals per game on the court. Additional accolades were said to include CIF Player of the Year, Press-Telegram Dream Team Player of the Year, John Wooden Player of the Year and the Los Angeles Times All Star Team. Mr. Bauman added that on Friday Feb. 7 Joshua was named to the 2020 McDondald's All-American Games roster and awarded a McDonald's jersey. It was said that he has yet to commit to a college program, but has offers from Arizona State, Kentucky, Michigan, UCLA and Missouri.

Mr. Bauman concluded his report by stating that in total, 23 Performers of the Year, 19 Distinguished Nominees, 10 Special Achievements and 15 League Champions will be recognized at the 39th Annual Lakewood Youth Hall of Fame Banquet. Sponsors of the event were said to include The City of Lakewood, Piazza Family McDonald's Restaurants, Soroptimist International of Lakewood/Long Beach, and the Rotary Club of Lakewood. Mr. Bauman noted that the 2019 Hall of Fame inductees would be on display the week of March 2 at the McDonald's restaurant on Woodruff. Tickets for the Hall of Fame Banquet were said to be \$36 for adults and \$26 for students through February 14. Over 400 guests are expected. The commission was asked to confirm their attendance with their secretary.

Commissioner Real mentioned that he has been on the Board of Electors for many years. He shared that the positive attitudes and support from the school personnel towards athletes who come from schools other than their own was extremely commendable.

Chairperson Spaseff thanked Mr. Bauman and staff for all of their hard work in preparation of the banquet.

The Commission received and filed the report.

4. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 8

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month January 2020 and a listing of upcoming activities for March 2020.

The Commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter to Employee of the Month – Chris Mooney – December 2019

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to be brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Ted Spaseff adjourned the meeting at 7 p.m. to March 18, 2020 at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission