



MINUTES
Recreation and Community Services Commission
Adjourned Regular Meeting
September 14, 2022

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Dave Allen.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Chairperson Ted Spaseff
Commissioner Dave Allen
Commissioner Veronica Lucio

ABSENT: Vice Chairperson Stacy Valdez

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of August 11, 2022. A motion was made by Commissioner Dave Allen and seconded by Commissioner Veronica Lucio to approve the minutes from the meeting of August 11, 2022. The motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her remarks by providing the commission with personnel updates. She shared that on Monday, August 27, Yesenia Torres started in the department as an Administrative Clerk, assisting with facility rentals and customer service. In addition, Geoff Yates started on Tuesday, September 6 as the Park Maintenance Worker at Bloomfield Park. Ms. Frost mentioned that the department was excited to welcome both employees into the class of full-time staff, as they were both internal candidates who were promoted from within the organization. The commission was informed that two recruitments were underway. Ms. Frost reported that applications for Community Services Supervisor were being accepted through September 23. She mentioned that the filing period to submit an application for the Park Maintenance Worker position had ended, and applications were being reviewed by department managers. Lastly, Ms. Frost informed the commission that an appointment to the Recreation and Community Services Commission was still forthcoming from Council Member Cassandra Chase.

Ms. Frost provided an update on the status of the Lakewood Meals on Wheels organization. She shared that the City of Lakewood was currently managing the operations and administration of the program, ensuring that the community's homebound adults continue to receive meals. It was said that the Lakewood Meals on Wheels Board was investigating the possibility of merging with Meals on Wheels of Long Beach. Ms. Frost shared that members of the Lakewood Meals on Wheels board intend to develop a working relationship that maintains the organization's identity and non-profit status.

Ms. Frost provided the commission with information regarding programming and upcoming events. She shared that the 25th annual Lakewood Special Olympics fundraiser, which is sponsored by city employees, was scheduled for Friday, September 23 from 5:30 to 9 p.m. at the Lakewood Youth Center. The commission was informed that their secretary could assist with registration or making a donation to the program. Next, she shared that the city would host a Lakewood Celebrates event on Tuesday, September 27, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. It was said that a video highlighting the

newly installed pillars artwork would be showcased. Following the video, attendees are invited to see the artwork as displayed in The Centre lobby on the first floor.

Lastly, Ms. Frost reported that the Lakewood Education Foundation golf tournament would be held on Friday, October 21 at the Lakewood Country Club. She reminded the commission that if they were interested in participating or volunteering, their secretary could assist.

Parks Superintendent Abel Andrade provided the commission with updates for the Environmental Resources Division. He shared that the Metropolitan Water District for Southern California has called for residents to suspend outdoor watering through September 20 in order to complete an emergency pipeline repair. Mr. Andrade pointed out that although the suspension does not apply to the City of Lakewood, in an effort to be a good steward of water, the city has suspended daytime watering and watering audits in parks and medians and has drastically cut back the watering schedule during this period. He noted that staff would concentrate solely on serious irrigation repairs, such as mainline leaks and valve repairs during this time. It was said that after September 20, staff would resume daytime watering audits and the normal watering schedule. Lastly, Mr. Andrade shared that on Thursday, October 13 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., in coordination with California Parks and Recreation Society, the city is hosting the Park Planning and Development Institute at Mayfair Park. He shared that guest speakers would cover several topics including park planning, budgeting, NCIPs, bid alternatives, project management and AB1346. Several vendors will be onsite and breakfast will be served. The commission was asked to RSVP with their secretary if interested in attending.

Commissioner Allen shared that he will be unable to attend the October commission meeting.

Chairperson Spaseff mentioned that he attended the recent Park Development Committee Meeting and was impressed with the many improvements at the Lakewood Equestrian Center. He shared that he attended the Patriot Day Flag Lowering Ceremony and commented that it was well attended and an overall great event. He thanked staff for their hard work.

REPORTS:

1. Fall/Winter Programs and Events

Community Services Manager Nancy Hitt displayed slides and reviewed the in-person classes and workshops offered for fall and winter by the Recreation and Community Services Department as noted in the written report. Ms. Hitt informed the commission that registration for 2022 fall classes began over the Labor Day weekend. She shared that classes would begin on Monday, September 26 and run through January 2023. It was said that the catalog was made available online beginning Thursday, September 1, with residents receiving postcards directing them to the website. Ms. Hitt mentioned that the cover features the statement “Fall is in the Air” and is accompanied by pictures of special events and activities that take place during the fall season.

Ms. Hitt provided the commission with details regarding the Activity Zone after-school program as noted in the written report. It was said that the free drop-in program began on Monday, August 29 and offers a positive place for children to create, learn, and play.

Ms. Hitt provided information regarding teen programming. She reported that the Lakewood Teen Action Committee's Youth in Government program would return in 2022. She noted that the program calendar would begin in December and conclude in May 2023. Additionally, she announced that the Lakewood Teen Action Committee would resume in the fall and would continue to focus on service to the community. She shared that meetings were scheduled to begin on Friday, September 23. Additionally, the commission was informed that the annual College Fair would return The Centre on Tuesday, October 11. It was said that over 50 colleges from across the country are expected to host a display booth and over 500 students and caregivers are anticipated to attend.

Regarding Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS), Ms. Hitt reported that registration for flag football, volleyball and volleytennis took place August 27 through September 10. Details regarding practice schedules and playoffs were provided as noted in the written report.

With regards to older adult programming, Ms. Hitt reported that the Human Services Association Nutrition Program had reopened for in-person dining and provides dine-in congregate lunch service Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday; with a frozen meal pick up option on Wednesdays that provides a week's worth of meals. She also mentioned that the 11th annual Older Adults Benefits Fair takes place at Weingart Senior Center on Monday, October 17 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Details regarding upcoming community events such as Family Game Nights and Community Walks were provided to the commission as noted in the written report.

Ms. Hitt proceeded to provide information regarding fall special events such as the Play at Palms series, the second annual Fest-Of-All, the Lollipop Lane Craft Boutique, the Lakewood Halloween Carnivals, and the Project Shepherd Holiday Program as noted in the written report.

Commissioner Allen commented that it was a great summer and commended staff for a job well done.

Chairperson Spaseff mentioned that it was amazing to see all of the many events return during the summer. He thanked staff for their hard work and dedication.

The commission received and filed the report on fall and winter recreation programs and events.

2. Human & Senior Services Programs Annual Report

Community Services Supervisor Sabrina Junkin reminded the commission that the city offers a variety of programs and activities for older adults and seniors along with programs and partnerships aimed at providing services to residents who need assistance. Ms. Junkin shared that a vast array of human and senior service programs were offered at the Burns Community Center and Weingart Senior Center. It was said that many of the programs are

offered directly by city staff, while other services are provided by partner agencies in and around the city. Ms. Junkin provided information regarding the programs, activities and services offered at the Weingart Senior Center and the Burns Community Center as noted in the written report.

Ms. Junkin reported that at the Burns Community Center, the Project Shepherd Extension Program assisted 213 families, which was said to be a 40% decrease from 2020, and 651 individuals, which was said to be a 47% decrease from 2020. For calendar year 2021, 456 boxes of food were distributed, 71 families received assistance with utility bill payments, and 64 families received grocery store gift cards. Additionally, 417 families were assisted during the Holiday Assistance Program, a 4% decrease from 2020. It was said that the annual Backpack Program secured donations of school supplies and backpacks for 434 children. Ms. Junkin shared that it was the highest number of backpacks the program had ever distributed.

Details were provided by Ms. Junkin regarding the many Active+ classes offered at the Burns Community Center as noted in the written report. Newly added classes were said to include American Sign Language (ASL) Basics and Seasonal Cookie Decorating. Additionally, Ms. Junkin provided information regarding the many programs and services offered at the Burns Community Center.

Finally, Ms. Junkin informed the commission about the free and low-cost programs and services offered at the Weingart Senior Center. Details on those various programs and services were provided to the commission as noted in the written report. Ms. Junkin noted that Lakewood also provides financial support to non-profit agencies by allocating Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to five social service agencies—Community Family Guidance Center, Lakewood Meals on Wheels, Pathways Volunteer Hospice, Human Services Association, and Su Casa-Ending Domestic Violence.

Commissioner Lucio shared that she attended the Senior Health Seminar and mentioned that the event was great and nicely organized.

Commissioner Allen commented that it was exciting to be back in full swing. He commended staff for being the best at what they do.

Chairperson Spaseff mentioned that it was amazing to be reminded of all of the many services the city provides to its senior residents. He shared that seeing the board at the Weingart Senior Center full with activities was awesome. He thanked Ms. Junkin and staff for a marvelous job.

The commission received and filed the annual report on human and senior services programs.

3. Fest-Of-All Preview

Community Services Manager Nicole Duran displayed slides and provided a preview of the upcoming Fest-Of-All. Ms. Duran shared that the event would take place on Saturday, October 8 from 2 to 8 p.m. at Lakewood Center. It was said that the event would consist of a multicultural food court, a family fun zone, a concert stage and a cultural stage with live entertainment, a craft village, a children's cultural booth, community booths for Lakewood non-profit organizations, an art and poetry showcase, and a new interactive addition called Passport around the World. Details regarding the event elements were provided to the commission as noted in the written report.

The commission was informed that a free shuttle would run from the east parking lot at City Hall to the event entrance. It was said that the shuttle would operate from 1:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., with pickups and drop-offs scheduled in 15-minute intervals.

Lastly, Ms. Duran provided information regarding event supervision and public safety. She shared that city staff would be working during the course of the event, monitoring the various event components, assisting Fest-Of-All attendees, entertainers, and vendors. Additionally, to ensure a safe and clean event, it was said that staff would manage crowd control issues such as litter collection, replenishment of event supplies, distribution of handouts, and staffing the first aid stations. Event staff will be identifiable in their Fest-Of-All event staff t-shirt. The commission was informed that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, community safety officers, and mall security would provide uniformed security on foot throughout the event complex to provide a greater sense of safety and security for all event attendees. Additionally, she noted that information and first aid centers would be located at the south entrance of the event near the Family Fun Zone.

Commissioner Lucio shared that she attended the event in 2021 and was excited to attend again with her family.

Chairperson Spaseff mentioned that the passport idea was a great addition and that the children would love it. He acknowledged that a tremendous amount of work goes in to the event and thanked staff for their hard work and efforts.

The commission received and filed the report on Fest-Of-All.

4. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 3

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month of August 2022 and a listing of upcoming activities for October 2022.

The Commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Spaseff adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m. to Wednesday, October 12 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission