

**SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
NOVEMBER 10, 2011**

**County Administration Center - First Floor Hearing Room  
675 Texas Street, Fairfield  
5:30 p.m.**

**Members Present:** Commissioners Alvarez, Leong, Riddle, and Whited  
**Members Excused:** Commissioner Hermsmeyer  
**Staff Present:** Dan Sykes and Kristine Letterman

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Vice-Chairman Whited called the meeting to order. A quorum was confirmed.

**2. Approval of the Minutes for the meeting of September 8, 2011**

The minutes of September 8, 2011 were unanimously approved as prepared.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

Dan Sykes asked that the commission move Agenda Item Nos. 9 and 10 after Agenda Item No. 6. He noted the reason for this is to accommodate a member of the audience who is in attendance and can help provide assistance with the scheduling of the marsh field trip.

The agenda was unanimously approved as amended.

**4. Chair and Commissioner Comments**

There were no Commissioner comments.

**5. Public Comments**

Robert Eddings, 396 Robert Road, Vacaville, appeared before the commission. He spoke with regard to the recommended funding list for the Suisun Marsh Specific Fund, specifically the Sprigateal and St. Germain projects. He stated that Sprigateal is ranked 16 and funding was cut by 50%, as opposed to St. Germain which is ranked 21 and was cut by 5%. Mr. Eddings questioned why a higher ranking project would get cut at a greater percentage than a lower ranking project. He also inquired if the project scope would be reduced if the amount requested is more than what is granted.

Commissioner Alvarez wanted to know if Mr. Sykes was previously contacted by Mr. Eddings with regard to these questions. Mr. Sykes responded that he was aware of Mr. Eddings' inquiries and informed him that he could direct his concerns to the commission. Mr. Sykes commented that with regard to the contractual question, typically if the amount of funding is reduced then the scope would also be reduced, but what the commission would need to weigh in on is what the appropriate scope would be.

Commissioner Alvarez stated that he did not believe the commission is equipped to respond to these questions since the commission has not met with the evaluation committee. Mr. Alvarez stated that he would prefer in the future that these types of questions be addressed by staff.

Dan Sykes stated that he did follow up with the evaluation committee letting them know that there were questions, and two members of the committee expressed their willingness to be present at the meeting to explain their rationale.

Commissioner Riddle stated that he has sat on evaluating committees in the past and commented that the evaluation process is very thorough with a lot of thought put into it. He stated that if the evaluation committee felt it appropriate to make those types of cuts he did not believe the commission should be challenging it. Mr. Riddle stated that he did not feel this is an appropriate topic for public comment since it relates to an item listed on the agenda.

Commissioner Leong stated that he agreed with Commissioner Riddle and that this topic should be discussed during the consideration of the grant process.

Mr. Eddings stated that his biggest concern is that it seems the higher ranking project, specifically Sprigateal, was cut more than the lower ranking projects. He stated that the other projects they submitted which were cut by smaller percentages, the scope of those projects could easily be cut back because of the nature of those projects. With regard to Sprigateal, Mr. Eddings stated that it seems a certain portion of the project was not liked by the committee. He stated that if the project is going to be cut by 50% then they need to know which 50% is expected to be delivered.

Mr. Sykes stated that with regard to the Sprigateal project the intention was to fund the gate installation which would reduce the scope accordingly. Mr. Sykes noted that it was not done on a proportional basis based on ranking but was done on a project basis.

**6. Approve Recommendation of Suisun Marsh Specific Fund Awards for FY2011/12 to be forwarded to the County Board of Supervisors**

Commissioner Alvarez expressed his thanks to the evaluation committee for their hard work. He stated that the process was very efficient which made it simple for the commission. He commented that in sitting on the committee last year, it did help him in understanding the projects better this year than in previous years.

Commissioner Whited stated that he has noticed in comparing the numbers from a couple of years ago to the current numbers that it appears the people who are submitting the applications understand it better also.

A motion was made by Commissioner Riddle and seconded by Commissioner Leong to approve the recommendation of the Suisun Marsh Specific Fund Evaluation Committee to award twenty-one (21) grants for a total of \$280,000, and to recommend approval to the Solano County Board of Supervisors. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Leong stated that he learned a lot from participating in the past as a member of the selection committee. He stated that some of the reasons for the partial funding are that they looked at matching costs for gates and work and some were higher than others. He also stated that they felt the clubs could do some of their own maintenance and this is why the percentages are not listed across the board for all items.

Steve Chappell, Suisun Resource Conservation District, expressed his appreciation to the commission, staff, and the reviewers for all of their efforts. He stated that the process has come a long way and the county is getting good quality product out of the effort.

**9. Schedule date of next regular meeting in January 2012**

Dan Sykes noted that the next meeting after the January workshop will be March 8, 2012. He stated that he will provide a 2012 meeting schedule to the commission at their January workshop for approval.

**10. Identify dates for future marsh field trip and Lake Solano Park workshop, and adjournment**

Dan Sykes stated that in a follow up to some of the comments about an interest in learning more about marsh projects, he felt the commission should have an opportunity to come out and see some of the work that is being done with the funds that are being awarded. He stated that he would work with Robert Eddings from the California Waterfowl Association to help come up with a good location for the trip, and would contact the Commissioners with some potential dates before confirming. The final date will be noticed to the public. After some discussion it was suggested that sometime in late February or early March would work well.

Based on previous Commissioner requests to discuss Lake Solano Park, Mr. Sykes suggested holding a workshop at the park in place of the January 12, 2012 commission meeting. He noted that the workshop could be held at the Lake Solano Park Nature Center and could include discussion on improving attendance and marketing opportunities. The suggested dates for the workshop were January 19<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Sykes stated that he will poll the commissioners by email to get a confirmation on the workshop date. The final date will be noticed to the public

**7. Consider request from Monterey County Fish & Game Commission to participate in funding CalTIP program**

Mr. Sykes gave a brief presentation on the CalTIP program. He explained that the program provides rewards for people who turn in poachers and polluters and has been active throughout the state. He stated that the commission does have some discretion in terms of how they recommend the use of Fish and Game funds. He believed that the Monterey County Fish and Game Commission are looking to gauge other county's interests in kicking in money as well.

Commissioner Riddle commented that he had the opportunity to participate in a program called We Tip and the program has been very successful. He stated that now the question is how much will it cost for participation in the program.

Commissioner Alvarez wanted to know where the funding would come from if the commission does decide to participate. Mr. Sykes stated that it would come from countywide funds in the Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund. He noted that currently those funds are co-mingled with the Kinder Morgan settlement funds which the county has received in addition to fish and game fine funds. Mr. Sykes stated that the Monterey County commission had suggested a \$1,000 contribution.

Commissioner Riddle wanted to know if there was some idea of what the return on the investment would be and if it would be feasible for the county to participate. He commented that on the surface it is a smart idea. Commissioner Alvarez asked if staff could obtain a listing of other donors in the program. Mr. Sykes stated that he would research this information and report back to the commission.

Commissioner Leong spoke with regard to Solano County's Grizzly Island and stated that the game warden out there is very active and suggested contacting him for his feedback.

Mr. Sykes stated that staff will bring this item back before the commission at a subsequent meeting.

## **8. Parks and Recreation Division Staff Report**

### **A. Attendance and Revenue**

Dan Sykes provided an Attendance and Revenue Summary for FY2011/12 and FY2010/11.

Commissioner Whited commented that in looking at the comparisons from last year vs. to date, it appears that revenue is doing very well.

Commissioner Leong inquired about advertising. Mr. Sykes stated that staff has put together a docent led tour program at Lake Solano to help promote the area. He noted that there has been a renewed interest in boating at the park, and those revenues have gone up. Mr. Sykes stated that the docent led tours have been getting a lot of press which has been a real benefit. He also noted that regular updates are posted on the website as well as working with the county Public Communications Officer.

Commissioner Alvarez commented that the information provided in the staff report has been very helpful and stated that it can also be a beneficial tool at the January workshop. He said that some park activities have changed or gone away over the years and suggested that staff provide a list of programs that were in existence 5 or 10 years ago but no longer exist. He stated that this could generate discussion among the commissioners in working on how to bring some of those activities back. Mr. Alvarez also suggested that Park and Rec staff be invited to attend the workshop because he believed it would be beneficial for them to hear from the commission as to what the expectations are in terms of customer service, priorities, and collection of revenue.

Commissioner Whited spoke with regard to the popularity of kayaking. Mr. Sykes stated that when he attended a meeting of the California Boating and Waterways Commission in Santa Cruz recently, he met with the chief of the grant division and discussion took place about how to improve the Lake Solano facility to make it better for kayak launching. There was also interest in putting a second boat float at both Belden's Landing and Sandy Beach.

Commissioner Leong spoke with regard to canoes and stated that there is a surplus program of the federal government where an entity can purchase items at a cheaper rate or before they go out to auction.

### **B. Status of FWPF and SMSF Grant Projects**

Mr. Sykes provided documentation showing the status of all 23 current grant projects.

Commissioner Whited inquired about the Suisun Marsh grant and wanted to know if it has come to the end of its cycle. Mr. Sykes stated that the marsh grant is at the beginning of the process and will conclude in August 2012. He noted that the Fish and Wildlife Fund will expire in February 2012. Mr. Sykes noted that there is still \$45,000 in the fund that has not yet been reimbursed.

Commissioner Alvarez wanted to know if the full \$45,000 would be spent. Mr. Sykes stated most of it would, but that there will be a small amount left because a couple of projects came in under what they expected.

C. Status of ongoing park projects

Mr. Sykes provided a report regarding the status of ongoing park projects at Sandy Beach, Belden's Landing, and Lake Solano Park. He said that they plan to do some replacement work on the facilities which include parking lot repair and installation of an automatic pay station at Belden's Landing; and installation of an automatic pay station, fish cleaning station, ADA improvements and more No Swimming signs at Sandy Beach Park. Improvements at Lake Solano Park include replacement of 3 park stairways, ADA improvements and replacement picnic tables.

Commissioner Riddle inquired about the proposed wind turbine at Sandy Beach Park. Mr. Sykes explained that there was some pending legislation regarding subsidy determination and the developer had been waiting for that to pass, which it did in October. He said the project should be getting underway in summer 2012.

Commissioner Riddle commented about the Delta Conservation Camp located on Lambie Road and noted that they prepare signage for use by the government and non-profit agencies. He suggested this may be something to look into.

D. Update on marketing efforts

Mr. Sykes stated that at this point there is not a lot of funding for marketing efforts but he recognized that it is an important part of what the Parks Division should be pursuing. He stated that the focus right now is on doing an in-park survey to gauge customer satisfaction and opinions on alcohol use. Mr. Sykes stated that for Veteran's Day there will be a fee waiver for all military personnel and their families. He noted that there will also be a redesign of the park brochure and park logo.

Commissioner Leong inquired about progress in working with volunteer groups. Mr. Sykes stated that the first volunteer event at Lake Solano was Smokey Bear's birthday which was a purely volunteer docent led effort. He said that the County is currently working with the Solano Land Trust Volunteer Coordinator. He announced that a Volunteer Appreciation Day was held at Rush Ranch for both Lake Solano and Lynch Canyon docents.

Since there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.