

**SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 2014**

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

Members Present: Commissioners Leong, Riddle, Whited, Alvarez and
Chairman Hermsmeyer
Members Absent: None
Staff Present: Dan Sykes and Diane Gilliland

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Hermsmeyer called the meeting to order. A quorum was confirmed.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of November 14, 2013 were approved as prepared (motion by Commissioner Whited, second by Commissioner Riddle).

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as prepared (motion by Commissioner Riddle, second by Commissioner Whited)

4. Chair and Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Leong commented that the City of Vacaville is planning to allow development in the Lagoon Valley area. Commissioner Alvarez asked if the City was going to fill in the lagoon. He hoped that the County would be able to comment on the development plan. It was noted that the project had already been approved and if any marsh land was removed from the site it would need to be replaced in another area.

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

6. Chair and Vice-Chair Elections

Commissioner Whited nominated Commissioner Hermsmeyer as Chair and Commissioner Riddle as Vice-Chair. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Leong. Commissioner Hermsmeyer and Commissioner Riddle were elected as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively by a unanimous vote of the Commission.

7. Approve 2014 Meeting Dates (on 2nd Thursday, every other month)

On a motion by Commissioner Riddle and a second by Commissioner Alvarez the Commission approved the 2014 Meeting Schedule.

8. Parks and Recreation Division Staff Report

A. Attendance and revenue

Mr. Sykes reported that the goal for FY2013/14 is to achieve \$225,000 in revenue. The goal has been exceeded at this point in the fiscal period. Mr. Sykes noted that the attendance over the years has gone up and down but is fairly level now. Revenue from the parks has steadily increased over the past fiscal year. There has been a consistent

effort to work on improving facilities at Lake Solano over the last few years to increase attendance. Another measurement of success is the increasing revenues that are supporting operations and providing good quality facilities for the public. It was suggested that there be two columns added to the Attendance and Revenue Summary to show an ultimate goal and what percentage of the goal has been met. The Commission also discussed using special events as a way to increase park attendance.

B. Update on Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund (FWPF) Projects

Mr. Sykes noted that there have been no changes in the status of FWPF projects since the November meeting.

C. Update on County Smoking Policy Changes

At the October 8, 2013 Solano County Board of Supervisors meeting an amendment to the County Indoor Air and Health Protection Ordinance was passed. The amendment increased the distance that smokers could light up from 20 feet to 25 feet away from County buildings, unless otherwise designated. Several Board members indicated an interest in looking into further restrictions on smoking on all County-owned and leased properties including County Parks. An ad hoc committee (Supervisors Hannigan and Vasquez) was created to research the issue further. Mr. Sykes noted that he will keep the Commission apprised of any possible changes to the County Parks. The Commission discussed several issues regarding enforcement of smoking regulations at the parks.

9. Discuss Commission Work Plan for 2013-2015

Chairman Hermsmeyer described a "County Parks Day" event held in Riverside County. On that day the county parks are open and free to the public. The event is advertised by all the local newspapers and special events are planned. The Commission agreed to discuss the inclusion of the idea in the workplan.

Mr. Sykes noted that the ad hoc committee, Commissioners Alvarez and Riddle (alternate for member Hermsmeyer), met with Mr. Sykes on January 3, 2014 to review the list of priorities and park related documents. The committee suggested that the Work Plan focus on five major goals, within which all of the Commission's priority topics could be considered. The five goals are as follows:

I. Update the County Parks Plan.

The Park and Recreation Element of the General Plan was last updated in 2003. The update would be a strategic planning effort to include some of the priorities discussed at the Commission's November meeting.

II. Increase Understanding and Use of Natural Resource Management at the Parks, Through Partnerships with Others.

Natural resource management is important at the parks but county park staff doesn't have the expertise to best steward natural resources. Partnering with local organizations that have the particular skills and expertise in natural resource management could be a solution.

III. Identify and Pursue Ways to Improve Financial Sustainability of County Parks.

This goal could include a variety of approaches including increased outreach and marketing to improve attendance at underutilized parks, opportunities for new

revenue-generating programs or concessions and better utilizing inmate labor work or alternative work programs through the Sheriff's Office.

IV. Prioritization of Park Improvement Projects.

This would require a focused effort to review and prioritize the large number of potential park projects that have been proposed over the years. It would involve identifying projects that are still current and fit within the mission of the county parks. Other criteria such as fiscal sustainability and user demand will also be used.

V. Additional Outreach and Networking.

By being more involved in attending meetings of other park and recreation commissions and public meetings of local organizations whose missions are related to County Parks and Recreation the Commissioners could both represent the interests of Solano County Parks and report back to the Commission about opportunities for working together with other organizations.

Members of the ad hoc committee discussed the methods they used to narrow down the priorities into the five core elements described above. Availability of funds, personnel to perform the work, and political will to carry forward the work were considerations used to identify achievable goals. It was noted that updating the Park and Recreation Element would take care of several priority items as the existing plan is 10 years old. The proposed two year work plan will also have measurements to gauge the Commission's progress toward their goals. Mr. Sykes encouraged the Commissioners to think in terms of how an idea would fit into the goals described above. The Commission continued the discussion by identifying ideas that could enable them to meet the goals of the proposed work plan. Suggestions included working with Solano RCD at Lake Solano Park and improving communication with the Solano Land Trust in terms of finding joint grant opportunities for Lynch Canyon. Discussion was concluded with the Commission deciding to hold a special meeting on February 13, 2014 to take a more specific look at the proposed tasks.

10. Confirm Date of Next Regular Meeting on March 13, 2014, 5:30 PM, and Adjourn

The next regular meeting was confirmed for March 13, 2014.

A special meeting was confirmed for February 13, 2014