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Minutes For September 13, 2007

SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD THURS., September 13, 2007
 COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER - FIRST FLOOR HEARING ROOM,
 675 TEXAS STREET FAIRFIELD, CALIFORNIA

Commission Members Present: Riddle, Alvarez, Hermismeyer, Leong & Laevastu

Staff Present: Sykes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Hermismeyer called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Sykes called roll. A quorum was confirmed.

2. Approval of Minutes for August 2, 2007 Special Meeting:

Chair Hermismeyer asked to strike the sentence from Item number 1 concerning Commissioner Alvarez's being de traffic accident. No other alterations or changes to August 2nd minutes. Motion to approve the minutes as modified Alvarez; second by Riddle. The minutes from the August 2, 2007 were approved as modified.

3. Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve agenda for tonight's meeting by Riddle; second by Leong. Agenda approved.

4. Chair Announcements and Commissioner Comments (Informational Only):

We're going to speak about the Fish and Game Commissioner Association in Staff Report, I was going to mention we'll pass 4 and go right to 5.

5. Parks and Recreation Division Staff Report

Sykes: Staff report today, there are several things I want to report on.

Commissioner Riddle had requested updates on the 50th Anniversary Celebration for the Monticello Dam. There were applications from 18 exhibitors and 2 food vendors. There will be live music, horse drawn wagon rides and shuttle up to the Dam, as well as a historic aircraft flyover. Still working on security and staffing issues.

Chair: Is that a volunteer security or is it Park staff?

Sykes: Security will be handled by our ranger staff and Bureau of Reclamation, Lake Berryessa.

Park Staff Training. As Commissioner Alvarez requested, I brought back information regarding training for our rangers. We have been partnering with Solano Land Trust at Lynch Canyon, as you know. Our volunteer coordinator that has been helping to fund will be putting on docent training for our rangers.

I hope to follow up with more interpretive training in the future. As well, the Suisun Marsh Natural History Association

provided literature about wildlife handling, and Monique and I will be working on some other training on wildlife h such as: rattle snakes, injured animals, and a variety of wildlife issues.

It would benefit everyone if the rangers were more informed about how to handle the situations.

Ranger Niall Dolan will begin training to be certified water distribution operator, and I myself will be attending wo the Intergovernmental Management Training program. There will be other training that goes on as well. Other tra would like to see staff get training on: trail construction, firefighting, law enforcement, off-road driving for ranger at Lynch Canyon.

Any questions?

Chair: Tell me about the water distribution operator?

Sykes: That is a certificate that is required through the Department of Health Services. We have a well that we cl public water supply so we need to have a ranger on staff up there is certified.

Lynch Canyon Open Space fire conditions. I reported a few months ago that we did close the park during the July weekend due to fire conditions, and, again, on September 7th. We've been working with the Cordelia Fire District Jay Huysoon, to be consistent with red flag conditions that are used throughout the County for park closures, and particular, the Cordelia Fire District. That includes conditions where the humidity in the air is less than 20%, temp above 90 degrees, and winds exceeding 20 mph. In those conditions, it is prudent to limit public access in order t fire risk. Those are the conditions when open space is closed, but it has only happened twice so far.

Alvarez: When you close Lynch Canyon, is there notification that goes out? A date or things like that. Is it user fri "we're sorry folks" or just "park closed"?

Sykes: Right now, it's been the latter. We post at the gate. There is one public access into Lynch Canyon and we notice there that it's closed because of fire conditions. Other things that we could do that I would like to get set u posting on the website as well, but that's all we do right now.

Alvarez: We have staff, Dan, that are there, irregardless of the day, that open and close the gate with the attempt friendly or the appearance of a user-friendly park. Something that you may want to consider: an actual sign, very 4, posted sign with Park, yellow, red...real good information piece...something to consider. (Sykes: Are you talking of those gauges that show fire conditions?) Yeah, you see those at state parks at times and there's a sense of pro to it. It's something you may want to consider for next season in all of our parks. (Sykes: Good idea.)

Riddle: Perhaps during the summer months when it's fire season, put up signage: "Park subject to close under re conditions." I think most people that use open spaces are aware that red flag conditions are dangerous and don't contribute.

Q: Is the Cordelia Fire District the first responders in the event, for instance, at Lynch Canyon?

Sykes: My understanding is that it is within the state responsibility area Cal Fire and Cordelia Fire works with the they did have that small grass fire, there were units from Cal Fire, from Cordelia, from Vallejo, from Fairfield. I w impressed with that, it was a good response.

Item 4 is the proposed formation of a Fish and Game Commissioners Association. The Board of Supervisors was c El Dorado Fish and Game Commission about Solano County's interest in forming such an association. We're lookir Commission's interest and Chair Hermsmeyer has done some research on that.

Chair: I received a letter forwarded to me by County Counsel about a month ago that had been sent to Superviso concerning the formation of a Fish and Game Commission Association made up of F&G commission members thro state. There's a letter in the packet that we have. I had already responded to their website with some contact info I've yet to receive anything from them. I asked manager Sykes if we needed to talk to the Board since the invitat participate came from the Board. He felt that the natural course would be to contact them to see what kind of int would need.

Sykes: I think I would just provide the information to the Board. There is some interest and I don't see any interest. The commission couldn't pursue it.

Laevastu: Is there a cost?

Chair: No, right now it's just up to each Commission to express their interest to join; it's in the early stages of formation. They have bylaws, they do have a website which is in the body of the letter that we have.

Item 5 is the Annual Advisory Board Review. The BOS established a policy for advisory boards such as the Parks and Recreation Commission. They ask that staff provide attendance at meetings and the accomplishment over the year, and we're taking care of submitting that information. I just want you to know that that's going on. If you're interested in the policy, it's in your packet.

Chair: Would this be just for the 2006 year then, the calendar year? I don't remember us being queried about this.

Sykes: You were actually, last year. I found it in the files. Marilea just took care of it. It's a fairly administrative task. I would like to see what was provided to the Board, I'd be happy to give you a copy.

Alvarez: When is it due?

Sykes: September 25th. We got the request about 3 or 4 days ago.

Alvarez: Are you prepared already?

Sykes: I'm having another staff member, Larry Epner, put it together and I'm going to review it and at that point I'll have it.

Alvarez: Do you forward your reports to your County Administrator?

Sykes: It goes to our department head and then I believe it does go to the County Administrator.

Alvarez: Would it be appropriate from this point on to be cc'd, that way it lets us know and it also let the powers that be know whether that be County Administrator, your boss, or the BOS, that way we are in the information loop.

Sykes: Okay. That's all I have. No, I'm sorry, I forgot. I want to mention, the Vacaville Sunrise Rotary Club will be sponsoring a kid's free fishing derby on September 22nd at Lake Solano Park. It's in cooperation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Chair: What kind of fishing?

Sykes: Trout, I think.

Chair: And that's at Lake Solano?

Sykes: Lake Solano, yes, at the fishing pond there. September 22, 9 am to 2 pm.

6. Review and Presentations by the Applicants for the 2007-8 Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund Awards. At this time, we all have copies of the applications?

Sykes: I have 3 copies of the applications that I'm going to provide to members who will be doing the evaluations. I also have a list of everyone who has submitted an application.

Chair: So this would be reviewed by the evaluation committee and brought back to the Commission.

Sykes: At this time, there isn't a need for action by the Commission, it's just for information.

Chair: Not to offend anyone, but we have a list and I'll just read the applicants top to bottom and as I read your name, if you're the one, then you can come up and make your presentation if that's okay with everyone.

The first applicant is the Suisun Marsh Natural History Association and Monique Liguori.

[Presentation from Suisun Marsh Natural History Association.]

Chair: To reiterate what Dan brought up, our committee will review all applications and the commission will also have the opportunity to review those prior to any action. I wanted to ask, is there any other agency in the County who provides services that you perform?

Liguori: No sir, there isn't. Some of you may be familiar with the International Bird Rescue and Research in Corcoran, which is primarily an oil spill response facility. After the Exxon Valdez, we had oil spill response centers set up through California in Arcata, Huntington Beach, and the IBRS is the Central Coast response center. They handle only water birds.

Chair: Okay

Liguori: I will say that we do send our water birds to them because they are a little bit better funded than we are.

Chair: So it's a facility that cares for the animals until they are able to return to the wild or if they can't return, then it's a suitable home for them?

Liguori: Yes

Chair: I know the Folsom Zoo has a facility and most of the animals in the zoo are animals that can't return to their natural habitat.

Liguori: Yes, we have that component at the wildlife center too, Commissioner. We have 9 releasables that public can see because we are rehabilitating them and preparing them for release back into the wild.

Alvarez: Do you have a working relationship with the Valencia Museum.

Liguori: Yes, sir, we do work with them. We're in Region 3. The Fish and Game department breaks wildlife center into regions and with the wildlife centers in our regions, we can do transfers between us. For example, a few years ago a baby bobcat found floating down Putah Creek by a fisherman. There was no option of reuniting with the mom, which would have been our first choice. In a case like this, they would all go to World Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center at Morgan Hill and they are raised by people who go through extraordinary efforts to keep these bobcats from imprinting. Our bobcat went down there until it was ready to come back here. The requirement from the department is that animals that are transferred do come back to Solano County to be released in Solano County.

Alvarez: For animals, birds, that are found in Benicia, you care for them?

Liguori: Yes, we cover all of Solano County and we have an arrangement with the Benicia/Vallejo Humane Society to transport things to us from your area.

Alvarez: Something you may want to check, it may be bad information. But, it's my understanding that at times the Fish and Game department advises residents to send them to the Valencia Museum.

Liguori: I will check on that to make sure they have the proper information; they should bring them to us. Our animals are supposed to stay within County. There are exceptions; we do have permission from the department to transfer for example, to Clear Lake Wildlife Rescue, because we are not a fawn facility.

Alvarez: Okay, something else in Benicia. If you would contact Ann Dunlevy. She prepares our quarterly brochure

put a little splash in there, advice to the community about what they should do if they discover an animal, who th contact. I think there's a good percentage going to Contra Costa County.

Liguori: I will certainly look into that and make every effort. We do release press releases to the entire County, b tough to get the word out to everybody. I will certainly check with PD immediately and make sure they have the information.

Alvarez: And check with Ann, I'm sure we can put something into the brochure.

Liguori: I appreciate it very much, Mike. Thank you.

Q for the Chair: How much do we have to disburse this year?

Sykes: The amount is approximately \$17,950.00.

Leong: I think there's also a bird of prey place, a rehab place, in Davis, which is actually in Solano County.

Liguori: I believe that's Yolo, Robin.

Leong: It's south of Old Davis Road.

Liguori: Are they affiliated with the college?

Leong: They are, but they're in Solano County.

[Presentation by Suisun Resource Conservation District, Jeremy Todoroff]

Chair: Could you tell us what the request amount is?

Todoroff: The request amount this year is \$5,450.00.

Chair: Is that amount broken down by any administrative cost?

Todoroff: I have an itemized budget, would you like to see this?

Chair: Thank you, that's all the questions I have. Anyone?

Riddle: Is this the a national resource conservation group?

Todoroff: Yes, there is one that's more waterfowl oriented, more Midwest, as I understand. We have the same ini we're a little bit different.

Riddle: So have you tried to ask them for funding?

Todoroff: To my knowledge, no.

Riddle: Seed regrowth?

Todoroff: The land owners right now are preparing the beds. Over the winter, it just sits idle. Come spring, when they'll start to germinate, and will see what growth we're able to get; it somewhat depends on our rainfall. Like o species we have is tall wheat grass; unfortunately, in some cases got a little stunted. In that regards, it was a litt the dry spring. But we were still able to find nests of all sorts of ground nesting birds, and raptors.

Riddle: When are you broadcasting the seed?

Todoroff: Right now.

Riddle: Do you see germination during the flood or after the flood or in spring?

Todoroff: Germination comes once in spring.

Riddle: Do you believe there's a measurable impact of water fowl eating the seed?

Todoroff: No, I would say it's probably more blackbirds, if its not underneath the soil, which we recommend to lar then blackbirds and song birds will come and forage on the seed. I know that does happen. It has effected some not to the point where it has completely dilapidated our whole area and makes it sterile.

Riddle: And who are the land owners?

Todoroff: Private gun clubs in the Suisun Marsh.

Riddle: Are they matching your financial commitment for broadcasting the seeds?

Todoroff: Yes.

Riddle: You make that a requirement?

Todoroff: Yes.

Riddle: Do they open up any portion of their land to public use?

Todoroff: No

Leong: You said that you folks are working in conjunction with fish and game?

Todoroff: This program is separate from the fish and game program, but they are using the program as a part of component...just as a way for the landowners to get seed to plant.

Leong: Do they plant seed on your property too?

Todoroff: If they do, it is not for us.

Q: Are they eligible?

Todoroff: I believe they are. Are they eligible Steve?

Steve Chappell ex-director of Suisun Resource Conservation District stated, If we have surplus seed, but typically not participating because our project requires landowners to do cost share. Basically, based on the size of the ord year, we apply the grant we receive on a cost per pound. This year, we estimate paying 75% of the seed cost. Fis will have to carry that burden; we are not subsidizing a public agency.

Chair: Did you say nineteen thousand pounds of seed this year?

Todoroff: I did, that's correct.

Chair: Okay. And then how much, you mentioned how many acres per pound? So what kind of a distribution ratio per acre?

Todoroff: We get 20lbs per acre.

Chair: So 19,000 pounds covers a pretty good chunk of land.

Todoroff: It is, but we still have more to go. Every year it grows. This year was a huge spike compared to recent

[Presentation by Delta Protection Commission, Linda Fiack]

Laevastu: Does the total project cost have limitations in terms of layers (GIS layers)?

Fiack: The estimate is based on the features that I mentioned. The entire marsh, not outside the marsh...immediate would be within the marsh and it would be the natural features.

Laevastu: What do you mean by natural features?

Fiack: Geographical features: waterway, upland, those kinds of features. In addition to that, if there are existing Belden's Landing, conservation district trails for hunting would show, any demonstration projects that we are aware of show. The negative aspects that people need to be aware about, such as invasive species, and also the beneficial

[Presentation by California Waterfowl Association, James Swan]

Laevastu: Under the fish and game code section 13.103, which paragraphs or paragraphs do you see your project under?
Swan: I would see it under (a) public education including audio and visual recordings and (m) other expenditures by the park. There are letters from Nancy Foley, who is head of enforcement and you'll find this in the proposal, and Jerry Carnel who is with the warden's association, so I have the approval of the Department of Fish & Game and they are actually backing us. We've done the 3 minute piece that they are using right now with the warden's foundation, and we are along the way in the process of raising money to get to the point where we can shoot with Rick Schroeder in the future.

Q: Where do you see yourself going at this time with production?

Swan: We're in development at this point, shooting footage, I'd like to see full production start by the end of November, ideally, we'd like to wrap by April. The North American Wildlife Law Enforcement Officer's Association which covers game wardens, asked me to be the keynote speaker in the national convention in July in Montana, where I hope to premiere this.

Q: Would credits be given to donors?

Swan: Absolutely, all credits, you will get copies as much as possible, to all commissions, all the state organizations, the environment, libraries, schools, and I see it coming on PBS and/or other channels. Showings when they occur will have a long ripple effect, because wardens are unknown right now, that's why they're so under-funded and under-supported. If we want to get into the schools, it will help the recruiting in the long run.

Leong: I'm pretty sympathetic to your cause; we know that the grants that we give are based on what the wardens need in the County. There was an article this past Sunday, Los Angeles article, about the lack of wardens, and we know that it is crucial to get the people who are violating the rules; I just want to remind our Commissioners that the grant has to do with the fish and game code, what it's saying, habitat enhancement.

[Arnold Ranch – No one attending]

[Presentation by Solano Resource Conservation District, Jodie Salz]

Chair: Did you say that you already have the pond sites selected?

Salz: We have a waiting list from last year, so I would say we have 3 ponds that are definite for next year and local ponds would not be difficult to find. The canals, that is touchy, because that's a new step. We're going to have to find land owners willing to try something new. The standard has always been bare canal as use of water transport, so you'll have to find people to go out to see what they're doing there and realize that it can actually benefit them in the long run.

They won't have to spend any more money controlling weeds because the native grasses will keep them down. So more difficult, but one of the big resources in Solano County is all of this agricultural water, and if we could do have either side of it, it will make a big difference for birds looking for a nesting site.

Q: What school districts are you working in?

Salz: Work with every school district in Solano County. We try to find the best project site, most kid-friendly where we get the most out of it, and then we work with the school district that's closest to the site so they do not have too much transportation.

Leong: We don't have any school districts in Benicia or Vallejo, right? So you wouldn't be working with them.

Salz: We had a farmer who had a pond down there for flood control.

Leong: I like this. There is a lot to be said about putting vegetation along the banks for not only birds, but for other animals too.

Salz: One of our ponds is a California red legged frog breeding pond. We're working with Solano Land Trust and the county on bullfrog eradication on the site and we're doing re-vegetation for the rest of the ponds.

Leong: That's at King Ranch.

[Arnold Ranch Duck Club – No one attending]

[Pacific Coast Hunter Education Association – No one attending]

Chair: There isn't a requirement for attendance; the applications are received, this is a matter of public record.

Laevastu: The subcommittee that's going to go over the applications is going to meet Monday, October 1.

Sykes: I would like to take a minute to recognize Dimitrios Georges.
For the Arnold Ranch Duck Club, Mike Lenzi, the amount requested is \$338.46.
For Arnold Ranch, Inc., their request is \$10,000.00.
For Pacific Coast Hunter Education Association, the amount request is \$2,327.00.

Q: Does the Waterfowl Association have anything in there?

Sykes: The California Waterfowl Association request is \$15,000.00.

7. Committee Reports

Commissioner Laevastu; Reported the Kinder Morgan Committee had two meetings to start working on a framework to present to the commission. They would like the Commission's feedback if the committee was working in the direction the Commission wants.

The framework is attached to the agenda and Commissioner Laevastu went over the information on the handout.

Chair: I think it is terrific what you have accomplished. I am wondering if the second set of bullets is something the committee needs to do or should the commission do when looking at the set of applications.

Leong: On the matching fund requirements. I think it is one way of making more money out of what we have. I think it should be one of the requirements.

Leong: On the area of a funding cap. Don't really know about that. If you are buying property to enhance, you limit the amount of money going to other grants we might not have any money for other type of stuff.

Alvarez: I too think the committee has done well. As a commissioner I would like to see the bottom strategies worked out. I think they are going in the right direction. Keep moving forward until there is a product we can evaluate.

Laevastu: So what I hear from the Commission is to carry on.

Chair: If there is anything else you need from this commission then let us know. If there is anything the commission can do to further your work we will.

8. Public Comments

Linda Fiack announced the Coastal Clean-up would occur next Saturday. The locations were also given.

Chair: Spoke of a homeless site on the Sacramento River near the ferry in Rio Vista and requested that there be a meeting at that area also at some point.

9. The next regular meeting was confirmed for November 1, 2007 at 5:30 pm, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

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