

**SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
September 14, 2017**

**County Administration Center - First Floor Hearing Room
675 Texas Street, Fairfield
10:00 A.M.**

Members Present: Commissioners Leong, Riddle, and Whited
Members Excused: Commissioner Alvarez and Chairman Hermsmeyer
Staff Present: Chris Drake, Parks Services Manager,
Resource Management, Diane Gilliland, Resource
Management

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice-Chair Whited called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum was confirmed.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of July 13, 2017 were approved (motion by Commissioner Leong, second by Commissioner Riddle).

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved (motion by Commissioner Leong, second by Commissioner Riddle).

4. Chair and Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Leong stated that he participated in the Visions of the Wild event with Mr. Drake and Mr. Barry Hill, Park Ranger Supervisor, at the Vallejo Farmers Market. He noted that there were not very many participants at the event who were familiar with Solano County parks. He was glad that Parks and Recreation had a presence at the event to reach out to the public. In addition to their regular exhibit Mr. Drake brought stuffed animals whose live counterparts live in the various parks regions. The exhibit was very popular.

Commissioner Whited visited a park called Gold Country in Pine Grove. He reported that the accommodations at Solano County parks were superior with more shade and spacious campsite areas.

5. Public Comments

There were no comments.

6. Create Parks and Open Space District Ad hoc Committee

Vice-Chair Whited noted that Commissioner Alvarez has expressed an interest to serve on the Ad hoc committee. Commissioner Riddle announced that he was also interested in serving on the committee as well. Vice-Chair Whited asked for a motion. Commissioner Riddle motioned to approve Commissioners Alvarez and Riddle as members of the Ad hoc committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leong.

7. Status reports by Staff

A. Attendance and Revenue Summary

Mr. Drake reported that the first two months of the fiscal year finds the attendance in a similar position to where it was at this time last year. The primary difference being that last

year there was a significant attendance up tick at Lake Solano for July. Otherwise the parks are tracking closely to FY16/17 numbers. Last year there were a lot of reservations for the Fourth of July unfortunately there was a fire closure that weekend. Almost all the reservations for that weekend were rescheduled for later in the month. During that time they also received many more new reservations for July as well. The canoe and kayak rentals were very popular and also brought in visitors and revenue. Consequently this year more kayaks have been added for a total of thirteen. It is estimated that the kayaks will pay for themselves in one year.

Revenue at Sandy Beach is about the same as last year at this time. Belden's Landing has stabilized and Lynch Canyon is where it is expected to be. Commissioner Whited noted that the signs at Lynch Canyon are well done and very visible. Mr. Drake noted that they are looking to replace the gate signs as well with reflective signage for better visibility. It was also noted that there was a red flag closure at Lynch Canyon over the Labor Day weekend which likely impacted its revenue. Currently Parks is at 26% of projected revenue at two and a half months into the new fiscal year. With all the fire activity over the last few years Mr. Drake didn't want to project out any further.

B. Project Updates

Most projects are on hold due to high visitor attendance at the parks during the summer season. There was some paving work completed on the lower section of the campground at Lake Solano as part of the FEMA repairs from the past winter and spring storm related damages. They are also working with Health and Social Services to install water bottle refill stations at Lake Solano and Sandy Beach. They will receive a total of five stations which will tap into existing water sources.

C. Park Closure Status and Incident Updates

Lynch Canyon experienced a four day red flag closure over Labor Day weekend. With the exception of two weekends Sandy Beach has had capacity closures every weekend since the Commission's last meeting in July. The lower section of the campground at Lake Solano was closed for a week while paving repairs were being done.

The Commission asked when the tree maintenance work was going to occur. Mr. Drake responded that they are working diligently at it and as the season transitions into the off season it will become staff's primary focus. The goal is to remove "Target One" hazards that could potentially fall on a motorhome, restroom or an active pathway either by trimming limbs or removing the tree. Parks will be capitalizing on some of the work release crews to help out when they are short on staff during the off season to work in areas where they have the most tree canopy damage. They will also be looking at planting new trees as needed through restoration projects with SRCD and PCC to provide shade and enhance campsite privacy. Park staff was also able to lay down some water pipes while the road was dug up during the paving work. Later they will be able to tap into those pipes and run additional lines so they can install irrigation systems.

There have been several enforcement issues at the parks over the summer season. In the day use area they range from dogs and glass containers to evictions for more serious violations in the day use area. There were also some campground evictions as well. Mr. Drake reported that there were less than six arrests made at the parks since July.

D. Parks and Open Space District Update

Governor Brown signed the Solano County Parks and Open Space District bill, SB365, on September 1st. It now gives staff the opportunity to move forward with the formation of the

Steering Committee. The Commission asked who would be serving on the committee. Mr. Drake believed that many of the people that have been involved with the formation of the District so far might also serve on the Steering Committee. Work will also begin to create a Financial and Administrative Plan. It will take some time to create a well thought out plan for presentation to the public. They also have to give consideration to plans for moving forward with and without a funding source.

Doug Darling, Watershed Chair, Solano Sierra Club, noted that the Sierra Club endorsed the proposed Solano County Parks and Open Space District. He stated that he hoped that the committee would create a thorough park district plan to present to the public. He also reported that a needs assessment for the proposed District identified Greater Vallejo Recreation District (GVRD) property as possible District sites. He stated that he had been told that the GVRD had not received any information about the proposed District. Mr. Drake clarified that the intent of the Needs Assessment was to identify types of properties that could be included in a regional park and open space district and was not intended to identify property to be considered for the new District. He also noted that Solano County cities including the City of Vallejo, as well as Shane McAfee, GVRD had been contacted about the proposed district.

E. 2017/18 Cycle of Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund Grant

Mr. Drake announced that the 2017/18 Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund Grant Cycle will be opened on October 1st. Grant applications will be accepted until October 31st. At the November Park and Recreation meeting applicants will have an opportunity to give a presentation to the Commissioners. An Ad hoc committee will also be appointed in November to review the applications. The grants will be awarded in March. This year there has been more outreach to prospective grant applicants.

8. Confirm Date of Next Meeting, and Adjourn (Action Item)

The Commissioners agreed by consensus to a regular Commission meeting on November 9, 2017 in its regular location, at 10:00 a.m. in the County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Hearing Room. Meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m.