

**SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
March 8, 2018**

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

Members Present: Commissioners Leong, Hermsmeyer, Alvarez, Riddle and Chairman Whited

Members Excused: None

Staff Present: Chris Drake, Parks Services Manager,
Resource Management, Diane Gilliland, Resource
Management

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

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

2. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of January 4, 2018 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 Alvarez).

4. Chair and Commissioner Comments and Outreach Reports

Commissioner Alvarez thanked and recognized Commissioner Hermsmeyer for his years of service as Chair of the Park and Recreation Commission.

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

6. FWPF Ad Hoc Committee Award Recommendation for FY2017/18, to be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors

Mr. Drake stated that with the Commission's approval a letter of recommendation for the Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund (FWPF) awards will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors. The Ad Hoc committee's scoring of the grant applications was reviewed and commented on by the Commission. Chairman Whited made a motion that the Commission accepted the Ad Hoc committee's recommendations for the FWPF grant fund awards. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Alvarez. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Staff Report

A. Regional Parks Update:

Staff and the consulting firm of SCI met to establish the logistics for the flow of communication and information that will be needed to begin work on the formation of the proposed Regional Park District. The Regional Parks Committee is working on establishing a timeline and identifying stakeholders. This spring the Regional Park Committee will be forming an advisory committee on which two Park commissioners will serve. Mr. Drake noted that the consultant fees are coming out of funds that have been designated for the Regional Park District through Resource Managements Planning Division. The Commission asked that a copy of the consultants work plan be made available to them as soon as possible.

B. Attendance and Revenue Summary

The revenue goal to date is at 64%. The number of estimated visitors to date is 133,126. The numbers are tracking closely to last year's figures. Belden's Landing continues to generate revenue and of the four parks it is at the highest percentage of revenue to date. The combination of having a larger staff presence at the park, the payment machine, iron ranger, and an extraordinarily good fishing season has helped boost revenue at Belden's Landing. More amenities such as picnic tables and shade are also attracting non-fishing visitors.

C. Project Updates

Currently park staff is getting ready for peak season that begins April 1. Staff is wrapping up any outstanding projects. At Belden's Landing staff has been completing repairs to the perimeter fence and making adjustments to the fishing rod holders. Because there is no designated parking, visitors park in an area along the fence line. Park staff is planning to cover that area with wood chips provided by Public Works Operations.

At Lake Solano, in addition to routine maintenance the installation of the water bottle filling stations should be done soon. The filling stations were provided by Health and Social Services for Lake Solano and Sandy Beach parks. Staff is also working on repairing the pathway leading to the play area. The worn out playground surface is being replaced by shredded recycled tires.

At Lynch Canyon routine trail maintenance continues. The park has two types of trails, gravel ranch road style trails and single track trails. The single track trails take a little more abuse in the winter months as the cows will tend to use them as well. On second Saturdays a volunteer trail maintenance crew helps out at the park. Volunteers from the Sacramento Valley Equestrian Crew offer visitors information about Lynch Canyon and its habitat.

The water bottle filling stations at Sandy Beach have already been installed. To improve the camp host site at Sandy Beach Mr. Drake and park staff are in the planning stages of providing a sewer connection for the site. The new sewer line will connect to an existing sewer line in the park. Step platforms and new railing have been installed at campsite 11.

D. Fee Revision and RV Dump Station Update

Mr. Drake reported that due to increased operational costs associated with RV dump station use, staff is recommending a fee revision and installation of equipment at the RV waste dump stations. The proposed fee change is in lieu of an increase to all RV campsites in the two campgrounds. The fee impacted is Fee 34 on the attached fee schedule, altering the nature of the fee collection as well as the fee amount from \$19 down to \$15. Currently the fee for RV waste dump use is isolated to non-campers only, the proposal is to reduce the cost to a lesser market level and charge it solely to those who utilize the service. The intent is to partially offset the cost associated with pumping out the waste and hauling it offsite for disposal. Current operations include pumping out up to 2,500 gallons per week, (Peak Season) at a cost of \$775 per pump out. Currently this cost is very minimally offset. The user trend has been steadily transitioning towards more RV campers utilizing electrical, water and the waste dump station.

He stated that two options presented themselves; 1) Raise the campsite fees for all campers utilizing an RV site or, 2) Charge only those using the dump service. The second was most appropriate, as a mediation of the impact to the park user the fee was reduced. Installation of a secure, locking pay per use device at the dump station allows for fee collection for all who utilize the service. He concluded with the following factors for consideration:

- Prevention of unauthorized use of the RV waste dump station.
- Reduced pump out frequency.
- Increased potential to be able to connect to Rio Vista Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Revenue offset to operations cost for service.
- Industry trend to this model.
- Cost to install and operate RV dump station asset.

Some of the Commissioners thought that an additional fee for the dump service was too high a cost for Solano County park visitors and/or needed more information about the proposed fees. Currently visitors are paying one fee that includes the dump service. A suggestion was made to create an Ad Hoc committee to look into the issue.

Mr. Drake noted that currently between April 1 and September 30 Solano County Parks can expect to incur a cost of \$20,000 for pump outs. Presently camping fees only generate \$1,000 toward offsetting the \$20,000 in pumping costs. What is being projected in potential revenues is based on a relatively conservative estimate of 29 campers per week. These numbers show the minimum amount needed in revenue to offset operational costs. Parks is projecting that the new fees will generate \$11,000 to offset costs.

Other Commissioners expressed concern about the Parks Division losing so much money per year and were comfortable with staff's proposal to move forward with a new fee structure to help offset costs. After some discussion the Commission agreed to hold a special Commission meeting on April 12, 2018 to finalize the proposed new fees.

Supervisor Sperring's Comments to the Commission

Supervisor Sperring was present at the meeting and asked the Commission what they believed their role should be in the new Regional Park District. He also asked if there has been any discussion about outreach coming from the Parks Commission to the Park and Recreation commissioners of the cities in Solano County.

Commission members stated that they have voiced their concerns from day one to be part of the process. Because the District is just being formed the Parks Commission has not received very much information as yet. Members also stated that until they know what the new Park District will look like they can't identify what role they will play. The Commission does want to participate in the working group that develops the new District.

Supervisor Sperring didn't think it was premature for the Commission to have an idea of their role. He stated that the Commission needs to determine what they think their role should be because if they don't someone else will do it for them.

After a brief discussion the Commission then agreed with Supervisor Sperring's recommendation that now was the appropriate time to determine their own ideas and goals for their role in the new Regional Park District.

Supervisor Sperring stated that he believed that the Commission plays a very important role in the direction the Regional Park District is going because the Commission is a conduit to the people the County serves. He advised that the Commission could look at other regional park districts around the state to learn how they are they managed, governed and what role is played by their park commissions. This could help the Commission to begin defining what role they want to play in the new district. He cautioned the Commission to not to wait too long before they voice their role to those involved in the Regional Park District formation process.

8. Confirm Date of Next Regular Meeting and Adjourn

The Commissioners agreed by consensus to a Special Commission meeting on April 12, 2018 in its regular location, at 10:00 a.m. in the County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Hearing Room. Meeting was adjourned at 12:11pm.