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Minutes For November 18, 2004

SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING, HELD THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2004 IN THE VET HALL LOCATED AT 549 MERCHANT STREET IN THE CITY OF VACAVILLE

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chairman Leong.
2. Roll Call. A quorum was observed, with Commissioners Alvarez, Leong, Hermsmeyer and Riddle present. Commissioner Garrison was excused. Also present were staff Norris, Davis, Tarver, McNeil, Linne and Fust.
3. Approval of Minutes. On call of Chair Leong, a motion was made by Commissioner Hermsmeyer to approve minutes of the October 20, 2004 (a Special Meeting of the Commission) and seconded by Commissioner Alvarez. unanimous vote the minutes were approved as written.
4. Approval of Agenda. On a motion by Commissioner Riddle and seconded by Commissioner Hermsmeyer th was unanimously approved without change.
5. Chair Announcements. Chair Leong reviews the upcoming Agenda items and the Lake Solano Master Plan hearing.
6. Commissioner and Staff Comments. There were no comments.
7. Public Comment. Chair Leong calls for public comment with no response.
8. Presentations & Updates
 - A. A Public Hearing for presentations from applicants to the Fish and Wildlife Propagation Grant Fund commenced. Two applicants were given the option to make a presentation for their grant the Commission:
 - Chair Leong called the first applicant. Craig the Suisun Resource Conservation District representative explain their request for \$2,205 would assist member property owners to enhance wildlife habitat thru distribution of seed purchased will be planted to enhance marshland habitat and local nesting areas for birds. Commissioner Alvarez requested a list of property owners to be provided the seed. Commissioner Alvarez also qu whether the Garibaldi property is provided seed or do they plant their own seed. The SRCD representative advise Garibaldi property is managed by the California Department of Fish and Game and that he was not aware of their management practices. Norris agreed to find out what seed selections Fish and Game utilize in the area. Commiss Hermsmeyer questioned what percentage of the properties provided seed are private and public. The representat that the bulk of the seed would go to private SRCD member landowners. Staff Norris requested a genius and species breakdown of seed selection, more than the common names provide application, to determine which are native seed. Chair Leong commented that the seed provides habitat for anim off the private lands onto public areas and that the public indirectly benefits from the plantings.

• Next Chair Leong requested the presentation for the Solano County Wildlife Committee (SCWC). Glenda Ri introduced Kit Crump who explained that their request for \$11,250 is to provide native plants and education to the restoration of natural landscapes. Native plants are provided to local landowners to enhance properties in Solano representative briefly summarized the educational accomplishments, the use of volunteers, the work done for local landowners and a fair presentation. Commissioner Alvarez asked commissioners the amount requested last year and amount awarded. Commissioner Leong replied that the same amount was requested and a lower amount was awarded because of the large number of applicants.

A discussion follows between Norris, Commissioner Alvarez and Commissioner Hermsmeyer on the use of reserve fund both grants and still retain a reserve.

B. Chair Leong called for the presentation by the Friends of Solano Regional Park District; on their public outreach efforts, particularly, their timeline of activities, the results of their third Summit meeting of October 18, the special meeting of the Tri-City and County Cooperative Planning Group of October 20 and the feasibility study to be undertaken with respect to Public Land.

Bob Berman began by mentioning that on October 12, 2004 the proposal for forming a Regional Park District was presented before the Board of Supervisors, who wanted it pushed forward by staff and directed staff to prepare legislative language and provided handouts to the Commissioners.

Berman and Darla Guenzler gave a thorough presentation centering around four handouts;

1. The Friends of Solano Regional Park District- Guiding Principles for a Regional Park District in Solano County. Items- Title, "Purpose, Geography Options, Governance Options, Funding Options, and Other Issues".

2. A document titled "Feasibility Study by TPL - Proposed Process among Solano Partners"; it included background information, Steps, Feasibility Study, Project Coordination, formation of an Ad-Hoc Technical Committee, and Outreach to key parties. Commissioner Alvarez questioned what specifically TPL would do. Guenzler explained that there are two phases: the first is potential revenues and funding sources to support the proposed district to be studied by TPL with results by the end of 2005, and the second is the cost of the proposed district to be completed by staff by spring. Staff Norris highlighted the locations for the costs data which will be based (for the most part) on the Proposals of the Park and Recreation Department and the General Plan.

3. The Friends of Solano Regional Park District- A November 18, 2004 letter to Summit Participants and Solano County including a summary report of the Regional Park Summit #3. In the 3rd Summit participants were requested to engage in discussions on the Guiding Principles key components. Commissioner Hermsmeyer wanted to know when the outreach process will become more public. Guenzler said there could be another Summit in the spring. Commissioner Alvarez stated that the process seems real enough that a tentative schedule would help for clarity. Commissioner Riddle felt that the Summit seemed to be more like "preaching to the choir" of open space enthusiasts.

Commissioners discussed the need to get more comments from various interest groups throughout the County, including agriculture. Berman said that County Agriculture Committee members had agreed at the last Summit to help with guidelines. Commissioner Riddle commented that he is aware of some large rural landowners that are against the District. Chair Leong observed that he had missed the last Summit but believes the Friends would like a recommendation soon. Commissioners Leong and Alvarez were in agreement that the Commission and staff must remain active in the process. Commissioners Hermsmeyer and Leong were in agreement that the Commission does not have the time to address the process. Through a consensus of the Commissions, it was decided that a special meeting of the Commission would be required and would be scheduled sometime in December. A more detailed discussion followed on the possibility of the District by Commissioners and staff. Commissioner Hermsmeyer questioned the timeline for efforts to achieve a possible 2006 ballot measure. Guenzler noted that the Commission should make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors in early 2005 to be within the timeline for a 2006 ballot measure.

4. The last handout was the October 20th, 2004 Resolution Adopted by the Tri-City and County Cooperative Planning Group (TCCCPG) that affirmed the need for a region park district in Solano County, supported the efforts of the Friends of the Solano Regional Park District, and supported the Guiding Principles for a Regional Park District in Solano County (10/12/04).

C. Staff Norris briefed the commission on the status of the surplus federal land at Mount Vaca. Apparently the

Park Service has not heard back from the General Services Administration, whether or not any other Federal agency interested in taking over the property. Norris noted that he hoped to hear something by the following week. A brief followed on an adjoining property owned by the county. Commissioner Alvarez moved to advise staff that the County was interested in including the surplus properties into the Solano County Park Division managed properties. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riddle and was unanimously approved.

D. Staff Norris gave a brief history of the 6.8-acre Solano Irrigation District (SID) property next to Lake Solano Park. Norris noted that a condition on the purchase of the property by SID was that it would eventually be used for recreational purposes. SID is not in the business of providing recreation. A 99 year management agreement between County of Solano and SID for the property had been drafted and is under review by the legal staff of both agencies. A motion was made by Commissioner Hermsmeyer to support staff in taking over management of the 6.8 acre SID property at Solano Park. Commissioner Alvarez seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

E. Staff Norris updated the Commission on the Board of Supervisors actions to revise and approve the By-Laws Commission. The Board of Supervisors favored the drawing of lots to stagger the terms of appointment, which are in Article VI- Terms Of Commission Membership of the By-Laws. The Board of Supervisors revised language in other articles and amended Article III- Section 3 - To read that only two Commissioner absences are allowed for Regular Meetings in a calendar year or the Commissioner will be replaced by the Board. A brief discussion followed amongst Commissioner Boards actions. Staff Davis passed a Ranger hat and lots were drawn from it for staggered terms of appointment, begin on January 1, 2005. The Commission members then agreed to the following staggered terms:

Commissioner Leong	3 Year Term
Commissioner Riddle	4 Year Term
Commissioner Alvarez	4 Year Term
Commissioner Hermsmeyer	4 Year Term
Commissioner Garrison	3 Year Term (Not Present- given the last lot as was drawn on his behalf by the Secretary)

9. Business

A. The Commission deliberated on ways to handle the workload of Future Agenda Items.

Staff Norris suggested more committee assignments and holding more special meetings.

B. Norris suggested the commission to seek more outside support of Commission activities (CAPRCBM, other agencies, other staff, etc.). He has signed the Commission on as a member agency with the CAPRCBM. Norris advised the Commission that he had been in contact with County Counsel in regards to some of the Future Agenda Items concerning the County Ordinance and a suggestion was made to review the entire Parks ordinance at the same time. Future Agenda Items included are;

- Consider a naming policy for parks and park facilities.
- Recommendation to prohibit or restrict smoking in the Parks (beyond fire safety).
- Recommendation to prohibit or restrict alcoholic beverages in the Parks.

Amend ordinance to include the existing language, which restricts camping to persons who are 18 years old or as a parent or legal guardian present.

Chair Leong recommended that a special committee be organized to discuss the ordinance amendments with the Ranger staff at each park and then to meet with County Counsel and the park staff. Commissioners Riddle and Hermsmeyer were appointed to the special committee.

10. Future Agenda Items

A. Fish and Wildlife Fund Grant Awards.

B. Hear report on Mare Island Regional Park

C. Consider new park sites.

D. Consider new funding sources for County Parks.

E. Consider a naming policy for parks and park facilities.

F. Recommendation to prohibit or restrict smoking in the Parks (beyond fire safety).

G. Recommendation to prohibit or restrict alcoholic beverages in the Parks.

H. Staff report on ADA policy for campsite reservations.

I. Recommendation to secure legislation to place the question of creating a Parks District on the Solano County ballot.

J. Update on the surplus Mount Vaca federal property.

7:00 PM

11. Hearing for the Lake Solano Regional Park Master Plan.

Chair Leong referred the public hearing portion to Architectural Staff Steve Fust and Linda Gates, of Gates Associates. Fust talked briefly about the large number of capital improvement projects planned for Lake Solano Park with available funding. He advised commissioners that in this master plan, one should think 20 years out. He then turned to Linda Gates to initiate the public outreach session. Gates began by identifying and thanking the partners of the Park Discovery Corridor Committee in the audience. Each of the PCDC participants as well as other attendees were asked for their names and agencies. Commissioner Leong questioned, by a show of hands how many were county residents. A power point presentation divided the park-developed area into seven areas, which were discussed in detail.

- Day Use East- Planned major changes are closing existing boat ramp for part of the year to allow access to walking trail under Low Water Bridge, which would allow ADA access between the campground and the Day Use Area. Upgrade of the boat house area as an attractive destination was discussed. A reorientation of the boat docks will be due to continued silting of the shoreline area. A new boat ramp is planned to be developed at the West end of the Area. Attractions, stairway access and the additional East end handicap parking are to be identified by well designed

- Day Use West- The foliage between the parking lot and the lower area is discussed and its visual barrier effect thinning is discussed. Visitor Wakefield notes that he prefers the foliage barrier because it screens off the parking use area. Visitor Seeger noted that it would be good to have handout maps to orient park visitors. Ranger Tarver signs or markers throughout the park could be included on such a map. The discussion turned to the planned new bridge and long backup requirement. Commissioner Alvarez suggested that an additional side loop in access would shorten the restored wetland will have a boardwalk across it for interpretive purposes. Visitor Gutstein suggested the wide gathering areas for school groups would be helpful. The lower parking lots ADA stalls are discussed. The prohibition of motorized boating is briefly discussed. Seeger noted that increased use may require an additional safety exit from the park. Commissioner Leong wanted to confirm the wildlife value of the restored wetland. It was noted that the classes already use it to study wildlife. Seeger was reminded of the fishing pier and hiking station waysides he has seen in New Zealand.

- Russian Flats- Some of the improvements suggested are making covers over the picnic pads, allowing one interpretive area. Gutstein noted that 3-5 day youth group environmental campouts could be planned in the future. Need to think in terms of more flexible and varied uses. Group campers could be dropped off at the site (because of parking) and hike in and out to the main portion of the park when the bridge is in place. Also, include the addition of regular tent sites, and possible cabins. Gates noted some earlier ideas provided for the site by UC Davis Landscape Architecture students.

- Connector trail- Gates described the area of the connector trail, the need for a bridge to span Pleasants Creek. Current clearing work being done on the trail.

- SID 6.8 acre site - Staff Norris discussed the pending agreement for the walnut orchard. The importance of fencing and buffer planting was noted. Brett Williams, Yolo County Parks Manager suggested that the North side of the lake and Creek be used for a Dam-to-Dam trail. Williams noted that the Yolo County Park and Recreation Commission recommended that connector trails be developed between the existing Yolo County fishing accesses. There seems to be consensus to maintain the proposed main trail to the Yolo Fishing Accesses from the campground on the north side using the Pleasants Valley Road bridge as the crossing. Staff Norris discussed the need to modify and extend the trail between Yolo and Solano Counties. Williams noted support for this concept on the Yolo County side. Commissioner Hermsmeyer noted that an enhanced JPA should be memorialized concurrent with this master plan. A habitat project for the south side of the lake starting just west of the SID site was discussed which could be further identified in a future management plan (with the aid of the Bureau of Reclamation). Commissioner Leong noted the Sandy Beach Range for having to do janitorial work in rental cabins without adequate staff. A suggestion was made to concession-out the site. Staff Davis suggested that multiuse sites be developed to allow recreational vehicle group camping, plus cabin camps. Fust noted that would require utility and sewer connections to each site, possibly putting them in groups of three. Commissioner Leong suggested that a Camp Host site be included for the camping area. Then the discussion went to the future of the existing English walnut orchard and the need for adequate boundary fencing. Seeger noted the need for coordinated management of the adjoining roadway and future bridges, fire exits, culverts, erosion repairs and drainage to make the future of the area workable.

- Campground- Gates went over the campground area and suggested three new campsite locations, additional sites, a thematic play area, clustered camper use centers, moving the chicken coup and doing something educational archeological site. Discussions follow on whether to even label the archeological site. Sensitivity as to the educational developmental plans in and around the archeological site can be expected. A suggestion is made to develop a fair educational area on the SID property site and maybe move the chickens there.
- Entry Area - A conceptual drawing of the new Visitor Center site and park entryway was displayed. The proposal to allow monitoring of the entry/exit roadway from the pay station window was discussed. Commissioner Hermsmeyer to be sure that the long term purpose of the Visitor Center goes beyond pay station needs. Then a suggestion was made to make a separate one-way entrance with spikes past the pay station and into the overflow lot was made. A group amphitheatre meeting area was requested near the Visitor Center site. Gates notes that the hillside below #90 was suitable for an amphitheatre. Gates also suggested that a turn lane was needed on the southbound lane of Pleasa Road into the campground to prevent stacking on the County Road on Peak Season weekends. A brief discussion on the need for slowing down traffic in front of the park. All were generally resolved that more needs to be done to provide safety for park visitors.

The public hearing ends after the presentation, comments and questions. Commissioners discussed possible agenda for the January 13, 2005 meeting. They are; Presentation of a draft Sandy Beach Master Plan, review of suggestions for Solano Park Master Plan, Election of Officers, Fish and Wildlife Grant Awards and update to the Commission on park committee work and meeting with County Counsel. Commissioner Hermsmeyer noted that he could attend future Regional Park District meetings, if Commissioner Garrison can't. A broader representation of the Commission in the future was acceptable.

Adjournment was made at 9:15 PM with January 13, 2005 at 5:30 PM set as the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission, which will be located at the usual 530 Clay Street location.

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