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Minutes For September 14, 2006

SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING, HELD THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2006 AT THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER FLOOR HEARING ROOM, LOCATED AT 675 TEXAS STREET, FAIRFIELD, CALIFORNIA

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

Commission Member Excused:

Staff Present: Taylor, Tanner-Linne, Fiack, Fust

1. Chair Hermsmeyer called the meeting to order at 5:36 PM. A quorum was confirmed.
2. Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Riddle made motion to approve the minutes for the July 13, 2006 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Alvarez and the minutes were approved.
3. Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Laevastu made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leong and was approved unanimously.
3. Chair Announcements: Chair Hermsmeyer stated there were no announcements for tonight meeting.
4. Commissioner and Staff Comments
5. Public Comments:

Robin Cox of the Solano County Smoke Free Parks Committee wanted to thank the Commission for their work with the committee and presented each of the Commissioners with shirts. The committee is planning a small event in October or November to celebrate the work being done in these areas. The committee will let the commission know as soon as possible when the event is being held.

7. Parks Division Staff Reports and Recommendations for Commission Action:

Agenda Item 7 Park Division Staff Report and Recommendations for Commission Action:

- A. Staff Taylor reported on the recruitment for the Park Services Manager.

The last recruitment for the Park Services Manager was not successful. The Board of Supervisors approved a 5% increase in salary for this position and a new recruitment has been started by Human Resources. The closing date is September 15, 2006.

Staff Taylor stated Commissioner Terry Riddle had volunteered to be on the interview panel and will be cont interviews are scheduled. If Commissioner Riddle is not able or available then Commissioner Hermsmeyer will be panel.

Staff Taylor reported on the status of the negotiations on the agreement between the Land Trust and the Co Jim Fiack with the County Administrator's Office is taking the lead on the negotiations.

Staff Taylor stated a report has been given earlier on a dam located at Lynch Canyon. The property line goes stra the middle of the dam with half being owned by the Land Trust and half by the neighboring property owner. Since reservoir behind the dam contains in excess of 50 acre feet of water it is subject to State regulatory authority. As constructed the dam does not meet the design requirements for a dam of its size and that has become a factor in negotiations between the County and the Land Trust.

Commissioner Hermsmeyer asked if the county had considered deeding the dam over to the neighbor.

Staff Taylor said the idea had merit but that it is up to the Land Trust and the neighboring property owner to resc issue. The neighbor property owner needs the water for their grazing cattle.

What are we assuming in the way of public liability exposure is one of the questions being asked. More concerns : the ADA requirements for the Park. What effect will this have on us? What will be the County have to do to gara for everyone?

Consideration and recommendation for approval to the Board of Supervisors the Master Plans for Lake Solano Reg and Sandy Beach Park

Mr. Steve Fust of Swinerton Corporation, consultant to Solano County reported on the status of the Master Plans : Solano Regional Park and Sandy Beach Park and they would be going before the Board of Supervisors.

We have held public hearings and the information regarding going before the Board and get a final CEQA approva being sent to each of the adjacent property owners, notices will be posted at the Park and placed in the newspaper bring this before the Board in October .

Then we will go back before the Board of Supervisors on either November 7th or 14th for final approval and will s design of the Center. The Nature Center project has \$1,578,000 in funding set aside at present from Prop 12 and Commissioner Alvarez asked if the Commission could review the plan when it is received. Staff said absolutely. Co Alvarez stated the Commission should give their ok on the preliminary layout of the site plan.

Staff Taylor said the Board of Supervisors will ask if the Commission has given their approval before approving a

B. Staff Taylor reported Park Ranger Supervisor Duane Davis had been working with other organizations to c to help with the abatement of invasive plant species. Commissioner Riddle said the Parks will have to spray to pre of the invasive plants. The Arundo will need to be sprayed for several years to keep it from coming back.

Staff Taylor reported also the Sunrise Rotary Club Fishing Derby is set for September 23, 2006 at Lake Sola Park.

C. Fish & Wildlife Propagation Fund Award Grant Application & guidelines.

Staff Taylor stated the award recommendations have been changed and the amount of the award was raise 60%.

Commissioner Laevastu asked if before the commission discusses the public comments should now be taken

Jerry B. Emanuelson, Suisun Marsh Natural History Association was present and rose to speak. Mr. Emanuelson completely disagreed with the staff approach. Mr. Emanuelson stated to his recollection the intent of the Fish & Propagation Fund money was not meant for the Solano County Parks which is tax funded. Mr. Emanuelson stated reading the Fish & Game Code and can not find anything in there that would tell him the money should be going to Park & Recreation. It is set up for public education, emergency treatment for animals, and improvement of habitats provide for funding for Fish & Game administrative cost. Mr. Emanuelson stated he does not think it is appropriate for staff to be applying for the Fish & Game funds and staff evaluating the applicants for funding since they are applying for the same funds. It is a conflict of interest. Mr. Emanuelson handed out letters to the commission on his statements. The commission considers the new guidelines they should be considering them based on the original text in the Fish & Game Code guidelines.

Commissioner Hermsmeyer asked Mr. Emanuelson If it the documentation of a percentage reserve for the County Parks is the issue. Mr. Emanuelson said the parks should have to apply and qualify as everyone else. The Parks should make an application in the same criteria as any other group.

Commissioner Alvarez said any percentage was set aside it would be guaranteed to be would be used for County Parks project.

Commissioner Laevastu asked if they could hear all the public comments before discussing the item. Commissioner Riddle stated he felt all the public comments should be discussed first.

Steve Chappell, Executive Director Solano Resource Conservation District wanted to commend the County for overhauling the proposal. The new changes and approach lends accountability to that. Mr. Chappell stated he had about giving an allocating a portion of the money to a dedicated pot which is rather self serving. The funds should be reinvested into the County whether private or public land through education or habitat. In a park setting there is compatible wildlife use other than raccoons. But to say there is wildlife enhancement in the park seems to be stretching the truth.

Commissioner Laevastu stated she was glad they were moving forward in the process of being objective. There are some areas in the evaluation criteria that are of concern. A couple of them appear to me to be written in a manner of evaluating how well the application is written instead of the content of the application. Commissioner Laevastu lists the following concerns with the proposed application process:

1. Content of the proposal should be more important than clarity;
2. Staff should reconsider how weighting different aspects of the applicants' proposals adds to the process. Are we weighting these more less equally why have a weigh on them at all. What are the objective standards we should be measuring against? If there are no standards how do we evaluate the proposals? How do we determine the most deserving grant instead of the second most deserving?
3. In terms of evaluation committee composition, a subject matter expert should be included. The County Parks should compete along with everyone else instead of having a reserve of money and the best project that really helps the Fish & Wildlife gets the money whether it be a County Park project or non-county park project. If we have the correct criteria and standard the appropriate committee through the paper audit trail this County project really meets the spirit of the law to help the Fish & Wildlife.

Commissioner Riddle concurred with Commissioner Laevastu's position.

Staff Taylor said staff sought to take any appearance or reality of a conflict by having a percentage of funds reserved for County Parks. Last year staff did compete. There is nothing in the code requires the competitive process at all. Nothing in the code provides for a specifying means or allocating or distributing the money. Just has to be spent in certain categories to be in compliance with the Fish and Game Code.

Commissioner Alvarez asked, is there a prohibition in the law that will not allow the parks to compete.

Staff Taylor responded that there is no such prohibition.

Commissioner Alvarez agreed with the discussion looking at the criteria and the make up of committee to get experts to help and applauded staff for their attempting to deal directly with conflict of interest.

Commissioner Alvarez state he thought a percentage should be set aside for the County for use. It will take out and put the County in the forefront to deal with the issues that relate to preservation and the habitat. The County is the largest part of the public that enjoy the County's parks habitat and open space that is open to the general public.

Commissioner Hermsmeyer expressed concern about the applicability of the new process in this round of grants. There could have a different set of rules for these two types issues or is it County Council view that one size fits all.

Commissioner Leong agreed with comments from other commissioners that County Parks should not have a set-aside from the grant fund. They should compete for the funds and as long as they meet the criteria and the parks solve some habitat restoration problems and could use the money go back for more wildlife things.

Staff Taylor offered an alternative that would address both the issue of evaluation committee composition and County Parks set-aside: (1) the Committee would have a subject matter expert from one of the many environmental firms for the County assist in evaluating applications and (2) the County Parks Division will submit applications with no guarantee of award, but that will be consistent with the master plans reviewed by the Commission and approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Alvarez said he thought the Commission should vote on this issue and give staff direction. He offered a motion that we approve staff for the set aside. The motion died for lack of a second.

The Commission directed Staff to bring back an amended application document at the next Commission meeting will address the items discussed tonight: provide for a fresh evaluation process including the composition of the evaluation team and revise the schedule for the application process to reflect the additional time necessary for the Commission to review the changes in process. If it meets the satisfaction of the Commission at the next meeting then they can go forward with the application process and revised schedule.

Steve Chappell of the Suisun Resource Conservation District invited the Commission to tour the marsh.

Steve Chappell said he would send an invitation letter to tour the marsh through the General Services office and scheduling with the Commission.

Agenda Item #8 Committee Reports: There were no committee reports.

Agenda Item #9 Future Agenda Items:

- A. Staff report on ADA policy for campsite reservations.
- B. Hear report on Mare Island Regional Park.
- C. Consider new park sites.
- D. Consider new funding sources for County Parks.
- E. Joint parks planning with the Yolo County committee.
- F. Consider appropriate memorial at Sandy Beach Park.
- G. Consider next steps for recreational reuse of the Mount Vaca property through public hearings.
- H. Commissioner training in press and media relations.
- I. Consider rating methodology for Fish & Wildlife Fund.
- J. Consider revision of the Commission By-Laws.

10. The Commission confirmed the next regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Commission will be November 10, 2006 at 5:30 PM. The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 P.M.

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