



Tulare County Parks Advisory Committee

**Committee
Members**
Mike Chrisman
Carol Finney
Nancy Hawkins
Neil Pilegard
Courtney Roche, Jr.

MINUTES

September 29, 2016

03:00 P.M. Committee Convenes

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

At this time, members of the public may comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. Under state law, matters presented under this item cannot be discussed or acted upon by the Board at this time. For items appearing on the agenda, the public is invited to make comments at the time the item comes up for Board consideration. Any person addressing the Board will be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes so that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak. At all times, please use the microphone and state your name and address for the record.

Present Members: Mike Chrisman, Carol Finney, Nancy Hawkins, Neil Pilegard,

Absent Members: Courtney Roche Jr.

Staff Present: John Hess, Amy King, Brooke Sisk, Victor Calderon, Mila Orth

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Chairman Chrisman.
2. **Welcome:** Chairman Chrisman welcomed everyone in attendance.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Committee member Hawkins made a motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting as submitted and Committee member Finney seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.
4. **Public Comment:** John Hess received an email from AJ Gomez who is interested in painting some murals in the parks. Some of his work is pictured in the packet that has been distributed to the committee members. Committee member Hawkins asked if he would charge for the mural or be donating his time and materials. Mr. Hess stated that he has not reached out to Mr. Gomez regarding those details yet. Committee member Pilegard stated that there have been murals

installed in the parks in the past and that the time and materials have been donated. The murals tend to attract graffiti, which would require repairs by the artist. Chairman Chrisman asked if there is any county policy for maintenance of murals. Committee member Pilegard indicated that there is not currently.

Mila Orth stated that there is an organization called the Real Mooney Grove Project that is not affiliated with the park and is holding a fundraiser at Carl's Jr. Mila has contacted Carl's Jr. to inform them it is not an authorized fundraiser for Tulare County. Chairman Chrisman asked if the group is a 501 (c)(3). Mrs. Orth stated that they do not have 501(c)(3) status.

5. Parks Facebook Page: Brooke Sisk reported that staff put together a work group to focus on outreach. The first item addressed was creating a Facebook page for the Parks and Recreation Division. A lot of research has been done to put together a policy for this project including a multiple lens to take into account potential professional, legal, fiscal, administrative, and cultural impacts. Benefits and risks have been weighed and it was determined that a policy was needed. The County has its own social media policy and so from that the General Services Department developed their own. Staff went to training conducted by the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) in Sacramento regarding this matter. There is a schedule included in the packet that was distributed that indicates sample posts that will be automatically posted that can be planned in advance. Some examples of posts are general information on the parks, historical events, pictures, upcoming events, and park related articles. Chairman Chrisman asked what the legal aspects are of using social media. Brooke Sisk explained that the County needs to be careful about removing posts and not infringing on free speech rights. County Counsel will be consulted with any questionable situations.

6. Visalia Feral Cat Coalition Trap, Neuter, and Release – Follow Up: Brooke Sisk reported a formalized summary of the activities that have occurred since the pilot program has begun. Staff is keeping a very detailed account of the project to report successes as well as address any concerns that arise and will give the Coalition the chance to make changes/improvements. At this point Mrs. Sisk read through the summary.

Chairman Chrisman asked who provides pest control and if they are County employees. Mrs. Sisk reported that the County has a licensed contractor Pest Master that handles pest control. Chairman Chrisman asked if the Coalition attends the meetings regularly. Mrs. Sisk reported that they do attend the scheduled meetings. Committee member Finney asked if there was just trash left on the museum grounds or was it related to the feeding of the cats. Mrs. Sisk stated that it was trash related to feeding of the cats. Mrs. Sisk indicated that Karen Kent was very concerned about the member of the coalition that was in breach of the contract and in September this person was told that they are no longer a member of the Coalition.

Chairman Chrisman asked what the electronic data reports are that were mentioned in the summary. Brooke reported that the Coalition reports on each cat and any interaction that has happened with the cats and their disposition.

Chairman Chrisman asked how they keep the cats out of the radio communications area. Committee member Pilegard explained that they will trap the cats, have them spayed, and have

them taken to find a new permanent home while working with Diane Dunbar and Karen Kent from the Coalition. The Coalition is preparing a flyer to hand out to individuals that are feeding the cats in the park to educate them on their protocol. Chairman Chrisman asked if the Coalition has regular meetings with their membership. Mrs. Sisk reported that they do and that the board met and that is where it was discussed about relieving the member not following protocol from the Coalition. Committee member Hawkins asked if they knew how many cats are in the park. Mrs. Sisk said that they don't have a thorough count just yet. Committee member Pilegard stated that there were two kittens left in a dumpster and he had staff retrieve them and have the cats spayed.

7. Grant Opportunity: Eric Coyne, Deputy County Administrative Officer (CAO), spoke about grant opportunities for County Parks. He stated that he met with Neil regarding what parks would be most qualified for the grants and identified Pixley and Woodville. They discussed the upgrades that are needed and what opportunities might be available. Lighting could extend the available hours of usage by patrons. A high level of outreach to communities is important. Ally Vander Poel, County Grant Specialist, put together a slide show with the timeline of the grant process.

Chairman Chrisman asked where the money that is supplied by the grant would come from. Committee member Pilegard stated that it is funded by a California State Bond Act. Mr. Coyne stated that a lot of outreach has been done and that RMA has looked at the outreach and conducted meetings with the community. Ms. Vander Poel stated that at the meetings for outreach there was a lot of excitement from the local community. The conditions of the parks prevented them from using the park as often as they had wanted. With the grant they will have a functioning park that can be used year round. 100% of attendees wanted the soccer field as opposed to baseball or basketball. Mr. Coyne reported that this grant allows for money to do projects such as irrigation and lighting and these are projects that are difficult to have funded.

Committee member Pilegard drew everyone's attention to the spreadsheet provided in the packet. He was concerned about doing irrigation over the entire park. A major component to the grant is water conservation. Doing the irrigation for the entire park made them more competitive for the grant. Chairman Chrisman asked what the demographics were at the meetings. Mr. Coyne reported that the turnout was good and there was lots of enthusiasm. The community is very active in Pixley.

Mr. Coyne reported that Ivanhoe has a big need as they have no park space. Building a park would be less of a financial problem than running and maintaining the park. The Boys and Girls Club is building a park with private funding so they can complete it quickly. Committee member Pilegard is providing assistance on this project. Mr. Coyne is involving several County departments to be successful in grants. Chairman Chrisman stated that anything that the committee can do to help with getting money or doing outreach, they should be contacted to help.

Committee member Pilegard talked about the other handout provided. It is a proposal of a project at Balch Park. There was a grant training and this idea was sent as an example. There are many elements of the project that make the grant desirable. It may be around 2 million dollars to

complete the project and there is a concept already in place. The committee can weigh in to vet and flesh out the program. There are no tasks as of now to delegate.

8. Park Well Status Report: A preconstruction meeting was held yesterday on the well at Cutler Park. There is a 5-6 week lead time for the casing and then it will take 45 days for completion. Todd & Co is the drilling contractor. Chairman Chrisman asked if the well in Mooney is functioning and committee member Pilegard stated that yes it is still in working order, but are still waiting on approval to use the domestic well.

9. Tree Mortality: There is a print out from the county's website page explaining tree mortality included in the packet that was distributed. There are 8.5 million dead trees in the forest in Tulare County. The County has started working with Cal Fire primarily and some other entities to start clearing 15 feet of road right of way on Bear Creek Road. They have done approximately a mile and a half and there have been about 130 trees taken out. Mr. Coyne has applied for grants to extend the clearing to 45 feet from road. There is a large beetle population and the small bushes that have shade are taking all the water and then killing off the trees then the beetles kill the trees. There are 1000 of acres surrounding Mountain Home and Balch Park and they are affecting the pine trees. They will need to replant eventually. Chairman Chrisman stated that the forest service is doing a lot of work along 180 and most on Federal land and is a massive job.

Committee member Pilegard stated that a prescribed burn may be allowed in the spring.

10. Parks Business Plan: John Hess reported that there has been some direction from the CAO and this is a work in progress. There is an outline included in the packet that was distributed for a succinct business plan to address the improvements to summarize the discussions. \$1.5 million has been approved for allocation to the parks Fiscal Year 2016/17 budget. The Board of Supervisors would like to see a plan in January and then give this plan to the committee before bringing back to the Board of Supervisors for final approval. It will consist of a large overarching navigation plan to help over the next few months/years to move forward. This will directly provide results in a proactive and simple way.

Chairman Chrisman reminded everyone about the public meetings that were discussed last time and that they will be postponed to the beginning of next year.

John Hess stated that the parks budget system needs to be revamped to allocate resources and identify costs so that the expenses and revenues will be clear.

Chairman Chrisman asked where the museum fits in with this project. John Hess stated that the museum budget is separate from the parks. Chairman Chrisman said that he would like to see the museum recognized separately as a line item.

Committee member Pilegard stated that the museum has its own separate budget from parks. Chairman Chrisman said that the museum has been an afterthought and the historical society has done their part to bring in money and want to be recognized and match the commitment from the County. He stressed that it is important that the museum be listed in this budget.

John Hess stated that there will be some support for the museum going forward. Staff will put together the work and then present to the committee. The budget prompted an investment in the parks.

11. **Committee Member Matters:** John Hess reported that there have been standard postings, media stream, press release, published in the Porterville Recorder, and also a public service announcement on the radio regarding the committee vacancies. There is currently one applicant, Ann Paregien, that will be sent to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

12. **Parks Manager Update:** The End of the Trail Classic disc golf tournament was a success in September. There were 175 players from all over the world, 3 professionals from Japan and 2 from Korea. There are two Frisbee golf courses in the Mooney Grove Park. There was a significant increase in spectators for the tournament from previous years. There was over \$15,000 of revenue impact on the community for visitors. The fifth ranked player in the world reported that the course at Mooney Grove has better conditions than most. People come regularly from out of state to play the courses in Mooney Grove Park. It is a long term investment in tourism.

Mila Orth reported that Sequoia National Conservancy hosted a food truck fest in Mooney Grove Park that was very successful. By 2:00 they had run out of food and did well with the fair in town the same weekend. There were over 1000 cars in the park that day. They are looking forward to expanding the event next year. This was a first time event and so next year it can be improved. Committee member Hawkins stated that the food trucks are better options than a concession stand in the park.

Committee member Pilegard stated that they are in negotiations with a large concert venue for next year and will report at the next meeting.

13 **Next Meeting Date:** Thursday, November 10 @ 3:00 p.m. at the theater in the AG museum.

14. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.