

MINUTES

Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission February 2, 2016

Commissioner Nathan Daniel called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

1. **Roll Call**

Members Present: Janet Davis, Al Sheakley, Ed Harney, Anne Buckley and Nathan Daniel. Doug Doolittle arrived at 3:06 p.m. Thomas Guinn and Austin Olson had an excused absence.

Board of County Commissioners Liaison: Jeanne Herman

Staff Present: Dave Solaro, Eric Crump, Deputy District Attorney Michael Large, Jennifer Budge, Cheryl Surface, Dennis Troy, Andy Mink, Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Andy Brown, Bryan Harrower, Jennifer Conlan, Kristy Lide and Joanna Schultz

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Public Comment**

No public Comment

4. **Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of February 2, 2016**

Item #10 pulled.

Motion by Commissioner Buckley to Approve the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of February 2, 2016. Second by Commissioner Davis. Motion carried.

5. **Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 5, 2016**

Motion by Commissioner Davis to Approve the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 5, 2016. Second by Commissioner Buckley. Motion carried.

6. **Acknowledgement and recognition of Park Operations staff for their outstanding service and contributions to Washoe County**

Dave Solaro, Director said Washoe County recognizes staff in blocks of five years. We have staffs here that were able to attend and he would like to recognize them in this meeting.

Bryan Harrower, Park Ranger has 10 years of service from 2005-2015.

Jennifer Conlan, Parks Maintenance has 15 years of service from 2000-2015.

Kristy Lide, Curator has 30 years of service.

Director Solaro added there is five more Parks staff not able to make the meeting. Those staff had years of service ranging from 10-35 years of service.

Commissioner Buckley thanked staff for their service and commiserates with them on the fact that staff has been serving since the budget has been cut. She thinks it's really great that they hung in there and hopefully the budget is increased and parks will be a better place to work.

Commissioner Daniel read a letter on behalf of the Parks Commissioners thanking staff for their service.

7. Presentation by Eagle Scout Chris Ristine of Troop 107 on a Dog Waste Station at Bartley Ranch Regional Park, Anderson Park and Hidden Valley Regional Park

Andy Brown, Park Ranger introduced Scout Chris Ristine.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding Troop 107 and the number of members, Scout Ristine said there are approximately 20 in his troop from 6th grade, to seniors in high school.

Scout Ristine gave a presentation.

Commissioner Daniel thanked Scout Ristine for his presentation and said the fact that dog waste contains 23 million forms of coliform bacteria is terrifying.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding the design of the waste boxes, Scout Ristine said he designed it with his dad.

8. Presentation by Eagle Scout Stuart Durand of Troop 107 on fence construction and Dog Waste Station installment at Ambrose Park

Andy Brown, Park Ranger introduced Scout Stuart Durand.

Stuart Durand gave a presentation.

In response to Deputy District Attorney Michael Large regarding how many posts were concreted in, Scout Durand said only one post.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding the depth of the posts, Scout Durand said 24 inches.

In response to Commissioner Davis regarding length of the project, Scout Durand said one day, from 8am-4pm.

9. Presentation by Eagle Scout Jonathon Rubino of Troop 107 on a social trail decommission at Bartley Ranch Regional Park

Andy Brown, Park Ranger introduced Scout Jonathon Rubino.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding how many people worked on the project, Scout Rubino said there were over 10 people; 3-4 adults and 7-8 kids.

Commissioner Daniel said it was a great project and so important to the parks. He appreciates all the work the scouts do.

Commissioner Harney thanked all three scouts for their projects. He knows how difficult it is to do and these are three outstanding projects that are very much needed.

Commissioner Daniel thanked Ranger Andy Brown for all his work and for identifying some very valuable projects for the scouts. Ranger Brown said he works with the scouts on project ideas that would benefit the scout and the park.

11. Presentation and update on the Hidden Valley Regional Park Off-Leash Management Plan

Colleen Wallace-Barnum, District Manager gave a presentation.

Public Comment:

Rich Hamilton, resident of Hidden Valley said he would have liked to have been part of the group had he been aware of it. Fencing and containing dogs in an area is counter to what the off-leash dog walkers want. Mr. Hamilton uses the trails for mountain biking and hiking with his dog and by fencing the small flat area, you are denying what most of the dog walkers want. They want open space, just like the bikers and people riding their horses. Mr. Hamilton is willing to volunteer his time and requests that we not change the flavor of our parks by adding in additional fenced areas. There is a tremendous amount off-leash dog activity and residents don't mind, he talks to them from his back fence. Mr. Hamilton's proposed changes would be, not to fence the area. We do not need the expense, just good signage with dog waste areas. He does not hike in the flat areas, just the hills and having at least the southern portion added to the loop, so there is a contiguous area.

Susan Moore, resident of Hidden Valley said she has had several generations of dogs that she has walked in the area. She has learned to watch for the Ranger truck and to avoid them because she never takes her dogs on leashes. A lot of people do not leash their dogs and it has been that way for years. She appreciates all the work staff did, but she thinks it is over kill. 16% of the respondents say they don't like to be around dogs; there a lot of different places to go in the County were you can be around dogs who have leashes. Ms. Moore agrees with the problem of dog waste below, but a lot of them walk up in the hills. To put them all in the proposed area is stupid. She appreciates that the County can have some liability, agrees having a dog that minds you is important, and thinks the County can make some money by issuing tags after going through a process and they can walk, like they have walked for the last 26 years.

Commissioner Buckley said she is not against dogs, she has owned dogs. Recently she was walking with a friend who was knocked over by a dog off-leash and was hurt. She meets a lot of dogs that are not under control. She does not walk in Hidden Valley, but there are a lot of people who would like to walk in the area. Residence of the area who aren't able to go to their local park because of unleashed dogs does not sit well with property owners who are paying taxes. If all of the residents were ok with off-leash dog walking, she wonders why we are dealing with this problem. There are two points of view and we should take that into consideration.

Commissioner Doolittle said the cost of operations goes beyond other parks when you have to control animals and uses of one park different from what is stated in the purposes of the park. He

is not in support of, or opposed to a fence, but controls have to be in place that will make all users comfortable. 16% of the respondents said that they do not like to be there with dogs off-leash, that's still a percentage that uses the park. If that percentage no longer has use of the park because of dogs off-leash, then where are they going to go. Assuming that 16% has homes there and want to utilize the park and utilize the park in a manner to which they are accustomed.

Commissioner Daniel said he does not like the idea of dog off-leash areas for several reasons:

- He thinks people come first. Excluding the park to people that want use it, but do not want dogs jumping on them, in his opinion, human park users are priority.
- The waste issue is a problem and if a dog is off-leash and away from the owner, there is very little chance that they are going to find the waste and pick it up. This further degrades the trails.
- He hikes in the park and there is a lot of wildlife in that area and they should be preserved.
- This opens up this issue for other park areas in the County and Cities. it's a standard here that we do not have dog off-leash areas. If you want to take your dog off-leash, 90% of the State is federal owned and you can go off trail with your dog off-leash. Trails should be for people first.

12. Presentation of Fiscal Year 17 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to include CIP process, schedule and park projects

Eric Crump, Operations Division Director gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the Bowers Pool funding by Pennington, will it be moved up the list to 2016 or stay at 2017, Mr. Crump said it would be the next fiscal year, after July. We are currently in the design phase. The grant was contingent upon the pool being open during the summer, though not fully renovated, it will be operating with plans for more construction after it closes.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding feasibility of completing projects for the next fiscal year, Mr. Crump he is hopeful to complete as scheduled. There is a staff bandwidth and resource issue trying to get all the projects on the ground. We do have a lot of playgrounds on the list and will have the ability to package them and manage them as one project.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding is the Crystal Bay Park development going through, Mr. Crump said it is the Boulder Bay Development and last he heard it is. Cheryl Surface, Park Planner said they are still working with the Boulder Bay Development Company. There has been some opposition from the community in Crystal Bay putting a park in that particular location. The next step is to send out a survey to the residents. Boulder Bay is required by TRPA to do some minimal park facilities, an open area with benches. They hired a consultant to work with the community on a design. That park is what we presented to the community, more robust than what their TRPA permit requires them to do. It will be constructed and paid for through Boulder Bay and use of Residential Construction Tax (RCT), if they decided to go with the amended features.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding if they agree they will maintain it for perpetuity, Ms. Surface said yes and will also include a trailhead piece and is part of the Stateline Bikeway.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the objection, Ms. Surface said there are some in the community that would like the RCT to be utilized somewhere else. However, the places that they have indicated they would like to see the funds used at has been ruled by our District Attorney that it cannot be used for stairwells etc., which is what some they want it used for. We feel this would be the best opportunity to use those funds. There are limited areas in Crystal Bay to build park facilities.

Commissioner Daniel said it's great to see the RCT being used.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding how does the 2016/17 Capital Projects compare to 2015/16, Mr. Crump said most of the Parks projects over the last several years, with the exception of Rancho San Rafael irrigation, have been funded through non-General Fund dollars. We have had alternative funding sources for those projects. This is the biggest ask from a General Fund support, in a long time. The Parks Project list is always bigger than what we can get on the ground from a staff resource level.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding was there an increase in RCT, Mr. Crump said there was not. The RCT is in legislation and they did not address that. They only thing they addressed was how it was to be spent.

Commissioner Buckley said it will be 30 years old next year and has never been increased, and materials etc. don't cost the same as they did in 1987. Mr. Crump added that we worked with our Regional partners in making recommendations when the bill draft came out. We were so constrained about how we can spend those dollars and the ability, to now get it on the ground, is great.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding that he thought WC-1 was used up and were these projects planned before, Mr. Crump said yes. All of the WC-1 Bond projects are identified and funded projects. None of them are new and are within the categories they were originally in.

Ms. Surface added that we were able to leverage a lot of money with the WC-1 funding. The original fund that voters approved was leveraged three or four times with grant augmentations, so a lot of this, is that money that was leveraged and now were trying to expend.

Mr. Crump added that we have received updates from Bond Council on how the balances can be used.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding matching funds for the bike trail, Ms. Surface said there is \$27 million dollars in the project including 99 parking spaces. The project is being funded from multiple sources. The number one fund for this was a \$12.5 million federal grant. All the grantees and funding are matching each other.

13. Parks Reports

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent said she could answer any questions on the reports.

14. Director's Report

Dave Solaro, Director said there will be an Agreement being posed before the Reno City Council, on February 23rd, to help share in the cost and utilize Residential Construct Tax in the amount of \$1 million for the North Valleys Park Phase V. If it goes well at the City, Jennifer Budge can get it before Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on March 8th. If Commissioners are available, there may be a need for support to push this agreement along. City of Reno will provide the Capitol funds upfront and Washoe County will continue with the maintenance of that park. The BCC set aside funds from the water rights sale to cover maintenance for a period of time.

Commissioner Daniel added that the Reno Recreation and Parks Commission endorsed that agreement.

Director Solaro said there are still some issues with Chapter 95 and potential add-ins that need to be done such as work the Off-Leash Committee has done.

Director Solaro said he is still working through the congested shooting and trails issue. He is working through the process of updating Chapter 50. There has been some mapping completed and is hoping we can do this one time and not continue to come back to this every five years, as development happens.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding Chapter 95 revisions and a limit to the number of times it is revised, Director Solaro said there is a process to go through to open up a Chapter to make adjustments. Generally the timeline of opening and closing a Chapter should be quick, but with staff constraints and other issues we have been working on this for 1 ½ years. It will take two trips to the BCC to complete the process.

Michael Large, Deputy District Attorney added that it should be back to staff in Parks for a final draft in the next month or two. It will come before this Commission then on to the BCC with your comments.

Commissioner Daniel said there were a lot of good changes. The citation ability for the Rangers is a good idea. Mr. Large added that just because it is in there, doesn't necessarily mean the BCC will sign off on it and will need to make the revisions they are comfortable with as well.

15. Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Buckley would like the Washoe Golf course contract on the Agenda.

Commissioner Buckley would like the budget letter to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on the Agenda.

Commissioner Daniel said there were some edits from Commissioners on the original letter proposed last year. He would also like to see the budget letter on the Agenda as well.

Commissioner Daniel added that the Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation (TMPF) also put together a letter that they are sending to the BCC with much the same feel. He would like this Commission to choose one of them to send.

16. Public Comment

No public comment

17. Adjournment

Meeting adjourn at 3:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Schultz