MINUTES
Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission
March 1, 2016

Commissioner Thomas Guinn called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

1. Roll Call

   **Members Present:** Janet Davis, Doug Doolittle, Anne Buckley, Thomas Guinn, Nathan Daniel, Austin Olson, Ed Harney and Al Sheakley

   **Staff Present:** Dave Solaro, Deputy District Attorney Michael Large, Dennis Troy, Jennifer Budge, Eric Crump, Mike Kangas, Bob Miller, Juan Martinez, John Gualano, Phil Brazier, Andy Mink, Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Jim Leary, Kevin Callahan, John Keesee, Nick Steuer, Dan O’Connor and Joanna Schultz

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comments

   Cathy Brandhorst discussed issues of interest to herself.

4. Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of March 1, 2016

   Commissioner Guinn said there is a correction to the date on item #8, it should read October 1-2, 2016

   Motion by Commissioner Buckley to Approve the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of March 1, 2016. Second by Commissioner Davis. Motion carried

5. Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of February 2, 2016

   Motion by Commissioner Doolittle to Approve the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of February 2, 2016. Second by Commissioner Olson. 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. Staff being recognized for their years of service:

   - Jim Leary, Range Master, 5 years
   - Bob Miller, Golf Maintenance Supervisor, 10 years
   - Mike Kangas, Sr Grounds/Parks Maintenance Worker, 10 years
   - Dan O’Connor, Parks Maintenance Supervisor, 10 years
   - Phil Brazier, Horticulture Assistant, 10 years
   - Juan Martinez, Maintenance Worker II, 10 years
Commissioner Guinn thanked all of the staff who was recognized today and at the last meeting. This Commission is pushing to see more of you.

7. Presentation and request from Spanish Springs Cal Ripken to name a field at Eagle Canyon Park in honor of Travis Walker

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent introduced Chris Baker from Spanish Springs Cal Ripken.

Chris Baker, Spanish Springs Cal Ripken said he does not have a formal presentation as they decided that would be more fitting for the dedication. Mr. Baker thanks County staff for assisting in this process.

Travis Walker’s passing at the end of last year shocked our community. He was a dedicated volunteer, parent and coach and the Board has struggled to find a way to honor Travis. They came up with the option of naming the rookie field. His children will play on this field this year and it is the last field he coached on. With this Commissions assistance they are hoping to do just that.

Commissioner Doolittle thanked Mr. Baker for coming forward and offering this suggestion that does fit within the guidelines of the park. We in the Parks Department have always enjoyed volunteers at every level, facility and activity. This is what keeps the parks going and active in the community’s eyes and minds.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding are the other fields named, Mr. Baker said none of the fields are named. This field is commonly known as field 4. There are three main fields, where the majors and AA and AAA play. This field is off to the east, which is where the younger divisions play.

Ms. Budge added that should this Commission approve this, Parks staff would actively work with the league to make sure the materials are appropriate, graffiti coating, easy maintenance and a location that would not encourage vandalism. This would be at the league's expense, for not only installation, but maintenance as well.

Mr. Baker said they are planning on installing metal signage on the existing 30’ backstop. Due to vandalism, they felt naming the field would be the best option rather than a rock or plaque. They’ve had numerous offers to have a sign donated and it will be metal.

Motion by Commissioner Doolittle to approve the naming of Field #4 to Travis Walker Field. Second by Commissioner Olson. Motion carried.

Commissioner Guinn requested that this Commission be notified of the date of dedication. Ms. Budge said she would. She believes they have a tentative field opening day the beginning of April. If there is a potential for possible quorum, we can post that in time.
8. Presentation and request by Shadow Industries LLC for a fee waiver for their CrossReno Cyclocross event scheduled at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park scheduled for October 1-2, 2016

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent explained that Shadow Industries is requesting a fee waiver. This would be their second annual event at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park and was a successful event for them.

Michelle Quevedo and Teal Stetson-Lee with Shadow Industries thanked Ms. Budge for this opportunity and have worked with Andy Mink and Joanna Schultz, on their current and previous events.

Ms. Stetson-Lee showed a CrossReno video from last year’s event and gave a presentation.

Ms. Stetson-Lee said they are asking for a waiver of the park fees as they continue to grow and expand. Their core value is collaboration and would like to build partnerships with everyone they have on board with this event.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding what is Shadow Industries and is it a for profit business, Ms. Quevedo said Shadow Industries is a business process development company that also produces the event CrossReno and some technology. They are a for profit business.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the fee of $6,250, if the figure includes loss of revenue for the rental of the facilities, Ms. Budge said the $6,250 is the loss of revenue. Last year’s event was substantially less because we had already reserved the majority of the pavilions throughout the park, as well as the gardens.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding other areas that hold these events, Ms. Stetson-Lee said cyclocross as a discipline started in Belgium and extremely popular in Europe. It is the fastest grown cycling discipline in the world right now and happens all over the US. However, the pairing of cyclocross racing with a full music festival is very unique. Their intention is to draw demographics to an outdoor recreation festival who may not normally attend so that they can expand their reach and provide opportunities for everyone to participate in the sport.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding their Boys and Girls Club partnership, Ms. Stetson-Lee said was their nonprofit beneficiary. They ran the kids area providing family friendly entertainment. Direct proceeds from the event were donated to them. Ms. Quevedo added that the plan for this year is to involve the Boys and Girls Club more in the music portion.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the donation, Ms. Stetson-Lee said $500.00.

In response to Commissioner Sheakley regarding media, Ms. Quevedo said they did not have a media partner, but are talking about having a media partner in the future. They did have radio tags that were promoted on the ESPN channel explaining about cyclocross and CrossReno. Ms. Stetson-Lee added that the primary media partner last year was Red Bulletin Magazine, which is Red Bull’s personal magazine.
Ms. Quevedo explained that the Red Bulletin Magazine has 2.3 million copies, with 78% of their readers interested in adventure and 74% interested in travel and music. The distribution is 520,000 subscribers with CrossReno being featured in the magazine.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding fees waived last year, Ms. Budge said it was not. Staff does not have the ability to waive fees, only the County Manager and Board of County Commissioners can approve a fee waiver. Ms. Budge added that prior to reserving the facility for their event, staff checked with all the customers who already had reservations to make sure they were supportive of having this event around their event. Because of the facilities already reserved, CrossReno paid a significantly less amount last year. Should they move forward with their existing plan, the $6,250 fee would be all the areas to reserve, to make sure they have adequate parking and increased attendance that requires additional resources within the park.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding expected attendance, Ms. Budge said 3,000-5,000. Last year she believes they had around 3,000 in attendance. Ms. Stetson-Lee added that their registration for last year was 348 racers.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding entry fee, Ms. Stetson-Lee said yes, $40 for amateurs and $60 for professionals. Ms. Quevedo added that the event itself is free, the fee is only for the racers.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the organization is a for profit organization, Ms. Quevedo said yes. They did not make a profit on this event.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding is the total revenue off entry fees and vendors, Ms. Stetson-Lee said for the first year their profits were generated exclusively off of the race entry fees. They took a loss of about $1,500, but hope to make this event sustainable and profitable in the future, as they expand it.

Commissioner Daniel said if they had 500 registrations with half registered as amateurs and the other professional the gross could potentially be $25,000 and that doesn’t take into account sponsorships. Will they do sponsorships? Ms. Stetson-Lee said they do sponsorships. Last year's expense budget they spent $71,000 to put on the event. They anticipate that will expand with more participation and expanding of the outdoor recreation they include. In the future, this could be a $200,000-$400,000 event.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding major expenses, Ms. Quevedo said insurance, portable infrastructure, staffing, security, marketing and operations were the major expenses. The USA Cycling sanction is the most expensive and it is very important to have it sanctioned to bring in the racers, especially the pro racers. Rancho San Rafael Regional Park is where the Nationals USA cycling event is scheduled to take place in 2018, which will draw in 14,000 people for seven days to Washoe County. Ms. Stetson-Lee added that they are not the race directors for the Nationals, but are collaborating with them, to help that event be a success. Another large expense they had for last year’s event was the music with the staging. The artists and will probably always be one of the top expenses for this event.

In response to Commissioner Davis regarding sponsors, Ms. Quevedo said the Peppermill was the title sponsor, Scott Bikes was the race logistic sponsor. LP Insurance, Massage Envy, Spine Nevada, Silver Sage Family Center, Dolan Auto Group and bike shops such as Velo Reno, Great Basin Bicycles,
College Cyclery also sponsored the event. Other sponsors are from local restaurants such as Grateful Gardens, Laughing Planet, Eclipse Pizza as well as a variety of small sponsors. Sponsors will mostly local businesses.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the level of sponsorships, Ms. Quevedo said some business didn’t have the funds to be part of CrossReno, but wanted to volunteer with services. The Peppermill specifically covered the prize purse for the racers, which was $10,000. This was split five levels. The expense for setup, building and engineering the obstacles is where the race logistics money went for a total of $15,000. Ms. Stetson-Lee added that the lowest sponsorship tier was $100, which was a vendor booth fee.

Commissioner Doolittle said it seems they are bringing in a lot of out of town business. Have they approached RSCVA for sponsorship and to what level? Ms. Quevedo said RSCVA is a partner especially with marketing. They specifically chose the Peppermill as the title sponsor, so they could find out how many rooms they were filling. The RSCVA wanted to sponsor the 2016 event, but they had over 35 events requesting sponsorship. They do plan to reapply with RSCVA in two years. Ms. Stetson-Lee added that their primary draw is local and regional. Drawing regionally does not generate room nights initially, however they hope that in the future to expand, so they have more of a national and international pull and then, at that point, a partnership with RSCVA will make more sense.

Commissioner Guinn said he has some concerns with this item because further down in the agenda this Commission is requesting that the Board of County Commissioners increase the Parks budget. In response to Commissioner Guinn regarding why they are requesting the waiver, Ms. Quevedo said they are requesting the waiver to make the event better, but they also consider all sponsors partners. Another reason is, so they can improve the infrastructure of the event. They support Washoe County speaking to what the community really wants and they desire this type of outdoor activity. A lot of locals thanked them for bringing in this event and they would like to keep that quality up. Knowing that pricing for the permits could affect the quality and they are hoping that won’t happen.

Commissioner Daniel said the concern is if they are asking for a fee waiver to increase profit, essentially on the backs of the Parks Department who have to put time and effort into this event, that doesn’t sound all that great. He would like to see this event succeed, it’s a great event and he will be attending this year. Ms. Quevedo and Stetson-Lee explained the community benefits well and he agrees with this, but the whole for profit issue is difficult for him. Commissioner Daniel feels this year, because it is the second year, he could support waiving a fee, but not with the expectation they would be granted every year when it does become profitable.

Ms. Stetson-Lee said for the second year it would be valuable to have a fee waiver, so they can get their feet under them and create a stable platform for growth. In the future, they may not necessarily have that same expectation, but the benefit they could provide to Washoe County through this event is showcasing the County and this beautiful park. Most people don’t know the park is part of Washoe County and most people from outside the area don’t necessarily recognize yet the value that Reno has with its access to the outdoor recreation area. They want to be able to showcase this area and community.
Commissioner Doolittle said he agrees that we are looking at budget and bringing in more money into the Department. The Department is struggling at every level now. The maintenance being done is being done by skilled labor working hard as they can, but they cannot continue in this direction. If we were to waive this fee, this sets a precedent for the future. We’ve denied fee waivers in the past to nonprofit groups and he personally cannot accept this kind of request at this time.

Commissioner Buckley said she agrees. This department has 1/3 the budget they had in 2008. This request essentially would be a donation to this event. The Boys and Girls Club gave one day’s labor and received $500, if we gave a donation of $6,000-7,000 that would be a bad investment on our part. We need every penny we can get and unfortunately this is the wrong year for this request.

Motion by Commissioner Doolittle to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners denial of the request by Shadow Industries LLC for a fee waiver for their CrossReno Cyclocross event scheduled at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park scheduled for October 1-2, 2016. Second by Commissioner Buckley. Motion carried.

Commissioner Guinn added that by no way their votes do they want to deter projects and events to come to the Parks, but these past few years have been hard. Commissioner Guinn appreciates Ms. Stetson-Lee and Ms. Quevedo’s time and maybe in a couple of years this request would be better received.

9. Presentation and Update on Washoe County Golf Operations (requested by Commissioner Buckley)

Eric Crump, Operations Division Director gave a presentation.

Commissioner Sheakley said one of the concerns with Washoe Golf Course is the water. He is concerned, if we have another drought, paying for the water is expensive. Mr. Crump said Commissioner Sheakley is correct and it’s very important to understand how both courses are irrigated. We cannot consider the ditches a reliable source of water. The irrigation was reduced at Washoe Golf by about 42-46% and a lot of the rough areas were lost, which we expected, but it was the right thing to do. We paid approximately $100,000 to Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) for use of potable water over the course of the season, to not lose the entire golf course. This is not a sustainable way to operate this course and there are not a lot of options available. The availability of effluent is extremely pricey, though we used this source at many of the parks, this is not a viable option at Washoe. We are constantly looking at that knowing that is dependent on how the drought plays out and continue to be an issue.

In response to Commissioner Sheakley regarding no real solution for water, Mr. Crump said there is no affordable solution.

In response to Commissioner Sheakley regarding Wild Creek, Mr. Crump said the information just became available last week. He understands that it is RSCVA’s desire to get out of maintaining and operating that course. Washoe County has a long history with Wild Creek and Washoe County was associated in the original purchase along with RSCVA.

Commissioner Sheakley said 50 years of belonging to clubs, playing tournaments that he enjoys playing at Washoe Golf and other courses. There are two great guys running Washoe and he hopes we could get a program together for them and keep it going. If Wild Creek comes about that would
be a win-win. Commissioner Sheakley is available, has a lot of knowledge and is willing to help with what is needed.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the Sierra Sage Course contract, Mr. Crump said we first entered into a contract with CalMazz Golf in 2009 for one year, then extended it an additional year, eliminating the debt, then amended the contract to include a 10-year contract.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding CalMazz has complete control of the course and pays a percentage of its take to the County, Mr. Crump said that is correct. It started at 8%, increased to 9% and is currently 10% of gross revenue, but not all revenue.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding where the funds go and were those funds used to pay TMWA, Mr. Crump said it goes into the Golf Fund, which is a restricted account and does not go into the General Fund. Funds from this account paid TMWA. All the revenue and expenses associated with golf are within this account.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding amount in that fund, Mr. Crump said fluctuates and last time he checked there was about $350,000 in the account.

Commissioner Buckley said she understands that the contracts between Sierra Sage and Washoe are completely different. Maintenance staff at Washoe is paid from the Enterprise Fund and the Pro Shop is run by BelMen who pays a percentage to the County. Mr. Crump said the fee schedule for Washoe Golf is not based on percentage, but based on a flat rate. There is a predetermined amount they pay monthly. They do have a couple of months off in the winter when they anticipate a drop in revenue.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding rise in the contract terms, Mr. Crump said there is a small escalation, but he is not sure where they are at, in their contract. When they hit certain thresholds they are required to pay more.

Commissioner Buckley said she understands that the percentage they have to pay to the County is quite high. She has never seen the contract, she understands there was an escalation in the fees and because of the drought and snow they have not been able to be open as much. It is a flat fee whether they make money, or not, and sometimes they haven’t been able to make the payments. Mr. Crump said that is correct. The fee was put together by Al Rogers and our Fiscal Compliance Officer, Rosemarie Entsminger who has worked in the golf fund for a long time. The fees were based on many years of revenue statistic and factors. We amended the BelMen golf contract a few years ago, to reduce the payment, when it was brought to our attention about how that fee was put together, what was involved and the revenue stream.

Commissioner Buckley said it is her understanding the fees were based on historic figures that included the years up to 2008-2009 when there was a boom when golf was more popular. She thinks the amount they were asked to pay is very high compared to what’s coming in, but she doesn’t know because she has never seen the figures and is one of the reasons she requested this item. The contract is expiring soon and she was wondering if it would be the same contract and have maintenance continue to be done by the County, or would it be looking at something different. Mr. Crump said at this time we anticipate being out of the golf maintenance business. The model that is being used at Sierra Sage is working very well. We used to have several staff within the golf fund and in anticipation of being out of golf maintenance we made changes at every opportunity.
We've moved fulltime position from golf to park maintenance, in the General Fund. There are currently two fulltime staff in golf maintenance. Mr. Crump anticipates some type of contract for Washoe Golf that would be on a percentage versus a flat rate. Looking at the two models that we have, the percentage model seems to be the best way to operate a golf course. The County and operator both benefit in the good times, but also share in the liability.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the future contract, Mr. Crump said they anticipate bringing a full contract back to this Commission. We are looking at several options and its going slower than we had anticipated. We have potentially another golf course the current operator wants to get out of. We have seen a lot of golf courses close in this area, as the golfing population doesn't support too many golf courses in one area. Mr. Crump doesn't see golf growing, but we have seen fairly steady rounds at Washoe Golf and increases in rounds year after year at Sierra Sage.

Commissioner Guinn said he used to work at Wild Creek when he was younger. He feels golf courses are very important in this area. Washoe Golf has a history. As an Engineer he understands where the water has to come from, but doesn't want us to give up on the water issue because he thinks in five years it would be a huge mistake and we'd be begging for that effluent.

10. Review, discussion and possible authorization for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Chair to sign a letter on behalf of the Commission to the Board of County Commissioners regarding Parks budget allocations (requested by Commissioners Buckley and Daniel)

In response to Commissioner Guinn regarding placing on the agenda for the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent said the letter can be presented in person, placed on the agenda, or distributed to the members of the BCC. Item #11 is a discussion on future budget workshops and timing so there could be other opportunities for Commissioners to share any comments, or concerns, with the BCC, in addition to the letter.

Commissioner Guinn distributed changes submitted by Commissioner Buckley.

Commissioner Daniel said, if we do approve one of the letters, it would be best to have a Parks Commissioner, ideally the Chair, to read the letter during public comment of the BCC meeting.

Commissioner Guinn said he would like to see it as an agenda item, but if it can't be agendized he will read it during public comment. If it can be on the agenda, Commissioner Guinn asked that it be on the March 22nd meeting.

Ms. Budge said we missed the deadline to place this on the March 22nd meeting.

Commissioner Guinn said this can be placed on consent items.

Deputy District Attorney, Michael Large said we can attempt to place an agenda item for Commissioner Guinn to present the letter and to speak not only through that letter, but also on his own behalf and which would open it up for public comment as well.

Dave Solaro, Director said suggested that, if this Commission decides to do a letter, that the letter go to the BCC Liaison, Commissioner Herman, with a respectful request that she read it out loud during her comment period. Director Solaro feels that is the most appropriate way to get the voice of this body heard at a BCC meeting.
Commissioner Doolittle agrees that would be a great approach. Whatever letter is decided upon, having it read out loud at the meeting, rather than just handing a letter to them, would carry more weight.

Motion by Commissioner Doolittle that the letter that starts out with “Dear Washoe County Commissioners” be the letter that is adopted and sent to the Board of County Commissions. It is clearer and provides all the information and addresses everything this Commission wants to say. Second by Commissioner Harney. Motion carried.

Commissioner Guinn asked that staff give the letter to Liaison Commissioner Herman and ask that she reads it at the March 22nd BCC meeting.

Ms. Budge said she we will have Joanna clean up the letter, make the changes requested, send to Commissioner Guinn for signature and go through Director Solaro to get it to Commissioner Herman.

In response Commissioner Daniel regarding putting the letter on letterhead if possible, Ms. Budge said we can work on something.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding if Commissioner Herman was not interested in reading the letter, letting this Commission know in a timely fashion, so they can approach another Commissioner, or attend the meeting. Ms. Budge said after we get confirmation from Commissioner Herman as to which Board meeting she will read the letter, we will let this Commission know. Commissioners can make public comment, or live stream the meeting.

11. Discussion on fiscal year 2017 to include, but not limited to scheduling a budget workshop, workshop topics and other agenda items as requested

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent said staff is asking for direction on how the Commissioners would like to proceed with a budget workshop. Every year we hold a workshop where Commissioners have the ability to delve into the budget, get information on the budget and request specific budget discussions/topics. This workshop can be scheduled between now and the next Parks Commission meeting, or in lieu of a Parks Commission meeting.

In response to Commissioner Guinn regarding the due date of the draft budget and final budget, Director Solaro said he believes the draft budget is due around the first part of April to the State. We are in the process of submitting budget requests and meeting with the budget office starting next week as a department. We will have more information after March 10th.

Commissioner Daniel said having a budget meeting in lieu of a monthly commission meeting is his preference. The items placed on previous budget workshops cover everything, have been very informative, great for the new members and a good refresher for everyone else.

Commissioner Buckley said she found them very helpful. She would like to see all, or as many Commissioners as possible attend. Last year there were only 2-3 Commissioners present and Commissioner Buckley feels it’s hard on the staff to put a workshop together to brief just a few Commissioners.
Commissioner Guinn recommended the April 5th meeting, at the regularly scheduled Commission meeting. It was invaluable information and would like staff to bring in Master Plans, projects that staff would like done, if there was extra money, priority lists and staffing needs.

Ms. Budge clarified that this workshop will be held on April 5th @ 2:30, which is the regularly scheduled Parks Commission meeting, at a different location, possibly a park. Commissioner Guinn said yes.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding can staff get all of the information together before the next meeting, Ms. Budge said yes. We've already submitted a lot of the information through budget, know all of our requests and high priorities and can easily articulate that to update last year's presentation.

12. Parks Reports

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent said she would be happy to answer questions on the reports. There is no May Center report available.

13. Director’s

Director Dave Solaro said on March 9th the Reno City Council will have an item on their agenda to discuss a potential agreement for joint funding on the development for the North Valleys Regional Park Phase IV. If Commissioners would like their comments heard, they can email the City Clerk, or show up in person at the beginning of the meeting around 10 am and make public comment. This will hopefully assist us in getting the funding necessary to complete Phase IV. Maintenance funding has already been set aside and not increasing something we can’t pay in the future.

Director Solaro thanked all the Commissioners for their time and effort in serving on this Commission. It definitely helps staff in crafting the specific direction for parks.

Commissioner Guinn said he won’t be able to attend the March 9th meeting and would like to submit comments. Director Solaro said we will send the email address for the City Clerk, so Commissioners can send their comments and request that they be read, or put into the record of the meeting.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding has this gone before the City of Reno Parks Commission, Director Solaro said it has and their recommendation is to approve.

14. Commissioner’s Comments

Commissioner Daniel said he is very happy that the budget letter has been approved.

Commissioner Sheakley would like an update on the shooting in congested areas item that was brought to this Commission last year, pickleball and Link Piazza Dog Park.

Deputy District Attorney Michael Large requested an agenda item for the April meeting for the initial presentation of Chapter 95 of the Washoe County Code.

15. Public Comments
Cathy Brandhorst discussed issues of interest to herself.

16. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Schultz