

## MINUTES

### Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission April 5, 2016

Commissioner Nate Daniel called the meeting to order at 2:42 p.m.

#### 1. **Roll Call**

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

**Board of County Commissioners Liaison:** Jeanne Herman

**Staff Present:** Dave Solaro, Deputy District Attorney Michael Large, Rosemarie Entsminger, Eric Crump, Jennifer Budge, Dennis Troy, Rachel Anderline, Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Andy Mink and Katy Stark

#### 2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

#### 3. **Public Comments**

No Public Comment

#### 4. **Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of April 5, 2016**

Motion by Commissioner Buckley to approve the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of April 5, 2016. Second by Commissioner Doolittle. Motion carried.

#### 5. **Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of March 1, 2016**

This item will be tabled to the next meeting.

#### 6. **Budget Workshop Discussion**

Park Operations Superintendent, Jennifer Budge gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding what goes into the consolidated taxes, Rosemarie Entsminger, Fiscal Compliance Officer, said a lot of it is sales tax, with other types of miscellaneous dollars mostly through the Legislative session that have been approved. We receive 10 pieces of it.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the 2007 Culture and Recreation budget, Ms. Budge said 7% for Libraries and Parks.

Commissioner Buckley said, at that time Parks got roughly \$9 million per year and now it's around \$3 million. Ms. Budge said it is around \$4 million.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the NRPA's acre to maintenance worker ratio, Ms. Budge said she would have to look it up.

Commissioner Doolittle said in the past we've had 5x plus the acreage to maintenance worker than what the national average. Eric Crump, Operations Division Director said we would get that information to this Commission. We had benchmarked ourselves against it and were well below the national average per Counties and Burroughs. Ms. Budge added that she believes it was 15 acres per maintenance worker for undeveloped areas and 39 acres per maintenance worker for developed acres.

Commission Doolittle said he assumes they made that illustration to the County Commissioners and wanted it on the record that we are lagging way behind most other municipalities.

Commissioner Buckley added that it is starting to show.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding Park Planners in the budget, Ms. Entsminger said Park Planners, Parks Reservations and her salary are now in different areas of the General Fund and no longer in the Parks budget or associated with Culture and Recreation as a function. Reservations and finance staff all report to Ben Hutchins in Finance and Administration.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the number of employees in Parks does not include the Planners or Reservations, Ms. Budge said she included them in the chart so you have everyone who touches parks on the list. They are not all paid out of the Parks budget, but they all impact or support Parks functions.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding Park Planners report to a different division and funded through another avenue, but do they work primarily on Park projects, Ms. Budge said all Park projects.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the link with Parks in terms of supervision or oversight, Dave Solaro, Director said it is something that we have noticed with all divisions of the CSD. The ownership on staff to communicate has been heightened. Some locations are good, but have struggled in others. Recently we have looked at how do we deliver projects within Washoe County and have set up guidelines on how to deliver those projects. Part of that is to make sure that everyone is communicating with each other. It's not a direct line like it used to be.

Commissioner Doolittle said his concern is things may fall through because priorities may be different on the Planning side than on the Parks side and resources get shifted. If they are just doing Park projects, then he does understand that. Director Solaro said they are specific to Park projects. Ms. Budge added that Park Planner, Dennis Troy leads the development review efforts. Dennis is reviewing development, subdivision, road abandonment, etc. on behalf of Parks.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding encumbrances, Ms. Entsminger said when there is an order for a supplies/equipment that we haven't taken delivery on it, by the end of the fiscal year, that purchase order is shifted into the next fiscal year's budget, but it really came from the previous year's budget. It is not a budget increase for overall supplies.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the difference 2014, 2015 and 2016 for staffing, Ms. Entsminger said part of this is we didn't have a seasonal budget for many years, then started getting funding back. Between 2014 and 2015 there was \$200,000 that Ms. Entsminger and other staff negotiated with Finance to move to the seasonal budget from a different source. The money was spent in the Public Works function of the budget and will not appear as Park expenditure for those years, but for Fiscal Year 2016 it will.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the Water Rights Funds funding the additional staff needed for the addition to North Valleys Regional Park, Ms. Entsminger said they would be paid from that source of money until the source of money is gone, it will then it revert to the General Fund.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the Shooting Range should paying for itself and would fees cover an addition to staff, Ms. Budge said right now we are not covering the entire cost. If we did add additional staff, unless we increase the fees or different financial structure, we would not financially be covering the cost of the addition. We feel it's needed to improve the safety of the facility. Director Solaro added that what the above base request does is help lessen the risk. We would have a full-time Range Safety Officer, in addition to the Range Master instead of relying on seasonal employees to fill

that role. Commissioner Buckley said she understands the need, but we should think about covering the cost.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding WC-1 funds, Ms. Entsminger said there are interest earnings and we highly leverage the WC-1 money with grants to the tune of more than \$7 million. We are at the very end of that process with four projects that will use the rest of those funds.

In response to Michael Large regarding Residential Construction Tax (RCT), Ms. Budge said we cannot take from one Park District to fund another Park District's projects. A road we have started down before is to update the Park Master Plan. We'd like to collapse the sub-districts and consolidate them into 4-5 Districts. We currently have 20+ sub-districts and can be done at a County Code level.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding 4A and 4B, Crystal Bay and Incline Village, Ms. Budge said yes, they are still intact. Commissioner Doolittle said this is a small area that should have been combined. If something can be done with this, it would help.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding the process to update the Parks Master Plan, Ms. Budge said due to legislative constraints the project was put on hold. We knew the legislation was going to be coming forward to change Residential Construction Tax and didn't want to approve the plan ahead of this. Now that the change has been made, we can move forward with the update, if we have the staff resources. Wood Rogers was the consultant on that project and went pretty far into the process before it was put on hold.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the last legislation session, Ms. Budge said the last legislation session made it so, that we have more flexibility with the use of Residential Construction Tax. To change the geographic boundaries we would need to do this at the County level. We create our geographic boundaries so they can be adjusted as needed.

Mr. Crump added that the subdistricts are created in Washoe County Code. We would need to go in and amend Washoe County Code to amend the subdistricts. The legislation allowed us to change the allowed use of RCT. There is some reference in State law on how RCT is to be used. We have tightened it beyond what State law mandates and can loosen, as long as we are within the State mandate.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the change, Ms. Budge said they changed the legislation on how we can spend it. We can use it for infrastructure preservation, but not for maintenance. The fees have not changed.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding RCT fees, Mr. Crump said it's hard to say for future legislation, if the fees will change. The changes that were done were very good for many agencies because there were balances that could only be used for new infrastructure and can now replace some of the aging infrastructure.

Commissioner Buckley said 2017 would be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction of that tax. It was too low when it was introduced, and is ridiculous now.

Commissioner Doolittle said it does enable the Counties to go up 2%, but the Counties do not do that as a general practice. The legislation says up to 2%, and Washoe County's is 1% or up to \$1,000.

Commissioner Buckley said a \$1,000 cap given how much everything has increased is not much. The construction industry went through a bad time in 2008, but they're recovering. She understands that it can only be changed by new legislation.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the letter this Commissioner sent to the Board of County Commissioners regarding the budget, Director Solaro said he would speak to this in the Director's Report.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the budget due date to the State, Mr. Crump said the tentative budget is submitted by April 15<sup>th</sup>, with the final budget sent by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Nothing has been finalized, but does know that the request for the \$465,000 for infrastructure preservation currently is in the recommended column. It could move, but at this time it is there.

Director Solaro said the process this year is a little different that it has been in years past. Presentations are no longer given to the Board of County Commissioners as departments. We now have informal meetings and discussions with the Budget office to recommend to the County Manager, who is the liaison to the Board. The tentative budget should be presented to the Board April 26<sup>th</sup> for feedback and direction.

Ms. Budge said that we requested \$2 million for the Community Services Department in above base requests. The County departments collectively requested approximately \$16 million in above base requests. Ms. Entsminger added that there is only \$2 million available and we are competing with the other departments for the allocation of those funds.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding property tax calculation and additional funds, Director Solaro said there is a calculation the State Taxation does to determine the amount. The County projected \$4 million coming from the State to the County. The State said that the \$4 million is not there. Our projections for an additional \$4 million are basically \$0 from the State. Next year there is probably going to be an additional \$4 million, if our calculations are correct. There is something about a 10 year running average with property tax that Director Solaro doesn't fully understand, but we are about two years behind. Property taxes have been going up for the last couple of years, but is it still going to be two years behind because the way the Assessor's Office works. It's about 18-24 months for that cycle to catch up. The sales tax is an immediate hit, but property tax portion has a lag.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the assessment tax increase cap, Director Solaro said it is 3% residential and 8% commercial.

Ms. Entsminger said the challenge for Parks is similar to the libraries; Parks sustained a 60% cut. We honestly thought when we started coming out of this that they would give us some kind of preferential treatment to get money back into our budget. A lot of needs in the County have caught up to all of that, so the fact that we took a 60% cut is no longer guaranteeing us to be the first to receive any increases to our budget. These are tough decisions the Finance Department needs to make, but we appreciate the Parks Commissioners going to bat for the struggle we continue to go through.

Commissioner Buckley said other departments have militant advocates than Parks does.

Director Solaro said as a Community Services Department we have done pretty well and the majority of that is going towards Parks. Of the \$2 million that we requested, over a million of it was for Parks.

**7. Review, discussion and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners regarding an update to Washoe County Code Chapter 95**

Michael Large, Deputy District Attorney said have been in the process of updating Chapter 95 for some time. The Board of County Commissioners directed Parks to update Chapter 95 some years back, as it has not been rewritten since the late 80s. There are a lot of modifications and completely rewritten to make it reflect not only the present and the consolidation into the Community Services Department. Staff has put together the modifications reflecting the new regulations we believe are necessary.

Mr. Large would like another agenda item for the next meeting to formerly present this to this Commission and incorporate comments, or ideas that the Commission has and finalize it. The modification will need to go before the Board of County Commissioners to be presented two times. Commissioners can send comments or ideas to Mr. Large or, Park Operations Superintendent, Ms. Budge to consolidate.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding number of meetings per year, Mr. Large said the number of meetings per year is by Statute. However, if we designate 9 meetings per year, but do not have a full quorum, we are still in compliance because we attempted to have those meetings.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding section referencing meetings, Mr. Crump said section six.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding change in number of meetings, Mr. Large said we are trying to put it at least four meetings per year.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding what type of action is staff seeking for this item, Mr. Large said we initially thought we would have a full presentation, but instead would like Commissioners to review the changes and bring it back as an action item at the next meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Doolittle to table this item.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding a clean copy with the changes, Ms. Budge said a version was sent previously. Eric Crump, Operations Division Director added that if Commissioners are looking for the existing Chapter 95 to compare to the proposed changes, he would recommend going to Washoe County's website and looking up Chapter 95. Mr. Large added that we had to do a complete rewrite with all the changes being made.

Mr. Crump said the powers and duties of the Commissioners is a new section and would like feedback.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding Parks Commission responsibilities, Mr. Crump said the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) would approve this Chapter 95 into Code. They may have changes and recommendations, but once those are implemented and read twice, it becomes County Code. For example if one of this Commission's responsibility is developing for facilities that would be now be this Commissions' responsibility and not subject to approval by the BCC.

Ms. Budge said the duties of the Commissioner are going to be more consistent with NRS. It would not only provide more authority to be more effective and not always have to go to the BCC and be more efficient.

Mr. Large said he will do a side-by-side comparison of the current vs the proposed changes on what was eliminated, included and how it was restructured.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding Commissioner Districts, Mr. Crump said legislation does not mandate this, we attempt to the best of our abilities to have all BCC Districts represented.

Second by Commissioner Buckley. Motion carried.

## 8. **Director's Report**

Dave Solaro, Director said he did approach our Board of County Commissioner Liaison to read the letter this Commission sent regarding the budget. The request was made and granted, unfortunately due to time constraints, the letter was not read and he will make the request for Commissioner Herman to read the letter into the record at the next meeting.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting would be the appropriate meeting to have the letter read, Director Solaro said it could be April 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup>.

We will be closing on Sky Ranch Park at the end of the month. It has not been an active park for several years and will transfer back to the original owner.

Parks staff has a Rancho work day, an all hands work day, on Thursday. Director Solaro invited Commissioners to join staff.

Director Solaro requested Commissioners think about which parks they would like to take a field trip of and learn more about.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding field trips, Director Solaro said either hold the meeting in that park or staff come in and talk about parks at meetings.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding joint meetings, Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent said staff could discuss and put together another meeting with City of Reno and Sparks.

**9. Commissioner's Comments**

Commissioner Buckley said one of the reasons she would like the number of meetings decreased is it costs money and takes staff time to put them together and to attend.

In response to Deputy District Attorney Michael Large regarding appointing another Commissioner, Director Solaro said he has reached out to a candidate at the request of Commissioner Hartung. He needs to find out if the candidate is still interested, if not we would put it out for solicitation. Ms. Budge added that Commissioner Buckley's seat is vacated at the end of June.

Commissioner Daniel said this Commission has met every month in 2015, except for November and December. Mr. Crump said the current Code is 9, the State is four.

In response to Commissioner Sheakley regarding update on the golf courses, Mr. Crump said we could provide one in a future meeting. An extensive update was presented at the previous month, but can bring something back.

**10. Public Comment**

No Public Comment.

**11. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Schultz