

**SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
May 14, 2015**

**County Administration Center - First Floor Hearing Room
675 Texas Street, Fairfield
10:00 A.M.**

Members Present: Commissioners Riddle, Whited, Leong, Alvarez and Chairman Hermsmeyer

Members Excused: None

Staff Present: Bill Emlen, Resource Management, Terry Schmidtbauer, Resource Management, Diane Gilliland, Resource Management

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Hermsmeyer called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum was confirmed.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of March 12, 2015 were approved as prepared (motion by Commissioner Whited, second by Commissioner Riddle).

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as prepared (motion by Commissioner Leong, second by Commissioner Riddle)

4. Comments and Outreach Reports from Commissioners

Commissioner Whited mentioned that he recently visited Sandy Beach Park. He noted that the beach and the park grounds were very well maintained. Commissioner Alvarez thanked Resource Management staff for providing material for this meeting.

5. Public Comments

Carrie Shaw, Executive Director, Putah Creek Council, reported that she had been working with Mr. Sykes for about a year on the public outreach and community resource program at Lake Solano Park. There is an agreement between Solano County, Solano Resource Conservation District and Putah Creek Council to work on natural resources and outreach at Lake Solano Park. Outreach consists of public engagement events including docent guided nature walks and canoe tours. There are 18 public engagements at the park. 12 are community tours or guided nature walks. Six are park enhancement events such as trail maintenance, weed removal, plantings, and public workshops. All 18 of the events involve the public in some way. When the program started there were only three docents. Docent trainings were held last summer, fall and this spring and now there are 15 docents. Over the last 12 months there have been eight guided nature walks and three canoe tours. These events have attracted over 100 participants from Yolo and Solano County. Ms. Shaw also noted that there have been seven park enhancement events that included weed removal, signage projects, habitat plantings, and plant propagation workshops. 70 community volunteers came out for those events. The Solano RCD has helped with park maintenance work such as weed removal involving the use of pesticides and herbicides and providing

guidance on habitat restoration work. Also this year they were able to do an additional habitat restoration/planting project on the creek between Monticello Dam and Pedrick Road in conjunction with the Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee. Ms. Shaw noted that the current agreement with Solano County will end on June 30, 2015.

In response to commissioner questions Ms. Shaw stated that Yolo County does not contribute to the Putah Creek Council because the activities are in Solano County. Yolo County participates with the Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee and has used grant funds for habitat work and to improve fishing access below the diversion dam. There are approximately 300 people who actively donate to the Putah Creek Council. They have about 3000 people who are active on their mailing lists. The Council does not have regularly scheduled public meetings. Their Board meets six times a year. They do have an annual potluck in April that is open to everyone.

Commissioner Alvarez suggested that an annual presentation by the Putah Creek Council become a regular agenda item. Ms. Shaw agreed to the request. It was noted that County staff are working on renewing the agreement with the Putah Creek Council that expires at the end of this fiscal year.

6. Staff Updates on the following (Informational)

a. Attendance And Revenue Summary

Chris Drake reported that park attendance has increased and the new reservation system is working out well with park users. A portion of the revenue reflected for this year was generated the previous year due to the new reservation system. He noted that the revenue from Belden's landing is down due to the theft of the automated payment machine.

b. Outcome of Board of Supervisors Discussion of a Regional Park System

Bill Emlen reported that during the midyear budget discussions Supervisor Seifert requested that the Board consider the establishment of a Board Committee to evaluate regional park options including the possible formation of a regional park district. At the May 12, 2015 Board of Supervisors meeting the Board approved the establishment of a Board Committee and appointed Supervisor Seifert and Supervisor Vasquez to provide oversight of exploratory efforts towards establishment of a regional park system. Mr. Emlen thought that it will be a multi-phase process that will expand over time. The Board also authorized funding to hire the Obrian Consulting/Strategy Research Institute to conduct initial exploratory work including public polling to get a sense of where the community is relative to regional parks. He stated that there is a role for both the Park and Recreation Commission and the Solano Open Space group as the process goes forward and that the consulting group would be contacting them within the next few months.

The Commission asked if the Park and Recreation Commission would be included in the process and receive reports from the Advisory Committee. They also asked if the decision had already been made to include Solano County Parks and Recreation in a regional park program. Mr. Emlen responded that the decision had not been made. He stated that what is happening now is that the Board has funded staff to move forward with the study to look at all the assets of the county and decide if there is a better way of managing them. He believed that the process will be made as diverse as possible in terms of reaching out to different aspects of the community.

The Commission requested to see the work plan when it becomes a public document to give them a better understanding of what is to be accomplished in the study. The Commission also asked if there would be a timeline so benchmarks can be identified and tracked as the process moves along. Mr. Emlen responded that the initial report from the consultant will be completed by the end of summer or early fall. It will describe recommendations for outreach. During the summer the consultant will be conducting many interviews which will include the Solano County Parks and Recreation Commission. They will also be conducting a public poll. He noted that the strategic research part of the consulting firm has a very good track record of assessing community sentiments on issues like this one.

c. Status of Recruitment for a Park Services Manager

Terry Schmidtbauer reported that the recruitment period for the Park Services manager closed on May 8, 2015. They had several applicants and Human Resources is in the process of screening the applications. The tentative date for the oral interviews is May 29th. He noted that they would like to have a representative from the Commission on the oral panel. Commissioner Alvarez offered to sit on the panel.

It was asked if a regional park district would have any impacts on the Parks Services Manager position. Mr. Emlen stated that it is too early in the process to know. He saw no risk in filling the position because the Department needs the position filled to oversee the day to day management of Park Services.

d. Park Improvement Projects

Mr. Drake stated that they are working on several projects at the park. The fish cleaning station grant was awarded and the station is expected to be delivered and installed at Sandy Beach Park in June. A payment station is also being installed at Sandy Beach Park.

At Belden's Landing a new payment station with more security is being installed along with ADA accessibility improvements around the restroom structure.

Chairman Hermsmeyer asked if the storage lot at the end of the parking area at Sandy Beach Park was still being actively used. Mr. Drake answered that is being used.

9. Confirm Date of Next Regular Meeting, and Adjourn (Action Item)

The Commissioners agreed by consensus to a regular Commission meeting on July 9, 2015 in its regular location, at 10:00 a.m. in the County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Hearing Room. Meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.