

**SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
September 10, 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, Director, Resource Management, Chris Drake, Parks Services Manager, 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 May 14, 2015 were approved with corrections (motion by Chairman Hermsmeyer, second by Commissioner Riddle).

3. Approval of Agenda

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

4. Comments and Outreach Reports from Commissioners

Chairman Hermsmeyer welcomed and congratulated Chris Drake on his appointment as Parks Services Manager. Commissioner Alvarez complemented Mr. Emlen and his staff for an outstanding job during the Park Manager recruitment. Chairman Hermsmeyer reported that he recently visited Sandy Beach Park and found the area looking very well maintained. His one concern was if there were any permanent RVs at the park.

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

6. Staff Updates on the following (Informational)

a. Announce Parks Services Manager Appointment

Mr. Drake thanked the Commission for their welcome and said that he was looking forward to his work as Parks Manager.

b. Attendance and Revenue FY2014-2015

Over the course of the last year they reached 106% of the revenue goal to date. This was especially significant in light of fact that Belden's Landing has not been bringing in as much revenue because its payment machine was stolen. The improvement and

repair projects at Belden's Landing are taking longer than expected. When they are completed there will be a new more secure electronic payment station and an iron ranger as a payment backup. Currently Belden's Landing is at 19% of its revenue goal. Lake Solano's revenue is at 115% of its goal; Lynch Canyon is at 115% of its goal and Sandy Beach is at 114% of its goal. He also noted that there was an increase in attendance across the board with the exception of Belden's (no tracking of attendance without a revenue stream).

Commissioner Alvarez asked if there was a trend for Belden's Landing to fall below its projected revenue goal, and if so would Parks want to consider adjusting that number down.

Commissioner Leong – whatever months that Belden's Landing was behind schedule we could take a look at previous year's income and get the contractor to pay for the loss of revenue for the time period repairs have been delayed.

Mr. Emlen stated that some of the delay may have been out of the contractor's control. The General Services Department oversees this project as well as many others and scheduling priorities may have played a role in delays. Mr. Drake noted that the initial delay during the first three months of the year were on the General Services side. The improvements will include replacement of the payment station, installation of a manual payment station, repaving for ADA accessibility, and a security system.

c. Update of Regional Park System Discussion

Mr. Drake reported that consultants from Obrian Consulting/Strategy Research Institute are currently conducting interviews. Recently Supervisor Seifert and a number of County staff met with the consultants and took a tour of local park properties in Fairfield, Vallejo and Benicia including the Benicia State Recreation Area.

Mr. Emlen reported that they are currently looking at options and opportunities. The consultant team is in the process of finishing up interviews with Solano city managers and will be coming back to the Board of Supervisors with an initial report on their findings of over 50 interviews. The next phase will include polling and examining funding mechanisms. Funding for open space and parks from the proposed STA sales tax measure is being explored. The type of entity to be formed for a regional park system has not been determined and could just be an expansion of the existing County Park and Recreation division. He added that the Commission will be informed when staff goes to the Board of Supervisors with the initial report in early or mid-October. The public polling is anticipated to be completed in October or November. Staff and the consultants will go back to the Board again with an expanded report. The Board will then decide what the next steps will be.

The Commission discussed past attempts to create a regional park district as well as what kind of questions will be included in the poll. Staff thought that starting with existing facilities as a baseline for a subordinate district and moving forward slowly so as not to overextend themselves is one scenario. The objective for the poll is to get answers that will reveal the public's true sentiment toward a regional park district. The consultants have been given direction to keep the poll clear, objective and not politically driven.

d. Fire Operations and Activity at Lake Solano

Mr. Drake reported that the day use area and campground of Lake Solano Park were evacuated due to the Wragg fire. Fire fighters utilized the park as a rendezvous point for strike teams, a refilling point for water trucks and as off shift sleeping quarters for fire

crews. The park was closed from July 22 thru August 2nd. Most reservations were able to be rescheduled to later dates. Staff plans to submit paperwork to FEMA.

e. Smoking Ban Update

The smoking ban will be implemented at the parks thru a phased approach. For the first year (present to 7/1/16) there will be a public education campaign with signage and literature distribution points. Beginning July 1, 2016 there will be no smoking in the day use area. The next phase of the plan will have a designated smoking area in the campgrounds. The final phase beginning July 1, 2017 will ban all smoking in the parks. Mr. Drake will be meeting with the Smoking Ban Transition Team at Lake Solano and Sandy Beach to work on locations for signage and distribution points for educational literature.

f. Park Project Updates

Funds from the Prop 84 Nature Center grant have provided a three sided kiosk and improvement of the water quality of fish tanks that will allow the gradual introduction of fish species to the tanks at Lake Solano. At Sandy Beach a grant funded Fish Cleaning Station and security system has been installed. It will be open to the public as soon as information signs have been installed and the final inspection is completed. Improvements at Belden's Landing will include ADA accessible pathways, and the installation of a more secure payment machine and a security system. A security system is in the works to be installed at Lynch Canyon as well. The Commission also discussed access and security issues from American Canyon into the Lynch Canyon Open Space Area.

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

The Commissioners agreed by consensus to a regular Commission meeting on November 12, 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.