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Minutes For April 21, 2005

MINUTES

SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

April 21, 2005

Commission Members Present: Leong, Garrison, Alvarez, Hermsmeyer, Riddle

Commission Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Norris, Linné, Fust, Ferguson

1. The meeting is convened at 6:10
2. Roll Call. A quorum is present.
3. Approval of Minutes: Terry Riddle made a motion to approve the minutes of March 10, 2005 and Scott Garrison second the motion. The Commissioners voted and it was unanimous approved.
4. Change to Agenda: Chair asked item D (Lake Solano Master Plan) be moved to item A. Motion approved.
5. Chair Announcements: An update on the National Park Service and Bridge to Beach Trail is ready for a two day workshop in Rio Vista for citizens to give their input on the connecting trails. Professionals will develop maps from Sandy Beach to downtown and from the bridge to Sandy Beach.
6. Staff Comments: Tony Norris, Parks Manager told the Commission the Board of Supervisors approved the transfer property from the National Park Service to Solano County Parks. Maps and pictures were given to the Commission. National Park Service will release a transfer when we confirm we are ready. Commissioners expressed interest in a tour.

The vegetation is the same as Mt. George in Napa County. It will be a great place for natural studies, art and science department to go and some are already interested in studying the area.

There are access roads to the area and the Communication utilities and property owners pool their resources for trail work repairs. There are two (2) towers on the property and the revenue from them will go into the Park's budget. Road is the best access due to Gates Canyon Road being rough. Mix Canyon Road gives access to the main part of the property. Commissioner Leong asked if there were locked gates on Mix Canyon Road. Norris stated, there is a gate monitor for different users.

7. Public Comment. Commissioner Steve Hermsmeyer calls for public comments. Joshua Freiwald the neighbor who manages 6+ acres of walnut orchard near Lake Solano Regional Park came forward to discuss the park expansion. There is a public access to his private road.

Norris said the Commission would be discussing this issue in the next item. It would be better to discuss this at the Commission. Commissioner Mike Alvarez told Mr. Friewald to wait and the Commission would welcome his comments.

8. Business

A: Steve Fust, Architectural Services – Talked about the Lake Solano Master Plan. The staff asked the Commission recommended approval of the Lake Solano Master Plan.

Commissioner Alvarez stated if the Park & Recreation Commission recommended approval and then modification were made by the Bureau, the plan should then come back to the Commission for recommendation again.

Mr. Friewald talked about a pump at the site that is used for irrigation during the summer and a strip he owns down on the Master Plans. This is on the Western edge of the walnut orchard..

He said the plan was quite nice but cautioned the lane is a private gravel road and the Park should place signage boundaries.

Commissioner Hermsmeyer said they would now take comments from Commissioners. The timetable is a slow process the process will not move forward till the land transfer has been made. The parcel lines will need to be examined. get public review between SID and the County. Mr. Friewald farms the walnut orchard located on the six acres owned

Mr. Friewald said a water pipe line was under the six acres and hopes it will be protected. The water feeds all the Quail Harbor.

Commissioner Leong asked if there was a fence and Mr. Friewald said there was a fence but it was in disrepair. Commissioner Leong said there should be gates at each end. He observes that the plan for the property works well for the adjacent

Commissioner Riddle asked if they could walk the property.

Steve Fuse said the campground area has an existing restroom with shower and was located on page 16 of the Lake Solano master Plan. It is down from the orchard and there were four showers.

Commissioner Alvarez asked if the other two restrooms had ADA compliant showers.

Steve Fust stated there are no showers from the road to the Pleasants Creek and will be a day use area. Russian proposed showers. One shower area will not be adequate.

Steve Hermsmeyer asked what the Commission would like to do.

Steve Hermsmeyer entertained a motion that they accept the plan to send it to the Bureau of Reclamation.

Commissioner Riddle made a motion with the stipulation that before sending the Master Plan to the Board that an item at all be brought back before the Commission.

Commissioner Leong second the motion.

All aye and the plan has been recommended for approval.

Peter Lucero Manager of the Lake Berressa Bureau of Reclamation stated the Bureau has been working on a time schedule for the master plan staff at present. The issue of the silt problem will be addressed. Peter said citizens of Blue Ridge Trails Committee are working on trails down from the Lake Berressa dam to Lake Solano.

Commissioner Steve Hermsmeyer said, if they were interested maybe Staff Norris could make a presentation to the committee.

Commissioner Mike Alvarez stated the Blue Ridge Committee, Yolo County, Land Trust, Napa County, Bureau of R and University (UC Davis) might also be included. Also Yolo County expansion of fishing access should be consider co-planning needs to be done with Yolo County. The Commission thanked Steve Fust.

B. Friends of the Solano Park District -Bob Berman presented an update. More co-planning needs to be done County.

There has not been a lot of activity with the Friends since the action of the Board of Supervisors. They have holding pattern. The Friends have been looking at the ultimate goal to have financing for a parks district.

The Friends are looking into having a South Solano County Regional Park District. This would include the cities Benicia, Fairfield and Vallejo.

Karen MacMillian has sent Barbara Kondylis a letter from the Tri City and County planning group requesting a joint

Land has been acquired. Thursday, May 26th at the community center Joe Nelson in Suisun Invitation for citizens involved. Financing to get land open for public access.

Commissioner Terry Riddle said the Tri City and County area needs public access planning and should proceed on Countywide basis.

Commissioner Mike Alvarez thought Summit stakeholders want a Countywide Regional Park System. Commissioner stated he wondered why the Friends can have 2 districts and everything be on hold.

He is disappointed that there is a proposal for a smaller alternative. Mary Helen Seeger said regional parks need to be considered in the North County as well.

Countywide mechanism need to be set up. Frustration about the Land Trust acquiring lands with little public access. What is the best source to find financing?

Chair Hermsmeyer remembers the Community meeting and grass root support.

Commissioner Mike Alvarez stated that the staff of the County and City of Benicia used Prop. 40 funds for purchasing

State Parks are keen on having it included. Need a resolution one way or the other.

C: Bob Berman from the Solano Land Trust

The Land Trust provides little maintenance funds for property owned by Land Trust.

The Board of the Land Trust is working with staff and a letter has been sent to Supervisor Barbara Kondylis for their support for a partnership on financing.

At Lynch Canyon there is some distance from parking to the reservoir. There is mountain biking on Tuesday night grazing all year. At the Eastern and Swett property there will be a celebration on April 29, 2005 at 10 A.M.

Commissioner Scott Garrison stated it was too bad we did not get the land before Hiddenbrooke. The final alignment to construct the Ridge Trail on Vallejo Swett will be on the property.

The Land Trust is looking to staff for funding for upkeep and monitoring.

If the Commission has not seen Lynch Canyon, the Land Stewart will be glad to show the Commission.

Saturday there will be a hike to see wild flowers on the Vallejo property. Partnership between the County and Land Trust is needed for Lynch Canyon to open to the public on a daily basis.

Next fiscal year FY 05/06 \$100,000 per year is needed to open the Lynch Canyon. The County and the Board of Supervisors will be asked to provide funding.

Land Trust is responsible for maintenance while, a Ranger could open and secure the property.

Formula for how many Rangers is needed. One Ranger to manage the gates and serve as security and the Ranger to patrol beyond Lynch Canyon and control the site and make sure citizens are out of the cattle areas. \$100,000 : new patrol vehicle, training, uniforms and placement.

The property is large enough that two Rangers could patrol.

Chair Steve Hermsmeyer asked about the liability. Bob said the liability has not been addressed with County Court.

Chair Steve Hermsmeyer asked about the nine miles of trails. Is there recommended hikes that stay on the trail?

Bob replied. Their goal will be to open it up. Hope the people would stay on the trail. We have guides on the trails to go to the top of the hill. Compatibility between hikes and bikes. Because we have cattle and they can be very close could create a problem.

Veronica Ferguson of General Service stated a management agreement between the Land Trust and County will be needed.

Lynch Canyon might be a park within the Solano County Park System. This is a bare minimum having one Ranger on the Board of Supervisors if this is what they would like and then come to the Land Trust.

Funding for the Lynch Canyon area was discussed. Bob Bernman stated the Land Trust had received funds from the Hoffman's.

They would ask \$150,000 from the County for contribution to a management plan.

They would like to have an education program similar to the one at Rush Ranch where 4th graders spend one day at the County does do some work with the Water Way Program for classes in Lake Solano Park.

The Land Trust would combine monies with additional monies from the County.

This idea has not gone to the Land Trust Board but will next Tuesday.

Veronica Ferguson mentioned a letter from Sean Quinn to Barbara Kondylis.

The Board of Supervisors is expecting a presentation from the Land Trust. It would be more beneficial to be presented to the Commission first. In the future the Commission should bring the items to the Board of Supervisors. The Land Trust should bring their ideas to the Commission.

The Commission should be part of the recommendation. The budget has already been submitted to the Board of Supervisors for the FY 05/06. Tony Norris will set up a date for the Land Trust to submit their budget.

The plan must be consistent for grazing in the fenced off area of the property. Veronica asked if the Land Trust would hold onto the Lynch Canyon property if not financed or able to let people onto the property.

Commissioner Robin Leong asked about the Foundation monies and the search for money.

One time donations had been received – (Moore \$50,000, Hoffman \$65,000 and the Tri City of \$12,000. The California

Bond funds are not for operations and maintenance.

Commissioner Terry Riddle asked about the money to make, the management plan and how to manage the funds.

The plan would be for the Swett Ranches, and King Ranch. The plan would need to be funded for about \$350,000.

Commissioner Mike Alvarez stated PG&E had given \$150,000. Initially they were going to do their own plan. They are short \$150,000.

Veronica. Multi part process. The Land Trust has stated certain properties should be folded into the park system.

Other properties as acquired could include Rockville, Walnut Orchard near Lake Solano, Putah Creek, River Park, and Mt. Vaca property.

The management plans should address the cost of Rangers.

Waiting for the Trust for Public Land. Then would like to present in a public forum. Bring this study before the Board of Supervisors. Trust for Public Land one of the participants is from Los Angeles and the other from Denver. Trust for Public Land has a shopping list of options in their study.

Board thought it was premature for them to make a decision without all the information.

Chair, Steve Hermsmeyer said, A firm commitment is needed. The Board of Supervisors has control and charge of the process. The County has a wide range of financial options to support the system.

Chair Steven Hermsmeyer Trust for Public Land lists options.

Help guide likely option that would work for this County. Do polling. Then they would charge for service.

Harry Englebright of Resource Management spoke that several balls are in the air at the present time. The Tri-City County the Board of Supervisors and the Solano Land Trust.

The Board wants to fund support for the County Parks system.

Chair Steve Hermsmeyer said given the magnitude of this, we should step back and address it. There is a lot to learn and understand what they are being asked to do.

It is good that the Friends are meeting again and coming back to the Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

Chair stated the position – Don't care what the method or who is in charge, we want funding for Parks and Open Space.

Commissioner Mike Alvarez said finding a new funding method. The key issue. The Commission is seeking a place for County Parks within a Countywide system.

Staff Tony Norris said the success of the Summits with the friends can continue on May 26th at the Joe Nelson Center in Suisun.

Chair Steve Hermsmeyer spoke that he thinks it needs to be a Countywide system and it makes the most sense. It is better than a South County District. Serves the public the best.

Commissioner Steve Hermsmeyer could support a Countywide system, and the funding and options the Commission will bring to the Board. The Board did not ignore or rebuff this option.

Staff has provided information on the Countywide system and the best vehicle for what comes later.

Commissioner Terry Riddle said the Board wants a Countywide financed system. A Countywide and County control makes the most sense.

Have it County wide and under County control. Don't know the mechanics.

Commission Robin Leong spoke that the Solano County Code 19 has the most bullet options behind it. We cannot have the Greater Vallejo Recreation District, so that is out. He would support a Countywide system and consider going to a District later.

Veronica Ferguson of General Services said the Commission could support the County Park District.

Commissioner Robin Leong observed that County control is a good leading option, but Friends need to embrace it.

The Commission would take on the task as it continues to aid the Board. Thinks the process should continue to develop until the option provides the best funding.

Commissioner Alvarez said all this makes sense. But why rush, need to meet with the Friends and advise the Board what has occurred and what more needs to be done.

Friends have not completed what the Board asked.

Staff Norris noted that based on previous actions and discussions by the commission, they could proceed with a Board recommendation that there be a Countywide Regional Park System, the Board of Supervisors would have control over the process and implement a new funding mechanism for Parks.

Veronica Ferguson said the Commission previously agreed on a Regional Park District vision.

Commissioner Terry Riddle supports one broad stroke recommendation. We should lend support and be here to help. We are here to support.

Commissioner Mike Alvarez said, the Commission had received directive but more time needs to be allowed so it can be in place.

Commissioner Terry Riddle said for the short time the Commission should make a recommendation to go forward with the concept of a Countywide Park System. The Board wants the County and Friends to meet. But the staff cannot do that.

Staff Tony Norris asked if the Friends would be able to meet.

Bob of Friends said there needs to be a process but a process that will come to that conclusion. Friends need to put it together and a goal to work together to the goal. Veronica Ferguson offered that the Commission could postpone the decision.

Commissioner Robin Leong thought the Commission should postpone a decision and inform the Board they are working on it.

Commissioner Terry Riddle asked that the decision be postponed till the next meeting. May 12th. Staff could prepare before the Board and it not be structured.

Commissioner Robin Leong said, one thing I see is that the County's Board of Supervisors are number one in the system would rather have 5500 District formation eventually..

Commissioner Robin Leong made a motion to postpone the decision and Commissioner Terry Riddle second the motion.

Commissioner Steve Hermsmeyer said we need to let the Board know what a struggle this is. They do know.

There is a good argument for the way the Friends feel.

No recommendation from the Commission.

A vote was taken and ayes had five votes.

At this time (9:08) Scott Garrison and Veronica Ferguson left the meeting.

A discussion California Form 700 – Statement of Economic Interest. Staff updated the Commission on how it would be used. It was noted that County Counsel's opinion is that it is not needed for an advisory Commission. Discussion of the Form 700 for Commissioners to fill out regarding their involvement in other organizations. Staff advised the Commission on appropriate use of the Form 700. Chair Hermsmeyer moves and Commissioner Riddle seconded to not fill out the Form 700.

It was voted that it is not necessary and the Commission would rather not fill out the Form 700.

Future Agenda Items were briefly discussed.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:20.

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