

**SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
July 11, 2013**

**County Administration Center - First Floor Hearing Room  
675 Texas Street, Fairfield  
5:30 p.m.**

**Members Present:** Commissioners Leong, Riddle, Whited, Alvarez and  
Chairman Hermsmeyer  
**Staff Present:** Dan Sykes and Kristine Letterman

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chairman Hermsmeyer called the meeting to order. A quorum was confirmed.

**2. Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes of January 10, 2013 were approved with a correction to Item 10.d. to reflect that the figures listed represent year-to-date totals. (motion by Commissioner Whited, second by Commissioner Leong; Commissioner Alvarez abstained due to his absence at the January meeting.)

**3. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved unanimously.

**4. Chair and Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Riddle voiced his concern with the decrease in the number of commission meetings.

Commissioner Sykes stated that while waiting to meet on how to conduct the next grant process there were no agenda items to be scheduled, and this is why there has been a break in the meeting schedule.

Commissioner Whited commented that the main thrust for the commission has been the distribution of the grant monies, and now that the process is winding down, the commission could focus on other things. He brought up the idea of each commissioner camping out at each of the campsites so they can observe park operations and public participation.

Commissioner Riddle commented that while there may not have been any agenda items for discussion, there have been things happening that he believed the commission should be kept informed of, such as the incident at Sandy Beach where a drowning took place. He commented that there have also been staffing changes at the park that the commission was unaware of.

Commissioner Whited mentioned that he recently became aware that some of the campsites at Lake Solano have been changed and he felt the commission should be kept up to date on such changes.

Mr. Sykes stated that the commission's role is to review those things that relate to county parks or the Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund and deal with those matters. He said that if the commission would like to look at a more proactive role, a work plan could be established.

The commission asked Mr. Sykes to bring back some ideas for the work plan including goals and objectives, review of the commission's bylaws and the Park and Recreation Element.

Commissioner Leong stated that some of the matters the commission should be approaching are reviewing the master plans for all of the parks, finding more ways to better publicize the parks, and looking at attaining new parks.

Commissioner Leong mentioned that he would be meeting soon with his District Supervisor regarding reappointment to the Commission. He noted that it is possible this could be his last meeting. The commission added this item to the agenda for more discussion. It is listed as Item No. 9.C.

Commissioner Alvarez asked that a discussion with regard to changing the commission's meeting time from 5:30 p.m. to an earlier time be placed on the next meeting agenda. He suggested a time during the day where the ability exists to have county staff available as necessary. He suggested that it would be more economical and more efficient.

## **5. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **6. Chair and Vice-Chair Elections**

It was motioned and seconded to elect Commissioner Hermsmeyer and Commissioner Riddle as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. The motion passed unanimously.

## **7. Committee Report: State Parks Working Group (Sykes/Alvarez)**

Dan Sykes noted that the City of Benicia City Manager and Mayor have combined forces with Board of Supervisor Linda Seifert to look into the issues around the lack of funding available for Benicia State Recreation Area and the Benicia Capitol State Park. They are looking for opportunities to expand public access to those two parks. Mr. Sykes noted that the City of Benicia came to the county with a request for funding to support a donor agreement that would donate money to the state so that they can expand operations in the Benicia State Recreation Area. He noted that the funds were incorporated into the county budget at a recent budget hearing in an amount not to exceed \$10,000. That amount would be in matching funds with the City of Benicia with the purpose of expanding operations of the recreation area.

Commissioner Alvarez provided some history as to how this project came to be. He stated that the State through their budget review a few years ago, were going to close 70 state parks. Of those 70, two were in Solano County; the Benicia State Recreation Area and Benicia Capitol State Park. During that time there were some unexpected monies that were discovered by the state which allowed those 70 parks to remain open, but state officials encouraged partnerships within the cities to continue those park operations. Mr. Alvarez

noted that a group of citizens in Solano County created the Benicia State Park Association. They entered into an agreement with the State Capitol to keep the Capitol open and to expand their hours of operation. The Solano State Parks Committee is made up of representatives of the Cities of Vallejo and Benicia, Solano County, the Greater Vallejo Recreation District, and the State Assembly and Senate. Currently the Benicia State Park is open 5 days a week. The committee is currently trying to find additional monies to allow the facility to remain 7 days a week. Mr. Alvarez noted that the committee meets once a month and the key to the county's participation is being able to keep both state parks in Solano County open.

#### **8. Review and Consider Approval of Application Materials for FY2013/14 Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund (FWPF) Grant Program, based on input from ad hoc committee**

Chairman Hermsmeyer commented that the materials contained in the agenda packet are the work product that was developed by the ad hoc committee, and is in draft form open for comment or modification. Mr. Sykes gave an overview of the application materials noting that it was modeled after the application for the Kinder Morgan Settlement Fund in terms of accountability and more information in the application. He indicated that the amount of funding available this fiscal year is \$10,000.

A motion was made by Commissioner Whited and seconded by Commissioner Alvarez to accept the application materials as submitted and to move the process forward with the agreement that the application would be open for modification upon further review by the commission or input from the public. The motion passed unanimously.

It was agreed to by the commission for staff to distribute the application materials in August to allow for applicants to make their presentations to the commission in September.

#### **9. Parks and Recreation Division Staff Report**

##### **A. Status of Ongoing FWPF and SMSF Projects**

Mr. Sykes reviewed the report on the current status of the Suisun Marsh Specific Fund Projects. Approximately 95% of the projects are complete and approximately 43% have been paid out. He noted that there is currently pending paperwork and payment requests in the queue of approximately \$145,000.

Mr. Sykes stated that the Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund Projects have been awarded more recently, and several projects have gotten underway. He noted that to date \$37,000 has been paid out. The total amount of grant monies is \$220,000.

Chairman Hermsmeyer inquired about the projects that have remaining unpaid funds such as with Greenhead, Inc. and California Fish and Waterfowl Association.

Steve Chappell, Suisun Resource Conservation District, commented with regard to those projects. He stated that it is not the fault of many of the applicants that they could not get their projects started earlier. He noted that SRCD holds a 5-year Army Corp of Engineer maintenance permit to conduct activities which include all the NEPA and CEQA coverage. He explained that it was a timing issue with acquiring a new permit saying that they had issues associated with federal agencies not performing under their

mandated regulatory requirements of rendering biological opinions. He said maintenance activities could not take place until these permits were issued, but stated that the remaining projects are anticipated to be complete by the project deadline.

Mr. Sykes stated that the county has the authority to extend the contracts if necessary.

#### **B. Attendance and Revenue**

Mr. Sykes indicated that the total number of visitors were for the most part equivalent to the previous fiscal year. He spoke to the increase in revenue at Lake Solano and Sandy Beach Parks, noting that this was due to the new online reservation system which requires payment be made in advance.

#### **C. Reappointment of Commissioner Leong to the Park and Recreation Commission**

A motion was made by Commissioner Riddle and seconded by Commissioner Whited to submit a letter to Supervisor Hannigan on behalf of the Park and Recreation Commission supporting reappointment of Commissioner Leong to the commission due to his past years of service and expertise. The motion passed unanimously.

### **10. Confirm date of next regular meeting and adjournment**

Commissioner Alvarez noted that he will be out of town on September 12<sup>th</sup> and will not be able to attend the meeting.

It was agreed upon by the commission to table the matter with regard to changing the commission's meeting time to after the first of next year.

The next Commission meeting was confirmed for September 12, 2013, at 5:30 p.m. Since there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.