

**Parks and Recreation Commission
MINUTES**

Council Hearing Room, 990 Palm Street
San Luis Obispo, CA
Wednesday, October 7, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Jill Lemieux called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Commissioners: Gary Havas, David Hensinger, Kylie Hatch, Ron Regier, and Steve Davis

ABSENT: Vice Chair Craig Kincaid

STAFF: Director Betsy Kiser, Marti Reynolds, Doug Carscaden

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

MOTION: (*Regier/Hatch*) Approve the September 2, 2009 minutes as submitted.

Approved: 5 yes: 0 no: 2 absent (Kincaid, Davis)

(Commissioner Davis entered the meeting after the motion.)

1. Volunteer of the Month

The October Volunteer of the Month is the California Conservation Corps (CCC) Summer Corps Youth Program. The Summer Corps participants were local high school aged youth who worked this past summer, Monday through Friday, on various restoration projects throughout the county. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funded the program, allowing participating youth the opportunity to learn skills related to trail building and conservation as well as interpersonal and social skills, teamwork and leadership.

Three different crews from Oceano, Nipomo and San Luis Obispo built the second loop of the Johnson Ranch trail, a distance of approximately one mile. They also assisted with the building of five bridges, hauling materials and minor construction. The work the crews did will enable the City to open the trail to the public six months earlier than planned. The first loop of the Johnson Ranch Trail opened in May and has become very popular with hikers and mountain bikers.

CCC member Aloni Carlotti commended the partnership between Cuesta College, San Luis County Office of Education (SLOCOE) and the City of SLO and the significance of providing 60 low income kids a minimum wage summer job. A crew mentor for 16-21 year olds, she feels she grew from the experience and thanked the City for resources and sponsors. CCC member Shilo Marquez, a mentor for the Paso Robles CCC, feels the program is a good experience in which mentors can see a little bit of themselves rub off on others. Dominic Santangelo, Regional Director for the Los Padres Center also spoke highly of the five leaders he chose for this endeavor.

2. Public Comment

(Out of original order of the agenda)

Jim Woolf, San Luis Obispo. Spoke of the need to develop a trail link into Sinsheimer Park from the Railroad Safety Trail. Would like an established route and would like to work with the Bicycle Advisory Committee and Parks and Recreation Commission to find funds and a through route. Interested and willing to work hard on the project.

Bonnie Long, San Luis Obispo, resides in the Laguna Hills Park area. Described the five acre Park parcel as secluded and commented on its use by local neighbors as a dog park used for training and socialization. Park Rangers have informed her of the leash law and although it is understood, she and others in the neighborhood have recently been ticketed by Police for violation of the dog off-leash law. Feels few people are present during early morning hours and that there are no issues with dogs and owners at that time. Proposes that time periods during the day be set aside for dog off-leash use, namely 7:30 to 9 a.m. and 5:30 to 7 p.m. These time periods offer the freedom to enjoy the park with neighbors and dogs without the worry of being ticketed. Feels this is an acceptable use as this is not a destination park, per se, and the majority of users are responsible neighbors in a 3-4 block vicinity who are willing to monitor the area and pickup after their pets. Requests PRC approve a dog off-leash area in the Laguna Hills Park on a trial basis.

3. Plus 3 Network Fundraiser – Kiser

Director Kiser explained to Commissioners the recent partnership between the Parks and Recreation Department, Running Warehouse and Plus 3 Network for a 6-month fundraising endeavor for the department. Plus 3 Network is an online social network that manages and rewards members for fitness activities by linking them with corporate sponsors and chosen causes. Running Warehouse is our corporate sponsor and Parks and Recreation their cause. They have offered to contribute \$4,999 to be divided equally between childcare programs and the new skate park.

The system allows online documentation of exercise/training by individuals and assigns a monetary value of a few cents per mile or hour of exercise which varies depending on the activity. Documentation may be hand entered or downloaded from a GPS in which case monetary value triples due to verifiable miles. Parks and Recreation agreed to participate after obtaining permission from the City Attorney regarding the City Donation Policy. Many Parks and Recreation employees have already started to log their exercise activities and recruit other participants.

More information and the opportunity to join this fundraiser can be found at www.plus3network.com/signup/slo-rw

Chair Lemieux expressed her support and the support of the Commissioners.

4. Staff Report – Carscaden

Ranger Services Supervisor Doug Carscaden provided a photo presentation to the Commissioners on Creek Cleanup Day which was co hosted by the Land Conservancy on October 3, 2009. Carscaden estimates that 80-90% of waste found in creeks is from the homeless population and encampments along the creek. Described creek areas in and around the city and the varying cultures of groups and inhabitants in them. Highlighted beginning of channel to SLO Creek, Marsh Street and an area near Prado Day Center used overnight and checked regularly by Rangers Services as well as cemetery and Elks Lodge staff. Another example was an area of Stenner Creek where the discarded items of college students are collected by the homeless and stored in the creek area. Rangers work closely with Police to try and keep the areas clean and uninhabited. During Creek Cleanup Day Biologist Freddy Otte accompanied Ranger Carscaden in walking SLO Creek from Mission Plaza to Los Osos Valley Road and Stenner Creek, and tributaries of French and Prefumo Creeks and Old Garden Creek –more than 4 miles of creek area and 18 sites. This year a 30-yard container was filled with garbage and well over 500 lbs. of glass, aluminum and cardboard were collected. Also notable was the accumulation of cigarette butts. One of the main reasons for this cleanup is to help populations of steelhead trout survive in the creek. A special thanks to SLO Baked who sponsored participants in the cleanup with breakfast, the contracted disposal assistance received, and the volunteers themselves. Expressed deep satisfaction in seeing members of the community participate and ‘give back.’

A question was honored by the Chair from a member of the public audience regarding how long it takes for homeless encampments to be rebuilt after being dismantled. Director Kiser indicated that it is an endless cycle taking very little time to reestablish encampments. Ranger Services personnel were commended for their hard work.

5. Director’s Report– Kiser

Director Kiser briefed the Commission on the following projects:

- Contract executed with RRM Design for the development of the plans and specifications for the skate park. Work has begun.
- Successful Volunteer Recognition BBQ held on September 23.
- Both movie nights went well with 300 participants at the Rotary co-sponsored event and 100 or so at the Mission Plaza movie.
- The Meadow Park Community Garden easement agreement has been developed for HOA; first planning meeting with Rotary clubs scheduled.

- *Icons of an Era* Public Art Dedication scheduled for Saturday, October 10, 1:00 p.m. at the Freight Warehouse.
- Biennial Advisory Body Training scheduled for October 15, 2009, 5:30 p.m. at the Ludwick Community Center. Mandatory training for PRC members.
- Skate Park grant submitted to Tony Hawk Foundation for \$25,000.

6. Committee Reports

Commissioners provided the following reports:

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| ▪ Tree Committee – Kincaid | ▪ Joint Use Committee – Hensinger |
| ▪ Youth Sports Association - Davis | ▪ Jack House Committee – Hatch |
| ▪ Open Space – Havas | ▪ Golf – Regier |
| ▪ Bicycle Committee – Havas | |

Although not present, Commissioner Kincaid emailed information from the last meeting of the Tree Committee that was distributed to Commissioners in his absence.

Commissioner Davis reported that the Youth Sports Association will meet the following week.

Commissioner Havas met with Natural Resources Manager Neil Havlik and reported on Open Space, including the status of Froom Ranch and an upcoming fundraiser for land acquisition; Johnson Ranch bridges near completion and kiosk to be updated with new signs; pathway through Stenner Springs and meeting with staff of co-owners Camp SLO, negotiations with USFS to manage portion of property, FASTA moving forward, concern for landscape restoration prior to impending weather and due to Nacimiento pipeline erosion.

Commissioner Havas attended the bi-monthly Bicycle Advisory Committee which met September 17. Highlighted was a presentation by Octagon Barn who have a high interest in completing the Bob Jones Trail from the Ranger Services area to the Octagon barn. Director Kiser added that a presentation on the Octagon Barn will be on the November PRC agenda. Commissioner Havas volunteered for Bike Rodeo, voiced concerns over hazardous bollards at Meadow Park and Bridge Street which will be removed. Havas continues to work with 3CMB.

Commissioner Hensinger reported there was no meeting of the Joint Use Committee last month.

Commissioner Hatch reported on the last meeting of the Jack House Committee. Items loaned from the Historical Society were returned as requested. Some trees against the fence behind the gazebo are to be replaced with vines that will still be a suitable backdrop for photos but dissuade the homeless from retiring there. Sprinkler repairs ongoing. The house will reopen in December for the December 11-13 Christmas tour. The Jack House Tea went well but discussed only holding event every other year. Kay Kaetzel, a Jack House descendent, recently passed away.

Commissioner Regier reported on the Laguna Lake Golf Course. Cal Poly's golf class is beginning in October this year rather than September. Will advertise in the Mustang Daily to try and encourage use of the course. Aerating greens and other complications may have contributed to lower use recently (down 2000 rounds for the year). The food concession will be moving inside in October and utilizing an area of the Pro Shop. Concerned nearby residents of the course proposed gates enclosing the park after an elderly neighbor was assaulted. As golf participants often stay longer in the evening than staff, self-closing one-way gate at front of course is being considered.

Chair Lemieux will attend the Mayor's Quarterly Luncheon on October 8 and deliver the Commission update.

7. Communications

Commissioner Havas inquired as to the existence of a Sister City for San Luis Obispo: a Palo Alto bicycle group he recently hosted had discussed the benefit of relations with their sister city in France. Director Kiser will connect Commissioner Havas with Brigitte Elke, who has information on San Luis Obispo's Sister City.

Ron Regier questioned Committee members interest in public speaker's comments relating to the dog off leash hours and requested it be placed on a future agenda. Director Kiser will research and place on December agenda and notify surrounding neighbors.

Director Kiser sought direction on subject of dog park (reference letter).

Chair Lemieux inquired about public comment regarding bicycle route from Railroad Safety trail to Sinsheimer. Director Kiser indicated the Bicycle Committee has oversight of master plans for all bike paths. This connector hasn't risen to a level of priority at this point. Although can look at the plans there is no funding at this time. Direction should officially come from Bicycle Committee. Commissioner Havas also commented on the Committee as a starting point.

Director Kiser indicated that Council gave direction to pursue a no-smoking ordinance for downtown outside areas and incorporating a park component. Pismo Beach, Arroyo Grande and Atascadero have already passed similar ordinances. Will include on the November PRC agenda.

8. Adjourned

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m. to the November 4, 2009 meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission.

Approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission on November 4, 2009.

/Sgd/

Martha M.S. Reynolds, Supervising Administrative Assistant