

Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission

**County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue,
3rd Floor Multipurpose Room
Wednesday, July 25th, 2018
6:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

A meeting of the Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, July 25th, 2018. Commissioner McGiffney presided.

Present: Commissioner Gary Bray, District I; Kathleen Arnold-Chambers, District III; Commissioner Gregory McGiffney, District IV

Absent: Commissioner William Chapman, District II; Chairman Manuel Barrera, District V

Staff: Sandi Formhals, Division Chief, Kern County General Services Department; Geoffrey Hill, Acting Chief General Services Officer

Others: There were 16 others present

NOTE: Br, Ch, Mc, Ba, Ar are abbreviations for Commissioners Bray, Chapman, McGiffney, Barrera, and Arnold-Chambers. As an example, Mc-Br denotes Commissioner McGiffney made a motion and Commissioner Bray seconded the motion.

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. Flag Salute: Commissioner McGiffney

1. Approval of the Minutes of June 27th, 2018

The minutes from June 27th, 2018 were reviewed. Commissioner Arnold-Chambers made the request to change content of the proposed Kern River Parkway Preserve to reflect that they are looking into doing a study of the area but no study had been planned at that point. (She also suggested that the language to the agenda be changed.) Ar-Br, motion to approve the minutes as corrected. 3 Ayes, 2 Absent, Motion carried - Minutes were approved.

2. Public Presentations

No one heard

3. Correspondence

Receive and File

4. Public Requests

None

5. **New Business**

None

6. **Old Business**

Kern River Parkway Wildlife Preserve

Commissioner Bray reported that since the last presentation with Eddy Laine and the representative from the Sierra Club they have walked the proposed area with Commissioner Arnold-Chambers and Mike Maggard, who has pledged his support. Bret Haney has also been to see the proposed area. Commissioner Bray distributed a summary of results of a recent meeting with participation, to name a few, by Parks & Recreation, Kern County General Services Administration, Parkway Foundation, Kern-Kaweah Chapter Sierra Club, Representatives of the Kern County Corridor Endowment, and several others. The consensus of those present was towards seeing this area preserved. They are not proposing the usage be changed as it is currently used for fishing, picnicking, and hiking. The concern is that it is being used heavily by off-road vehicle traffic and pickup trucks despite those types of vehicles being prohibited by statute. This area is not policed or patrolled by Parks Rangers or anyone at this time. They are proposing more appropriate fencing, updated signage, a portable dumpster, and the official designation of the area being a County preserve, which is the most crucial part of the proposal. Per Sandi Formhals the initial study by County's Property Management revealed that Fish and Wildlife would need to be involved in any decisions regarding the land because they are the ones responsible for maintaining and monitoring the banks of the river in the area. Geoff Hill said that he has done a cursory review of the Kern River Plan as well as the Kern River Pacific Trails plan which covers this area and discussed reviewing additional planning documents related to this space to see which limitations are put on it, stating that there are significant limitations in place against development. They will make a full and more robust review of these plans as well as check with Fish and Wildlife to come up with the necessary requirements to make it a preserve.

Lake Ming Watercraft Use

Commissioner McGiffney discussed the need of an environmental study, which he believed would be somewhat costly, being necessary before any proposal regarding personal watercraft use on the lake. He asked the County to do a preliminary investigation into the need for this type of permit and the costs involved in getting to that point.

Requests for Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Funding

Kern County General Services Division, Parks & Recreation (Initial Request: \$40,000) – Chief Ron Rice heard - gave a summary of the request saying that the areas that would be monitored with the vehicles are areas that are inaccessible by regular vehicles. Chief Rice request to withdraw the Park Ranger's request for funds to purchase vehicles after receiving the offer of several donated vehicles from the KC Sheriff's Department, and in addition, a possible free vehicle leased from a local community business.

Kern County Sheriff's Office – Equipment and staffing (Initial Request: \$49,879) Sheriff's office heard - They rely heavily on two grants, this being one of them. They are responsible for patrolling an area of 8,000 square miles, specific areas of patrol were discussed at Commissioner Brays request. Commissioner Arnold-Chambers asked if Hart Park is patrolled. Sheriff says that they patrol all areas.

Stewards of the Sequoia's – Maintenance of the Piute trail system (Initial Request: \$50,000) Dave Walker heard (Friends of Kern Open Space) in the absence of Chris Horgan, asked the Commission to reconsider the initial request from Stewards of the Sequoia. They were previously awarded \$25,000 and their request was for \$50,000.

Friends of Kern Open Space – Instruction & Safety Events (2) (Initial Request: \$3000) Dave Walker heard - gave summary of how requested funds would be used. They would like to hold two public safety events related to OHV, one in California City and the other in Bakersfield. They will also use these opportunities to get public input on OHV use. He also brought up the value in having a subcommittee for OHV (as previously discussed by Commissioner Arnold-Chambers). He reiterated the need for the Commission to stick to the guidelines for awarding OHV funds to specific OHV projects/needs.

In response to the discussion regarding the use of OHV funds, Geoff Hill heard - remarked that after Bruce had taken this to the Board, after initial funding requests were awarded and questioned, he asked County Counsel to review the statute with relation to the proper use of funds. County Counsel reviewed and deemed that the use by County Parks, as written in the funding request, is consistent with the use of OHV money. He provided verbiage from the grant guidelines on which County Counsel based their opinion.

After hearing all the requests, and considering what will do the most good for the most people, the Commission determined the following:

\$22,000 will go to Kern County Sheriff's Office
\$3,000 will go to Friends of Kern Open Space

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Bray, 2nd by Commissioner Arnold-Chambers, 3 Ayes, 2 absent - motion carried.

7. Department Staff Report

Sandi Formhals heard - Bear Valley Springs Cycle Club has offered a donation of 1500 man hours to install a world-class four mile long trail for mountain biking, hiking, and rollerblading at Tehachapi Mountain Park. This is just an offer at this point, holding off on reviewing and moving forward with this until a hazard tree mitigation project of removing over 500 dead trees in this area has been completed.

An extra help painter was hired a couple of months ago to work specifically on graffiti removal and to this point he has already completed 158 graffiti projects in just the parks areas alone and staff is reporting that now there are fewer incidents of reoccurrence within all areas.

Regarding the 4th of July holiday there were no major trash issues at Buena Vista or Hart Park. There was additional staff available and there were no complaints from the public this year.

On the reservations side we received information from Westside Mosquito & Vector Control District letting us know that we have Saint Louis Encephalitis Virus (SLEV). Initial news reports made it sound as if it was a very serious public hazard. These initial new reports caused a number of reservation cancellations at the lake. They were asked to revise their information as the source that had been infiltrated by mosquitos has been treated and stocked with several thousand mosquito fish, technicians have doubled up on treatment efforts, the restrooms are being treated with eco-friendly oil that repel mosquitos and at the last inspection

the mosquito count was significantly reduced. They will continue with these efforts through October 31st of this year. Anyone that wants to cancel their reservations due to this can cancel with not penalties. This is not a major health concern at this point.

At Kern River Campground there will be new signage posted including campground rules, rates, and maps of the area. They will all be uniform in color and will be strategically located at the entrance as to hopefully cause less confusion.

Geoff discussed the Rosamond Community Services District, Rosamond Park. County is in the process of accepting responsibility of the park and are engaging their contractors to provide maintenance of the park. They will work towards having the pool open next year as the funding to have it open this year was not available.

8. Commission Comments

Commissioner Arnold-Chambers asked if OHV could benefit from resource consulting with the Library to help the group gain publicity through some of the social media outlets. Geoff Hill responded saying that Director of Countywide Communications, Megan Person, could assist with this as well. She discussed again the need for the OHV subcommittee. She also discussed complaint resolution process with the other Commissioners. She asked that General Services review the complaint procedure that Eddy Laine submitted. General Services will review and report back at the next meeting.

Commissioner Bray again expressed his desire to review the proposal for the preserve at Lake Ming.

Commissioner McGiffney thanked Sandi for bringing up the trash issue at the parks and expressed his appreciation for the extra effort to keep the parks clean during the holidays.

9. Dates and Locations of Future Meetings:

Commissioner Arnold-Chambers motioned to hold the next meeting at the Administrative Center again due to ongoing topics requiring staff reports. A second was made by Commissioner Bray. 3 ayes, 2 absent – motion carried.

The meeting time is at 6:30 p.m.

Future meeting dates and locations (subject to change):

- August 22, 2018, County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Ave, 3rd floor
- September 26, 2018, County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Ave, 3rd floor
- October 24, 2018, District 3 Rathbun Library, 200 W China Grade Loop
- November 28, 2018, District 5
- No Meeting December 2018

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mc-Ar, 3 ayes, 2 absent. Commissioner McGiffney adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.