

Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission

County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue,
3rd Floor Multipurpose Room
Wednesday, August 22nd, 2018
6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

A meeting of the Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, August 22nd, 2018 Chairman Barrera presided.

Present: Commissioner Gary Bray, District I; Commissioner William Chapman, District II; Kathleen Arnold-Chambers, District III; Chairman Manuel Barrera, District V

Absent: Commissioner Gregory McGiffney, District IV

Staff: Bret Haney, Division Chief, Kern County General Services Department

Others: There were 14 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: Chairman Barrera

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

The minutes from July 25th, 2018 were reviewed. Br-Ar, motion to approve the minutes. 4 Ayes, 1 Absent, Motion carried - Minutes were approved.

2. Public Presentations

Marion Vargas heard regarding Panorama Park trash cans. She had questions about the schedule of current trash pickup and requested additional pickup times since there seems to be a problem with overflowing trash. Bret Haney will have staff check into this and related issues and report back at the next meeting.

Kevin Fidel with National Jet Boat Association (NJBA) heard regarding jet boat drags at Lake Ming. It is his opinion that Lake Ming is the best place for the boat racing. He stated that many were concerned that it might be an issue to continue the boat races with the recent discussions on watercraft usage.

3. Correspondence

Letter from Bill Cooper and Eddie Layne will be reviewed at the next Commission meeting in September.

4. New Business

None

5. Old Business

Kern River Parkway Wildlife Preserve

Bill Cooper, Kern River Parkway Foundation heard reiterating the uniqueness of the property of discussion.

Steve Montgomery with the Sierra Club heard regarding appropriate access restriction for motor vehicles, access mobility, and signage interpretation.

Kit Smith with the Sierra Club heard recommending the preservation of the area and the pollution of the area and the air of the Valley in general.

Commissioner Bray heard stating his appreciation for those who attend the meetings and for bringing forward these issues. Bret Haney added that they are still waiting to hear back from Fish and Wildlife regarding the control of the river banks. The County has the ability to designate an area for the preserve up to the bank area. Once information comes back from Fish and Wildlife Bret will make sure that future agendas are updated and the Commission will discuss. Commissioner Bray asked about the current signage and how it is difficult to read and the need for an update. Bret stated that replacement signage is in process and he will follow up and report back. Commissioner Arnold-Chambers heard questioning the need for more Ranger control. Bret stated that it has been discussed with the Rangers and they are open to Patrol as much as possible with the limited resources.

Margie Bell with the Sierra Club heard regarding a cleanup group out of Hart Park that meets weekly. She is interested in being involved with the preserve.

Lake Ming Watercraft Use

Steve McNutt heard regarding fair usage of Lake Ming for Jet Skis. Bret Haney heard regarding resources and reports that the County is waiting on from the Planning Department regarding the environmental impact report. Once that comes back this will be brought back to the Commission for discussion. At this point jet ski use is prohibited at Lake Ming.

7. Department Staff Report

Bret Haney heard regarding the County entering into a service agreement with owners of Happy Jacks for clean up along the river. Bret suggested to Margie Bell and others looking to volunteer to go to the Commission's webpage where they can make their desire to help known. He briefly discussed the volunteer wall of fame and how grateful the County is for all of the volunteers. Bret discussed some unfortunate findings regarding incidents of finding body parts, one at Buena Vista Lake and the other at the River. Rangers initially responded to these incidents but Sheriff's Office has taken over the investigation. Bret discussed the loss of reservations and loss of County revenue due to the incident at Buena Vista.

Bret gave an update on the Ranger situation stating that they recently met with the CAO, Ryan Alsop, who has given his approval to get some reinforcements in staffing and hopefully convert some of the current extra help positions to more permanent positions. As of today there are only three (3) P.O.S.T. Certified Rangers which only 2 are patrolling due to a medical leave of absence. Everyone else assisting is either a Security Attendant or extra help Parks

Security Officer. They are hopeful to rectify some of this in the next 6-8 months and get some permanent well-trained reinforcements for the Rangers. The increase would most likely occur with positions that are not P.O.S.T. Certified. The Sheriff has offered to give us some additional quads and this is working great for the Rangers for quick access to needs in OHV areas.

Bret discussed monthly meetings and actionable items on the agenda and how and when meetings are conducted. He asked the Commissioners that if there were no actionable items - only discussion items for the agenda, would they want to conduct a meeting. Otherwise it would be a Commission meeting based on discussion alone. Chairman Barrera suggested that if there are no items to agenda by the Friday before the meeting, the meeting will be cancelled and followed up with the following month, unless the Commission decides to hold a meeting on discussion alone. This was merely discussion among Commissioners and staff. No decisions or conclusions were made. Commissioner Arnold-Chambers desires the meetings to continue monthly so the public can be heard.

Bret Haney discussed Hart Park Master Plan and that a meeting has been set between General Services and the CAO's office to review and discuss the plan. He says that County Budget Hearings will take place at next week's Board of Supervisors meeting. At this time they haven't heard any of major changes to the General Services/Parks budget other than some additional major maintenance projects and parks improvements. Chairman Barrera asked Bret to provide an update at next month's meeting regarding the outcome of the budget hearings.

Bret reported on an OHV Public Works project of work around Shell Park. Once it has been completed to everyone's satisfaction the remaining funds will be returned and put towards next year's grant for distribution and use in future parks projects.

8. Commission Comments

Commissioner Arnold-Chambers heard regarding OHV Subcommittee. She gave thanks to the Bret Haney and other County staff that covers the Parks and Staff reports each month.

Commissioner Chapman heard regarding Lake Ming and the issue of watercraft use.

Commissioner Bray heard regarding Preserve idea and that he looks forward to public input.

Commissioner Barrera heard regarding a thank you to all for attending and submitting correspondence.

9. Dates and Locations of Future Meetings:

The Commission discussed future meeting dates. Chairman Barrera made the recommendation to have the year's remaining meetings held at the County Administrative Center. The Commissioners were in agreement with the change of location for the September, October and November meetings.

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

Future meeting dates and locations (subject to change):

- September 26, 2018, County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Ave, 3rd floor
- October 24, 2018, County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Ave, 3rd floor
- November 28, 2018, County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Ave, 3rd floor
- No Meeting December 2018

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn Ba-Br, 4 ayes, 1 absent. Chairman Barrera adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.