

Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission

Public Services Building
2700 M Street
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Wednesday, August 24, 2016
6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

A meeting of the Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, August 24, 2016. Chairman Faull presided.

Present: Bob Jamison, District I (Vice-Chairman); Mark Faull, District II (Chairman); Carl Park, District III; Gregory McGiffney, District IV; Manuel Barerra, District V.

Staff: Bob Lerude, Director, Kern County Parks and Recreation Department; Bret Haney, Division Director, General Services Department

Others: There were 9 other people present.

NOTE: Fa, Ja, Pa, Mc and Ba are abbreviations for Commissioners Faull, Jamison, Faull, Park, McGiffney and Barerra. As an example, Fa-Ja denotes Commissioner Faull made a motion and Commissioner Jamison seconded the motion.

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. Flag Salute: Chairman Faull

1. Approval of the Minutes of July 27, 2016

Ja-Ba motion to approve the Minutes. All ayes, motion carried.

2. Public Presentations

Bernie Jennings, VFW Post 3741 who meets the 2nd Monday of the month from 6-9 PM at the California Avenue Veterans Building asked why it was not open. Mr. Lerude, Director said he would have staff follow up with Mr. Jennings to make sure it was open.

Mariel Mehdipour and Flor Del Hoya made a presentation of a picture of the basketball court at Heritage Park to Mr. Lerude for his work with Public Health and the community for Heritage Park. Mark thanked them for attending and making the presentation.

Mr. Bruce Miller attended to let the Commission know of the oversight on two projects. First, he mentioned the Stewards of the Sequoia project regarding two clean ups of the area, repairs on 58 miles of trails and 1,600 trees cleared. Secondly, Mr. Miller discussed the Friends of Jawbone project. Public meetings were held. 183 signs were completed and work was done at 223 sites. A kiosk was built and the maps were updated. Bruce also reminded the Commission about the generosity of the Sheriff during the allocation process last year so that the other projects could be fully funded. Commissioner Park thanked Mr. Miller for all his work. Commissioner McGiffney is disappointed that there are people who are against wildfire hazard mitigation projects that can

greatly reduce the potential damage during future wildfires. Are people starting to change their way of thinking? Mr. Miller said some are, but some aren't. Unfortunately, there is only one mill and it can't handle all the trees. Mr. Faull talked about the climate warming, drought, and forest management has all led to the issues with fires we see now! He mentioned even the native folks hundreds of years ago managed their forests. Now agencies are starting to re-think how to manage forests. The problem is lack of funding. Mr. Miller said Mr. Chris Horgan couldn't make it tonight as he was at a fire meeting in Kernville.

3. Correspondence – Receive and File

None.

4. Old Business

a. Hart Park – Potential Daily/Annual Permit Fee. DISCUSS AND RECEIVE PUBLIC INPUT.

Commissioner Faull said this is the ninth meeting discussing a potential fee for Hart Park. We started back in April of 2015. He mentioned how we have raised some fees over the past few years. He indicated the Department and the Commission thoughts and comments have evolved over this time due to comments and discussion from both the audience, Commission members and the Department. They have looked at other Counties in California to compare the fees and structure of the fees. Looked at what and who should be charged. He said we have evolved to not charging for bikes, runners, people driving through Hart Park, but now people parking at Hart Park. Commissioner Faull said we also looked at the Iron Ranger self-pay parking machines and how other Counties were doing the entry or parking fees. Commissioner Faull mentioned that the key to success with the program is that the fees collected don't go into the general fund for the County but back to Hart Park directly. The reason being that budgets have been and will continue to be tight, but we love parks and the benefits they provide. He also mentioned the great partnership with Paramount/Wonderful to improve the one park and the building of the other park. Mr. Lerude mentioned how the Department can't close the majority of parks and buildings as park bonds, grants and CDBG funding have been used which require the facilities and parks to remain open to the public. Mr. Lerude also mentioned how the Department has used Work Release, Community Service, AB 109, SER, Cal-Works, Sheriff Inmate Crews and Juvenile Probation Work Crews to assist the Department due to the 50% cut in staff over the last 10 years. Mr. Lerude stated all departments have cut 5% this year.

The public commented on the topic:

Ms. Barbara Hayes with the Cat People said she has been involved with Hart Park and the cats since the early 1990's and has seen the deterioration of the park. Littering has increased, areas are vandalized and animals are dumped in the park. They are responsible for trapping and rescuing the cats to adopt them out. They put signs in English and Spanish about the fines to dump cats and dogs. She has talked to many people who use the park and they are in favor of a fee. Commissioner McGiffney mentioned we should use cameras and promote the park is under surveillance to deter the people causing the issues. He wanted to know about the number of vehicles using the park. Mr. Lerude gave a short update of vehicles using the park on weekdays and weekends. Mr. Bob Rutledge mentioned maybe the annual fee should be \$25.00 rather \$50.00. Mr. Rutledge also asked about how it will be enforced since there is a lack of Park Rangers. He said cameras would be a good idea. Commissioner Faull stated cameras and should be used. Mr. Faull wanted to know the cost of a citation. Commissioner McGiffney asked can the Park Rangers or Sheriff cover? Can Auxiliary or Volunteers write citations? Can

security be contracted to do the work? Director Lerude said enforcement can be directed as it is done for boat permits and alcohol permits. Mr. Bret Haney said private security can't work on County property. Commissioner Park asked what type of video is needed to make an arrest. Sgt. Fred Wheeler from the Sheriff's Office said video is used. The example is the cameras on toll roads and a citation is sent in the mail. Commissioner Faull said Fish and Wildlife uses cameras in their work. Mrs. E.J. Rutledge from the audience said we must hit it hard to start with as there must be consequences through enforcement. Commission McGiffney said use cameras and signs and use volunteers to educate. Commissioner Faull said education is critical to let people know why this is happening. Maybe tee shirts should be worn by volunteers to educate folks. Use social media. Again, Ms. Hayes said trash is terrible after holidays and this is needed. Commissioner Faull reminded everyone the proposed fee at this time is \$5.00 daily and \$50.00 annually. Commissioner Faull also suggested maybe we have a few free days like the free fishing days for those with limited incomes. Commissioner Barrera agreed with the idea.

5. New Business

- a. Recommendations for Certificate of Recognition recipients.

The Certificate of Recognition should have recommendations two weeks in advance. Ms. Rutledge asked whether organizations were allowed to be nominated. Director Lerude said both individuals and groups/organizations are all allowed.

6. Department Staff Report

Director Lerude discussed the Department Report. He discussed the current fiscal budget crisis faced by the County. Low income housing grant projects were discussed. Director Lerude told the Commissioner about the BVARA launch ramp damage and the Frazier Park pond issue. He also mentioned the potential re-organization between General Services and Parks and Recreation is scheduled for BOS vote on September 13, 2016. Director Lerude discussed the difficulty continues this year acquiring Trout for BVARA. The Greenhorn Fire was discussed, no damage to the park. Director Lerude also discussed the Kern Pioneer Village Museum – water tank moved from Bakersfield High School to the Museum and the Orientation Center and Research Center being built. Lastly, Director Lerude discussed the Cyclovia at Rexland Acres Park and the Timber Harvest for Greenhorn Mt. Park.

7. Commission Comments

Commissioner Jamison said the Forest Service closed all the campgrounds by Kernville due to the Fire including the County closing Camp Erwin Owen.

Commissioner Park thanked all for coming and for their comments.

Commissioner McGiffney thanked all for coming and participating. He liked the comments about Hart Park. He mentioned the opportunities but we need the people's suggestions and comments.

Commissioner Barrera told everyone thanks for coming and he supported the Hart Park fee. He believes we need a "media plan" before we start charging the fee and we should do a soft opening with the media.

Commissioner Faull thanked everyone and to come back with more ideas.

8. Date and Location of Next Meeting:

September 28, 2016, 6:30 p.m. at the Public Services building in Bakersfield.

Future meeting locations (subject to change):

October 26 – Bakersfield – Kern County Museum

November 30 or December 14 – Rosamond (Hummel Hall or Library)

9. Adjournment

Pa-Mc Motion to Adjourn. All ayes, motion carried.

Chairman Faull adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.