

Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission

City of Ridgecrest
Parks & Recreation Department
Kerr McGee Community Center
100 W. California Avenue
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

October 28, 2015
6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

A meeting of the Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, October 28, 2015. Chairman Jamison presided.

Present: Bob Jamison, District I; Mark Faull, District II; Carl Park, District III.; Vacant, District V.

Absent: Gregory McGiffney, District IV

Staff: Bob Lerude, Director, Kern County Parks and Recreation Department; Pamela Schekel, Kern County Parks and Recreation Department.

Others: There was one (1) other present.

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

Prior to the meeting the Commissioners and staff toured Petroglyph Park.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Chairman Jamison led the flag salute.

1. Approval of the Minutes of September 23, 2015

Fa-Pa to approve the Minutes. All ayes, motion carried.

2. Public Presentations

Gary Charlon, resident of Ridgecrest, expressed that many of the residents feel like the plants at Petroglyph Park look like weeds and that the landscape is not very well maintained. Mr. Lerude said that at various times throughout the year that some of the drought tolerant plants will become dormant and looks as though they are dead but will bloom and "come back to life" as the seasons change. There may need to be a period of educating the public as to the various stages of xeriscape.

Mr. Charlon also had questions about Leroy Jackson Park and what the county's

responsibilities are there. Mr. Lerude said that the county takes care of the turf and mature trees. The county has a lease with the city of Ridgecrest and they take care of the baseball fields and tennis court areas. The county is in the process of going through different phases to rehabilitate the parks throughout the county. Phase I is complete, Phase III is almost complete and work on Phase II has begun.

Mr. Charlon wondered with the new park and work being done at other parks if there was an increase in staff to keep up with the needed maintenance. Mr. Lerude said that unfortunately no. The parks department can apply for and get grants from the state but the money cannot be used for maintenance. Mr. Lerude said that a bond needs to be put on the November 2016 ballot requesting that a measure be passed that allows for money to be used to rehabilitate existing parks.

Mr. Charlon said he had suggested that instead of spending money on Petroglyph Park why not put a walking path up by the college that could be used by everyone and would not cost much to maintain. He said that this idea was not pursued because the decision was already made to go with the park. He feels that at some point a decision has to be made to stop putting more money into the parks if we don't have the staff to maintain them.

Commissioner Faull said that he grew up in the Bay Area and they are looking to expand the parks but added that parks are a major draw to the business community and residents as well so they are more willing to pay extra taxes to keep up and create new parks.

3. New Business

a. Discussion of Petroglyph Park.

Prior to the meeting the Commissioners took a tour of Petroglyph Park to get a close up look at all the new xeriscape and petroglyphs along with the new playground equipment and picnic area. All agreed that is a wonderful addition to the community and look forward to the ribbon cutting ceremony on November 6, and the Petroglyph Festival which will take place over the weekend of November 7-8.

The park has many petroglyphs and drought tolerant landscape. Plaques have been installed at the various petroglyphs to give a brief description of their representations. There is also a small playground area that has swings that are designed for children with handicaps. This area has a gated fence around it that the local residents paid for.

Mr. Lerude said that they have options that will help visitors navigate their way through the park as far as where the Petroglyphs start and where they end. They are looking at various ways to do this with either a map posted near the parking lot or pamphlets that visitors could take with them on their walk through the park.

Commissioner Faull said that many cell phones come equipped with a QR code

reader that could be used at the different plaques and give them information about each Petroglyph. Mr. Lerude said that in fact they do have that capability but at this time it is not working but work is being done to fix that problem.

In a previous meeting it was brought up that they were looking into having an 80' tower erected that could be seen for miles away to attract visitors to the Petroglyph Festival but due to the "fly zone" around the air field that will not be possible. The Parks Department has also been asked to prepare something that represents our department to put into a time capsule that will be placed in the ground to be opened some time in the future. Mr. Lerude encouraged any who might be able to attend the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to be there.

4. Department Staff Report

Mr. Lerude reported on the following:

- ❖ With the low income grants work has begun or is being done at:
Potomac Park
Lamont Park and
Pioneer Park
- ❖ The Parks Department could still be looking at mid-year budget cuts
- ❖ Work will begin at Tehachapi Park in January
- ❖ Greenhorn Mountain Park is getting some much needed work at Camp Yenishante and Camp Kaweah.

5. Commission Comments

Commissioner Park thanked everyone for coming and again said he enjoyed the tour of Petroglyph Park.

Commissioner Faull feels that we need to market our parks more. There is a new free app (Periscope) which is a live stream video that could be used to promote public events, upgrades being made to the county parks, fall colors, etc. that would be seen by thousands of individuals.

Mr. Lerude said the marketing of what we are doing is more important than we even know and we need to celebrate the positive aspects of parks. He also mentioned that there will be a meeting in Lake Isabella on Friday, October 30th related to the skate park and encouraged the commissioners to attend if possible.

6. Date and Location of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2015, 6:30 pm at the Public Services Building, 2700 M Street.

7. Adjournment

Fa-Pa Motion to Adjourn

Chairman Jamison adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.