

Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission

**County Administrative Center
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
Wednesday, October 21, 2020
6:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

A meeting of the Kern County Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, October 21, 2020. Chairman Bray presided.

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

Absent: Lorena Cervantes, District IV

Staff: Geoffrey Hill – Chief General Services Officer; Carl Brewer, Senior CAO Manager – General Services; Matt Howard, General Services Manager – General Services; Isaac Preston, General Services Manager – General Services; and Shane Denton, Supervising Park Ranger – General Services

Others: There were fourteen (14) others present

NOTE: Br, Ch, Ar, Ce, and Os are abbreviations for Commissioners Bray, Chapman, Arnold-Chambers, Cervantes, and Osby. As an example, Br-Ch denotes Commissioner Bray made a motion and Commissioner Chapman seconded the motion.

Meeting called to order at 6:36 p.m.

1. Approval of the Minutes of September 16, 2020

The minutes from September 16, 2020 were reviewed. Ar-Ch, to approve the minutes. 4 Ayes, 0 Opposed. Motion carried - minutes were approved as written.

2. Public Health Services Department

Matthew Constantine, Director of Public Health Services was present before the Commission to discuss the water testing requirements for lake and rivers in California. It was noted by Matthew Constantine that the State Water Board and the California Department of Public Health were currently working on developing regulatory requirements for recreational water. It was further noted by Matthew Constantine that the County of Kern does not have standard water quality requirements for recreational waters nor does it have regulatory authority to enforce any water quality standards.

Richard O'Neil, Harry Love, and Marion Vargas were heard.

3. Public Presentations

Mark Martinez was present before the Commission to voice his concerns regarding the noise levels at Lake Ming when special events are held and to request that it remain open to the public at all times.

Richard O'Neil was present before the Commission to voice his concerns regarding the overall condition of the county parks compared to the city parks and to question why there is no longer a separate Parks Department within the County.

Bill Cooper was present before the Commission to thank everyone for their time and efforts on the Kern River Riparian Preserve and ordinance changes.

4. Public Requests

Harry Love was present before the Commission discuss his concerns regarding the habitat at Lake Ming over the years and to request that the Commission to appoint a committee to prepare a plan regarding the use of Lake Ming and the number of days it could be closed.

Eddy Laine was present before the Commission to discuss the concerns listed in the October 7, 2020 letter from the Sierra Club, Kern-Kaweah Chapter regarding events held at Lake Ming and to request that the Commission put a moratorium in place on events involving motorized watercraft at Lake Ming until a habitat protection plan is developed and implemented; relocate the planned boat racing event scheduled for November 7-8, 2020 at Lake Ming to Buena Vista Lake; enforce the prohibition of jet skis on Lake Ming; enforce the California Department of Health COVID-19 Guidelines for recreational events; and change the May 23, 2017 ordinance to allow for public, commission, and/or board comment prior to agreements being scheduled and finalized.

Sharon Briel, Elizabeth Perez, Ross Wallach, Grady LaKamp, and Mike DeClark heard.

5. Correspondence

Staff provided the Commission with the written correspondence dated October 7, 2020 from the Sierra Club, Kern-Kaweah Chapter regarding events held at Lake Ming and requested that the Commission put a moratorium in place on events involving motorized watercraft at Lake Ming until a habitat protection plan is developed and implemented; relocate the planned boat racing event scheduled for November 7-8, 2020 at Lake Ming to Buena Vista Lake; enforce the prohibition of jet skis on Lake Ming; enforce the California Department of Health COVID-19 Guidelines for recreational events; and change the May 23, 2017 ordinance to allow for public, commission, and/or board comment prior to agreements being scheduled and finalized; the written correspondence dated October 12, 2020 from Carol Lair regarding the recent cat statistics at Hart Memorial Park; the written correspondence dated October 13, 2020 from Eddy Laine which included a summary of surveys from Lake Ming and Lake Ming watercraft event issues; the

written correspondence dated October 21, 2020 from Sure Stay Plus by Best Western thanking the National Jet Boat Association for their business over the years and their support during COVID-19; the written correspondence from Karan Singh of Rio Bravo Market for the support from various events held at Lake Ming over the years; and the written correspondence dated October 21, 2020 from Mike DeClark of the National Jet Boat Association regarding the use of Lake Ming over the years and the business their events generate to various business within the County of Kern. Ar – Ch, to receive and file the correspondence. 4 Ayes, 0 Opposed. Motion carried.

6. Department Staff Report

1. General Services – Status Update

i. Hart Memorial Park – Carl Brewer, Senior CAO Manager was present before the Commission to discuss ongoing projects at Hart Memorial Park. Additionally, Geoffrey Hill, Chief General Services Officer informed that Commission that the Board of Supervisors approved Planning and Natural Resources” Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and authorized the release of funds for the Hart Park Adobe project.

ii. Proposition 68 - Carl Brewer, Senior CAO Manager was present before the Commission to discuss Staff’s efforts on the various Proposition 68 funding opportunities, which currently include the Urban Greening Grant, the Trails and Greenways Grant, and the Statewide Park Program Grant. Additionally, Carl Brewer informed the Commission that General Services, Parks is working with the CAO to determine what projects will be funded with as part of the \$1.47M Per Capita grant award.

iii. Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Park – Status – Carl Brewer, Senior CAO Manager was present before the Commission to provide an update regarding the status of the Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) grant for a future OHV Park in Kern County.

Park Ranger – Status Update

Shane Denton, Supervising Park Ranger provided the Commission with a verbal update regarding the year-to-date Ranger Status Report.

7. New/Unfinished/Other Business

1. District 5 – Parks Presentations – General Services Manager, Isaac Preston presented on the projects that had been completed in various District 5 parks which included new soccer field lights at Pioneer Park, large tree care at Heritage Park; graffiti and unsheltered population clean-up at Potomac Park, a soccer field renovation at Virginia Park; and major irrigation improvements at Belle Terrace Park.

2. Review and Discuss Proposed Event Limit/Closures – Lake Ming – Ar – Os to have Staff make a recommendation on who should be on a committee to determine guidelines and closures for Lake Ming at the November Parks and Recreation Commission. 4 Ayes, 0 Opposed. Motion carried.

Grady LaCamp heard.

3. California Ave. Vets Hall Site Designation – The Commission furthers discussion from the October meeting regarding a request to designate the Vets Hall on California Ave. as a historical site. Staff provided the Commission with the 7-year cost for maintenance and upkeep of the facility as requested.

Geoffrey Hill, Chief General Services Officer informed the Commission that on January 28, 2020, the Board of Supervisors approved the declaration of surplus property and permission to advertise the county's intention to dispose of the property, set the auction date, and set the hearing to approve the results of the auction. The auction was originally set for April 14th. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the county was not able to conduct the public bid opening and Counsel advised us to cancel the auction. On October 20, 2020, the Board of Supervisors renewed the item and the determination of surplus property and moved forward with setting the auction and hearing dates for the California Ave. Vets Hall.

8. **Commission Comments**

The Commission requested Staff to include a recommendation on water testing Lake Ming and the Kern River, a report regarding why the Parks Director position was eliminated, a park showcase, and a staff recommendation on a committee to determine guidelines and closures for Lake Ming on the November agenda.

9. **Dates and Locations of Future Meetings:**

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

Future meeting dates and locations (subject to change):

- November 18, 2020, Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

10. **Adjournment**

Chairman Bray adjourned the meeting at 8:33 p.m.