

MINUTES

Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission May 5, 2015

Commissioner Jim Nadeau called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

1. **Roll Call.**

Members present: Scott Pierson, Al Sheakley, Jim Nadeau, Tom Guinn, Anne Buckley, Nathan Daniel and Janet Davis

Board of County Commissioners Liaison: Jeanne Herman

Staff present: Eric Crump, Dennis Troy, Andy Brown, Jennifer Budge, Deputy District Attorney Michael Large, Dave Solaro and Joanna Schultz

2. **Public Comment**

No public comment

3. **Approval of the Agenda of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of May 5, 2015**

Commissioner Nadeau said Items #12 and #13 are action items and Items #10 and #11 scouts are not here to present their project.

Motion by Commissioner Pierson to approve the Agenda of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of May 5, 2015. Seconded by Commissioner Sheakley. Motion Carried

4. **Approval of the Minutes of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 6, 2015**

Motion by Commissioner Guinn to approve the Minutes of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 6, 2015. Seconded by Commissioner Davis. Motion Carried.

5. **Approval of the Minutes of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of February 3, 2015**

Commissioner Buckley said she had an excused absence from this meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Buckley to approve the Minutes of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of February 3, 2015. Seconded by Commissioner Davis. Motion carried.

6. **Approval of the Minutes of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of April 7, 2015**

Motion by Commissioner Guinn to approve the Minutes of the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of April 7, 2015. Seconded by Commissioner Pierson. Motion carried.

7. Presentation by Eagle Scout Joshua Wolz on a project to replace native plant seedlings at Bartley Ranch Regional Park

Andy Brown, Park Ranger, introduced Eagle Scout Joshua Wolz.

Eagle Scout Wolz gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Herman regarding secret for planting sagebrush, Eagle Scout Wolz said they didn't plant sagebrush as there was some there. Their instructions were if they found baby sagebrush to remove the tumble weed around it.

In response to Commissioner Guinn regarding is the chicken wire for the rabbits, Eagle Scout Wolz said rabbits and other animals.

Commissioner Nadeau said Eagle Scout Wolz gave a great presentation and thanked him and all scouts.

8. Presentation by Eagle Scout Logan Peterson on a project to replace native plant seedlings at Bartley Ranch Regional Park

Andy Brown, Park Ranger, introduced Eagle Scout Logan Peterson.

Eagle Scout Peterson gave a presentation.

Commissioner Daniel thanked Eagle Scout Peterson for his project.

Commissioner Nadeau said the Eagle Scout program is a great program and you all should be commended.

In response to Commissioner Herman's question to Eagle Scout Wolz regarding planting sagebrush, Ranger Brown said very carefully.

9. Presentation by Eagle Scout Gabriel Andrus on a split-rail fence construction project to protect the Catalpa trees at Hidden Valley Regional Park

Andy Brown, Park Ranger, introduced Eagle Scout Gabriel Andrus.

Eagle Scout Andrus gave a presentation.

Commissioner Nadeau thanked Eagle Scout Andrus for his project.

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent thanked Ranger Brown and Eagle Scouts for the projects and presentations.

12. Presentation by Washoe County Health District Air Quality Management Division on a proposed Ambient Air Monitoring Station at Lazy 5 Regional Park and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Daniel Inouye, Washoe County Health District, Air Quality Division said they are seeking the Parks Commissions permission to establish an air monitoring station at Lazy 5 Regional Park.

Mr. Inouye gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding the footprint, Mr. Inouye said fencing is approximately 16x24, shelter is approximately 8x12.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding a building with antenna with no noise, Mr. Inouye said essentially they will be no moving parts or open to the public. Commissioners are welcome to visit the site. They've used sites as educational facilities and provided different classrooms with different educational opportunities and this would be the only possible activity.

In response to Commissioner Guinn regarding bollards, Mr. Inouye said not anticipating or proposing bollards. They feel the fencing is adequate to protect the area.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding the reason for the Galletti station shutdown, Mr. Inouye said there are several reasons for this. One is there is quite a bit of monitoring in the Truckee Meadows. The sites near the Galletti would be approximately 1 ½ - 2 miles away and there are three current sites within a 1-2 miles. This gives them the opportunity to open up in Spanish Springs and help complete their network and still keep capacity at the same level. EPA supports the closure of Galletti and opening in Spanish Springs.

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent said they reviewed the Master Plan for this area and there would be no potential conflicts with planned use of the park. The neighbors were noticed and we did not receive calls. Ms. Budge said she met with Parks staff to ensure no operational issues or concerns.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding no responses to notice sent out, Ms. Budge said no response and copy of the notice is in Commissioner's packets.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding are there stations in other parks, Ms. Budge said yes, at the Lemmon Valley Park, attached to the Joe Mitchell Community Center.

It's our hope that we'll do an umbrella agreement and will have the opportunity to add additional locations as needed. Each request will be brought to this Commission and have a public noticing component as new sites are introduced. We have no current agreement to address this at the current locations, but hopeful to capture both the Lemmon Valley and Lazy 5 locations in the agreement.

Motion Commissioner Daniel to recommend approval of an Ambient Air Monitoring Station at Lazy 5 Regional Park. Seconded by Commissioner Buckley. Motion carried

13. Review and possible approval of a letter from the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission to the Board of County Commissioners regarding support to increase parks funding for the FY 15-16 budget. (Requested by Commissioners Daniel and Buckley)

Commissioner Daniel said the goal of the letter is to express to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) that the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission values highly our parks and make this a formal declaration.

Last week was the budget meeting with the BCC and Commissioner Daniel and Buckley attended as private citizens to make public comment supporting our parks. This letter is a cleaned up version of Commissioner Buckley's public comment on that day. Commissioner Daniel would like to have a discussion.

District Attorney Michael Large said this was noticed as an action item. If we have a draft of the letter and it has been reviewed by Commissioners, we can move forward as stated or make amendments then send it to Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Daniel would like to know if other Commissioners have any appetite to move forward with this letter. If there is not, then we won't need to spend time discussing this.

Commissioner Guinn said he thinks it's a good letter, but has some edits. If he does a motion can he say for consideration of edits? Mr. Large said Commissioners can review the letter, make recommended edits and review those edits at the next meeting.

Commissioner Nadeau said budgets have to be submitted by end of May.

Dave Solaro, Community Services Director said the process is the tentative budget has been sent to the State. However, the BCC at a May 18th meeting will be reviewing and approving the budget. Delaying to the next meeting of this Commission will be too late for this current fiscal year. We would be able to get something on record for the next fiscal year.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding the proposed budget has what percentage or increase for Parks compared to last year's budget, Mr. Solaro said there is no increase or decrease but are working internally to move functions within Public Works at the Culture and Recreation function within the Community Services Department. We are trying to target approximately \$50,000 increase to the Culture and Recreation budget.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding the County Manager indicated there would be an increase in Parks funding, Mr. Solaro said the overall budget for Washoe County is relatively flat, there are no big increases. Even if we sent the letter to the Manager's Office for the BCC, the issue is available funding within the County budget. We are trying everything we can within the Community Services Department. There is funding for some parking lots at some of the parks through Capital funding, which is one-time funding.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding funding for additional seasonals, Mr. Solaro said the funding is the same as last year. The \$200,000 is in the base budget and will continue to be part of the budget for the future.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding where will seasonals be used, Eric Crump, Operations Division Director said mostly in maintenance and ranger functions and is a similar staffing pattern as last year.

Commissioner Buckley said if we can, and the rest of the Commission is for sending the letter, she thinks one should be sent. If there are not too many edits, Joanna Schultz has a copy of the letter and will compile the edits, complete them, then forward it.

Commissioner Nadeau said part of the reason he was bringing up the funding issue is because it goes directly to how we formalize the letter.

Commissioner Guinn has edits for the letter and will forward these to staff.

Commissioner Buckley said she researched and only knows of one department who has had its full budget restored to the 2008 level.

Commissioner Nadeau said he wants to send a message from this Commission that we are serious about wanting the budget increase. One of the difficulties he has is much of the stuff that is in the letter, they already know. We want this to be impactful and struggling on how to rewrite the letter and not repeat what they are already aware of.

Commissioner Buckley agrees but there are new Commissioners. At the BCC meeting last week several members of the public spoke about the ball park and the Commissioners didn't listen to the public comment. This Commission when people address us as a body we pay attention and not all of them did. She is fine with cutting the letter down and wish it was one page, but she is just not certain they know.

Commissioner Herman said she's received several hundred letters and assures everyone she does know about the problem. The other Commissioners are aware as well.

Commissioner Guinn said it sounds like it's a little too late for our letter. Maybe going forward we write this letter as we saw the budget. Let them know that we understand the decisions that need to be made, however, this is what we're looking at kind of letter. It will imbed this in their minds for next budgets that they really need to start taking this seriously because there are some great points in this letter. He's been through budgeting, understands that you hear from every department, and every department has issues, you sit and listen, then a lot of times a week or two later you don't need to worry about it until next year and sending letters will reinforce to the people who have been voted up there that we are still watching it and it's still on our radar to be addressed.

Commissioner Pierson said it sounds like a two prong attack. We are looking at a position statement for the next budget year as well as something for now as a word of encouragement/recommendation on how we would like to funding increase.

Commissioner Sheakley said he agrees with Commissioner Pierson. It's a great letter, but doesn't know if it will mean anything to them since they already know about it.

Commissioner Davis said if our BCC Liaison would carry our message to the BCC that we are strongly advising a better increase for our Parks system.

Mr. Crump added that letters like this have been sent from this Commission in the past. The BCC Liaison, if it is her pleasure has the ability to make announcements during the meeting. Although we do budgets once a year the thinking about budgets happens 12 months out of the year. Regardless of whether this Commission is able to get the letter out, the letter can be given at any time.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding if the letter is redrafted, would this affect Open Meeting Law, Deputy District Attorney Large said in terms of drafting the letter, we would request that staff send the letter to the Commissioners who can communicate changes to him. When we have a meeting that is not a quorum including discussion on email does cause

concern with Open Meeting Law because we could be discussing issues outside of the public. He advises that all changes be directed to him, he will compile them with Parks staff, redraft the letter, send the final to Commissioners for review so we are not in violation of the Open Meeting Law.

Commissioner Pierson said this seems like a perfect opportunity to have a subcommittee on a letter writing campaign, but would it fall under the Open Meeting Law.

Commissioner Nadeau said his understanding of the Open Meeting Law is a subcommittee appointed by this Commission is also subject to Open Meeting Law because it is an appointed committee acting under an official capacity of this Commission who is subject to the law. Mr. Large said this is correct.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding could the Commission request someone speak on behalf of this Commission to the BCC, Deputy District Attorney Large said that is not under this agenda item, however, the agenda item is in the way of communication with the BCC regarding the budget so everyone as individuals are welcome to go to the BCC and provide public comment. As for designating someone to that is in the purview of this Commission to act upon that.

Motion by Commissioner Guinn at this time do not send the letter to the Board of County Commissioners, rather send comments to legal to incorporate into a second draft to bring back to this Commission for approval. in the interim strongly ask our Board of County Commission Liaison to convey our concern on the current budget. Second by Commissioner Daniel.

Mr. Large recommended adding to the motion sent to legal counsel and Parks staff.

Motion carried

Mr. Solaro said the next opportunity to go before the BCC as individuals is Tuesday, May 12th.

14. Park Reports

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent highlighted the Volunteer and Park District reports.

Eric Crump, Division Director of Operations highlighted the May Center report.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding how this exhibit numbers compare to previous exhibits, Mr. Crump said it was comparable to some of our more successful events. Based on the budget put together for the show we were running in the black about a month ago. We paid for the show including all overhead costs before the show ended, which is what we want. This is highly subsidized by the May Foundation and to run in the black for any show, especially with four weeks to go, is good position to be in as we are not always there.

Commissioner Daniel thanked the May Foundation for continued support of the Museum. Doing the renovation is going to improve the quality of the facility.

Dennis Troy, Park Planner highlighted the Planning report.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding when will construction start on the Stateline to Stateline Bikeway, Mr. Troy said they do not have an exact date, but will find out and get back to this Commission.

15. Director's Report

Dave Solaro, Community Services Director said we are still working with legal on Chapter 95 and hoping to bring this back in June. Deputy District Attorney Michael Large added that we have worked hard on this and June should be fine to bring it to this Commission.

There were no Park items that went before the Board of County Commissioners except for the budget where the County Manager presented his recommended budget. Two Parks Commissions made public comment in support of parks and we truly appreciate that. We've also been inundated with emails as well and he believes got what it was intended to get across, which was information to the Board on the importance of parks in the community. Part of the issue with the budget is flat revenues and operation demands coming at the Board and County. We are working through Capital Improvement funds for parking lots and have other funding for other various parks, trails and open space projects.

Another interest to this Commission is the drought and the impacts of the drought on Washoe County. Last Friday Eric Crump sent out information on the need to close the off-leash dog area/multiuse pasture at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park and the need for Washoe County to close that facility. That area is irrigated by ditch irrigation with no other way to irrigate that area. As soon as the Highland Ditch is turned off by the Federal Water Master we won't have any water for that area. Staff has done a great job of reaching out and trying to determine a game plan on the best course of action. If we let the grass go dormant, it will pick up back up in the spring as long as we don't have thousands of dogs and people trampling all over it. So in an effort to sustain that resource we made the decision to close it. Information on the drought and impacts are on the Community Services web page and will be posted on the Parks web page for the public.

Washoe County Golf Course is also irrigated predominately through ditch water. We do have a small well at Virginia Lake that we can use for irrigation. We are going to have to reduce watering by 42% and staff is working on how to take care of that asset into the future. Things will start drying out and you will start hearing about them so we will be preparing some information for Commissioners.

Sierra Sage is watered by effluent, so there shouldn't be any impacts there. At the majority of the parks we are going to do as Truckee Meadows Water Authority has requested, which is reduce by 10%.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the Washoe County Golf Course half the fairways will die, Mr. Solaro we will try to keep the greens, tees and fairways and mostly likely have a brown driving range as well as the practice area. Commissioner Buckley hopes revenue for the golf course will keep up and Washoe will keep paying for itself.

Commissioner Buckley saw the article about the dog park today, thought it was very well done and explains why it will be closed. That is in her neighborhood and is really the only big green space and would like to see it maintained.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding will Washoe Golf Course ever get effluent water, Mr. Solaro said that is deep in the middle of non-effluent territory. The cost to get effluent water there is very cost prohibited, but staff is looking at all the options to ensure we can maintain and sustain the golf course.

16. Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Sheakley said a tournament is coming up at the Washoe Golf Course and there are a lot of dandelions.

Commissioner Daniel hopes the letter does not fall off of the upcoming agenda items and we're having this discussion again.

Commissioner Nadeau hopes for it to be on the agenda for June.

Commissioner Guinn with Washoe County water shortages it is good time to bring up effluent. What we can utilize, funding sources to help with this, funding sources a lot of people don't utilize and it's about time, while not specific to parks to build that infrastructure, the cities and county need to look at that funding and bring that reclaimed water over.

Commissioner Nadeau said couple of years ago Truckee Meadows Water Authority went into one of the parks to build an easement. He would like an update on the recovery of the area.

Commissioner Nadeau would like to add the park in Vya, northern Washoe County to the Park of the Month.

17. Public Comment

Cathy Brandhorst discussed issues of interest to herself.

Board of County Commissioner Bob Lucey thanked this Commission for their service. This is a tough Commission to be on because you are required to make some tough decisions, but have kept our community pretty and available to the citizens. He has great support for the Parks Commission because he feels is one of the prime assets to our community.

18. Adjournment

Chairman Nadeau adjourned the meeting at 4:04pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Schultz