

## MINUTES

### Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission October 7, 2014

Commissioner Jim Nadeau called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m.

#### 1. **Roll Call.**

**Members present:** Scott Pierson, Nathan Daniel, Jim Nadeau, Thomas Guinn, Janet Davis, Ed Harney and Allan Sheakley. Anne Buckley had an excused absence.

**Staff present:** Eric Crump, Deputy District Attorney Leslie Admirand, Jennifer Budge, Marie Fong, Bryan Harrower, and Joanna Schultz

#### 2. **Public Comments**

No public comment

#### 3. **Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting October 7, 2014**

Commissioner Nadeau said item # 6, Eagle Scout Lane Radar was unable to attend the meeting. Item # 8 staff is requesting pulling this item.

Motion by Commissioner Guinn to Approve the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting October 7, 2014. Second by Commissioner Daniel.  
Motion Carried.

#### 4. **Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of August 5, 2014**

Motion by Commissioner Davis to Approve the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of August 5, 2014. Second by Commissioner Pierson.  
Motion carried.

#### 5. **Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of September 2, 2014**

Motion by Commissioner Guinn to Approve the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of September 2, 2014. Second by Commissioner Davis. Motion carried.

#### 6. **Presentation by Eagle Scout Lane Radar on a project installing horse mount stations at the Lemmon Valley and Golden Valley Horse Arenas**

Item pulled

#### 7. **Presentation by Eagle Scout Nathan McCrea on a project staining the main barn at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park**

Marie Fong, Park Ranger introduced Nathan McCrea with Troop #443.

Eagle Scout Nathan McCrea just completed his Eagle Scout project at Rancho San Rafael Park. Ranger Fong pointed out that the last couple of Eagle Scout candidates have been from Troop #443 and she thanked the Troop for their dedication to our Washoe County Parks system. Eagle Scout McCrea's project has garnered over 280 hours of volunteer labor for this project.

The project was to fix the barn at Rancho San Rafael, which included replacing and staining boards. There were numerous challenges including hornet nest removal. The weathered wood required many coats of paint. Nathan showed before pictures of the barn, which didn't fit in with the white fence and the green and white chicken coop. One person used the paint sprayer and another volunteer followed back-rolling. People that were using the Park commented to Nathan on the great job that he was doing, and that it looked a lot better.

On the final day of painting Eagle Scout McCrea and the volunteers had to hurry because smoke from surrounding fires was blanketing the valley.

Eagle Scout McCrea thanked his troop for all of their help. He also thanked Reno Paint Mart who had donated approximately 25 gallons of paint, which is equal to \$1,000.00. Reno Paint Mart's donation helped make the project possible.

Commissioner Guinn thanked Eagle Scout McCrea and said he has done a great job on the project and also the power point presentation. Coming from an engineering firm he know that is a great talent to have and Eagle Scout McCrea should be proud.

Commissioner Daniel thanked Eagle Scout McCrea and the troop for the work they have done at Rancho San Rafael. It really means a lot, because that area is really in need of some repair and with the limited budget the County has, it is great to have Eagle Scout McCrea and the rest of the troop step-up and steward the public land.

Commissioner Harney thanked Eagle Scout McCrea and said he is part of this troop and it is one of the leading troops for Eagle Scouts. It seems like every month the projects are getting bigger and better.

Eric Crump, Director of Operations thanked Eagle Scout McCrea. He was at Rancho San Rafael a couple of weeks ago and said it looks stunning and has brought a whole new element to that area. Mr. Crump added it is with Eagle Scout McCrea and the troop's assistance that we continue to get these projects done. The amount of resources that he had on the ground probably constitutes the amount of resources that Parks has available to us for our entire park system on any given day and we cannot do it with out you.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding paint, Eagle Scout McCrea estimated 20 gallons based on measurement, but with the spillage and how the wood soaked up the paint they used 30 gallons.

Commissioner Nadeau thanked Nathan, his sponsors and the troop for their efforts.

**8. Review and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to approve a Statement of Intent to Participate in the Swan Lake Nature Study and Resource Management Area.**

Item pulled

**9. Discussion and possible recommendation to staff on the standing agenda item “Park Reports” to include but not limited to: what information should be included in the reports, format of the reports, and how the reports should be presented to the Park Commission.**

Eric Crump, Director of Operations said this item was placed on the agenda at the request of our Chairman, Commissioner Nadeau.

Some background on how the reports are generated will aid in the discussion. Discussion will address what the Board is looking for in the reports. Most of these reports are turned in from various field staff that is responsible for this function. Our Volunteer Coordinator, Denise Evans, receives reports from all field staff on all volunteer efforts' through volunteer time sheets. She then puts together a report for Mr. Crump's review. This holds true for both the May Center and Park Districts reports. A lot of people touch these and no one person spends an extraordinary amount of time because of that. They are given to me in final form and I have a chance to read through them. This is done on a monthly basis.

Commissioner Nadeau said the reports are helpful for Commissioners and the public, in order to see what is going on in their parks. Along the same lines, they require staff time for both preparation and presentation.

Commissioner Davis feels the volunteer information is very important for Commissioners and the public, in order to see the contributions the volunteer are making.

Commissioner Nadeau asked Commissioners, if there were reports that were not as helpful as others. He asked if we needed a verbal update monthly on the Park Districts and the May Center.

Commissioner Guinn said he would like a quarterly budget report. He doesn't have to see numbers, but would like to see how budgets are doing.

Commissioner Pierson would like to see some kind of benchmarking or matrix used to determine the success of the parks and that would tie in with the visitation. That would be beneficial for the Commissioners Trends can be determined from that and would help Commissioners make decisions for the long term.

Commissioner Nadeau said we can also see what type of benefit the community is garnering from volunteerism. Public assumes the parks are out there and they can be used any time.

Quarterly budget, volunteers is a good matrix and also visitation to see how active the parks are. We don't need a verbal report, maybe something included in the Commissioners packets.

Mr. Crump said all the comments were great. If anyone is concerned about the information getting to the public, the agenda and any supporting documentation can be found on our website, [washoecountyparks.com](http://washoecountyparks.com)

We do have car counters in most of our regional parks and we are able to use a multiplier for people on foot and bike that don't trigger the car counter. We have been capturing that information for approximately 20 years, and have good historical information. We use to

capture the types of use and that would be through staff. With decrease in staff, we are no longer capturing that to the extent we have in the past. It is important for future planning and it is a tough one.

Mr. Crump pointed out that we use to also do a nice Annual Report, but that went away due to the economics.

Commissioner Harney feels the Golf Report could be a quarterly report.

Commissioner Guinn wanted to be clear that he does not want to put additional burden on the limited staff. Mr. Crump said he appreciated that, but feels that we can pull our accounting SAP program, in a matter of seconds.

Commissioner Daniel said he saw a matrix of projects that staff was working on and would like to see that at least once a year.

Commissioner Nadeau reiterated that they don't want to add additional burden to staff and some reports could be done quarterly and that would offset the workload.

Motion by Commissioner Guinn recommending that staff come back to the Commission with recommended additional and deleted reports. Second by Commissioner Harney.  
Motion carried.

**10. Update on proposed off-leash pet area at Hidden Valley Regional Park and possible recommendation to staff on the management of certain area(s) within Hidden Valley Regional Park**

Eric Crump, Director of Operations, said they anticipated having a report for this Commission. Unfortunately the staff person who was the lead on this had an emergency appendectomy and not able to produce the report for this meeting.

Mr. Crump said he knows that she has met with staff. Staff is doing quite a bit of research on best practices throughout the nation. Mr. Crump anticipates bringing a full report to the Board next month.

Mr. Crump attended a Hidden Valley Homeowner's meeting close to nine months ago. A proposal was presented to designate an off-lease area in the undeveloped section of Hidden Valley, which is in addition to the Link Piazza Dog Park.

We held a public input meeting in September with 25 people attending. We also initiated a survey with 71 people responding. We brought this item back to the Board in September, where we had one public comment. This is not an easy decision because there are many ramifications from user conflict, increase use of parks, which leads to speeding in neighborhoods and an increase in pet waste that isn't picked up.

Our staff recognizes that people want areas to exercise and have their pet's with them, off-leash. This is an activity that is in high demand both regionally and nationally and underserved in our area. Washoe County only has two off-leash dog areas and our sisters agencies are in the same situation.

Many people are looking for areas close to home so they can get the quick walk in before, or after work. Making a decision like this, where we mitigate those potential conflicts, recognizing that certain people want to experience their parkland without having a conflict with a dog off-leash. We are doing a lot of research and will come up with a workable solution to move forward.

Commissioner Daniel said he appreciates the time staff is taking with this matter.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau's question regarding transmission of communicable disease, in public dog parks through dog waste, Mr. Crump said you address it, to the extent that you educate the public and hope they do the right thing.

Mr. Crump added that this item is also on the agenda for joint meeting with City of Reno and Sparks.

## **11. Presentation on the Wilbur D. May Center Annual Report**

Eric Crump, Director of Operations, said the annual report specifically targeted for the Wilbur May Foundation, who generously supports the May Center to the tune of \$300,000 annually for operation and maintenance of both facilities. We meet annually with the Foundation and the last meeting was September 22, 2014. We discussed items in the annual report and future operations. The May Foundation has funded over \$97,000 in improvement projects for the May Center last fiscal year, which is over and above the \$300,000 they give us towards operating. This is almost 1/2 million dollars put into the May Center by the May Foundation last fiscal year.

We completed renovation of the fire suppression system, which was a Washoe County project and funded through capital funds. The old fire suppression system was a standard wet system and water sat right behind the sprinklers. If a break occurred, the Wilbur D. May collection would have been damaged. The pipe used in the old system no longer met code and most of it was replaced when we put in the new system. We also added a double check dry system. There is no water in the new system, but water will be released, if both fire and smoke occur. The project cost \$170,000.00 and the May Foundation was happy to see the system update.

There is a great section in the annual report on marketing, which a large portion, is funded by the May Foundation.

## **12. Presentation on Park or Program of the Month featuring the Wilson Commons Park**

Eric Crump, Director of Operations, introduced Park Ranger Bryan Harrower. Ranger Harrower has recently moved to the Mt. Rose District and works out of Davis Creek Regional Park, managing Bower Mansion, Davis Creek and Wilson Commons.

Ranger Harrower said Wilson Commons Park is listed on the historical registry as Twaddle-Pedroli Ranch. It was purchased by the Twaddle family in 1869 for \$5,000 and was irrigated by the Twaddle Ditch, which is actually the ditch that provides water to the property today. The Pedroli family purchased the property in 1885 for \$3,000. Most of the development of historical significance we see now was done by the Pedroli family. At its largest, it was 630 acres and purchased by Washoe County in 1986.

The Pedroli family did have a working ranch with livestock and they did they own meat processing on the property. There is a slaughter house, chicken coop and other buildings that are substantial in their construction. They are large stone construction with cut-stone doorways something you would not normally see for a chicken coop. They may have resorted to this type of construction due to the lack of local materials.

Ranger Harrower showed pictures of the bunk house and the stark difference between how they treated their staff compared to their animals. The bunk house had very few amenities, which shows how little thought they invested in the people working for them as compared to the product they were producing.

Eleanor Roosevelt visited the area in the 1800,s and stayed with a friend in the valley.

Today current development is what you would normally see, which is a picnic area, horseshoe pits, tennis courts, volleyball courts and a large fishing pond. Current maintenance is to replace a fence that fronts the property, which has fallen down. We will use salvaged fencing from the Marr property to do the repair.

Wilson Commons is a beautiful, serene place with an abundance of wildlife. There are red tail hawks, owls, blue herons and turkey vultures. Wilson Commons is a “gem” of a park and we are so fortunate to have it as part of Washoe County Parks system.

### **13. Parks Reports**

Eric Crump, Director of Operations highlighted the reports.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding funding for the Bowers Mansion Docent, Mr. Crump said that position is funded through the general fund. It is a part-time summer seasonal position. The grant funding helped with the swimming pool renovations.

Jennifer Budge, Park Planner, highlighted the Planning Report.

Commissioner Guinn disclosed he is on a couple of teams that are doing proposals for the Mt Rose Corridor projects and will have to decline sitting on a panel to select a consultant.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau’s regarding the Ballardini Trailhead, Ms. Budge said it is open and available to the public. Information will be coming about the grand opening.

### **14. Director’s Report to include updates on Board of County Commissioners actions, department update and community partnerships**

Eric Crump, Director of Operations said Jennifer Budge has been selected as the Parks Operations Superintendent.

The Board of County Commissioners approved the May Museum traveling exhibit, which was done at their Sept 23, 2014 meeting.

The November meeting has been cancelled due to elections.

We are working on a joint Park Commission meeting with the cities of Reno and Sparks for some time in December.

**15. Commissioner's Comments: (This item limited to announcements or topics/issues proposed for future workshops/agendas)**

Commissioner Guinn congratulated Jennifer Budge on her promotion. He also reminded that it is fall and he lives in the Mt. Rose area and the fall colors are beautiful. He urged everyone to get out and enjoy.

**16. Public Comments**

No public comment

**17. Adjournment**

Chairman Nadeau adjourned the meeting at 3:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Carolyn Kelly/Joanna Schultz