

## MINUTES

### CONCURRENT MEETING

**Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission  
City of Reno Recreation and Parks Commission  
City of Sparks Recreation and Park Commission  
March 3, 2015**

#### 1. Call to Order

Layne Van Noy, City of Reno Recreation and Parks Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

#### 2. Roll Call

**City of Reno Recreation and Parks Commission:** Layne Van Noy, Nathan Daniel, Erick Scalise, and Gerry Taylor. Tom Stille arrived at 5:54 p.m.

**Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission:** Thomas Guinn, Anne Buckley, Nathan Daniel, Janet Davis and Allan Sheakley.

**City of Sparks Recreation and Park Commission:** Dave Sexton, Dorie Guy, Angela Fuss, Jack Byron, Charlene Bybee and Andrea Tavener.

#### 3. Public Comment

Kent Ervin, co-organizer of the Promoting Safety on Peavine Trails group. Thank you, Commissioners. My name is Kent Ervin. My comments are related to agenda item 5, (d) discussing the regional trail master plans.

I am a co-organizer of the Promoting Safety on Peavine Trails group, which represents hikers, bikers, and runners. Our goal is to improve safety on trails where illegal or legal, but unsafe target shooting on, over, or toward trails and roads is common. Our goal is to find solutions that improve public safety and that work for all responsible hikers, mountain bikers, runners, 4x4ers, dirt bikers, hunters, and recreational shooters. Our particular focus is Peavine Mountain, but through our Facebook page, Facebook.com/PeavineTrailSafety, we have heard from people whose safety has been threatened by irresponsible target shootings all over the Truckee Meadows. On Peavine, we are dealing with a dense network of existing roads and 4x4 tracks, new and old single-track trails, existing target shooting activities, and mixed jurisdictions. We have developed a proposed action plan for Peavine that includes more education, better enforcement, and simplified regulations, and we are working with the County, USFS, and other stakeholders. It's not a simple problem with a single solution. Because there will continue to be high demand for target shooting on public lands, we believe part of the solution needs to be identifying public land areas where shooting is safer, convenient, and legal in order to attract shooters away from trail areas. We enthusiastically support the development of local and regional trail networks in the Truckee Meadows. But as you plan for new or improved trails, please consider the safety of future trail users. Where there are existing target shooting sites-legal, or illegal-trails should either be routed at a safe distance, or shooting sites be found elsewhere to separate incompatible recreational uses. It's pretty easy to find the existing shooting sites-just look for the shell casings and target debris left behind. Thank you very much for listening and thank you for your work promoting recreational opportunities in the Truckee Meadows. I would be happy to answer any questions. Contact information: PeavineTrailSafety@gmail.com, www.Facebook.com/PeavineTrailSafety.

#### 4. **Approval of the Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Daniel to approve the Agenda for the Concurrent Meeting of the City of Reno, City of Sparks and Washoe County Parks Commissions. Second by Commissioner Guy. Motion Carried.

#### 5. **Business Items**

##### **a. Washoe County 1 Regional Parks, Trails, Open Space and Libraries Bond 2000 (WC-1) allocation status report and discussion on remaining bond funding.**

Jennifer Budge, Washoe County Park Operations Superintendent, said there is an Executive Summary that was passed out (included in handout) just after the Bond was passed, to make sure that all agencies and the community were aware of the parameters of the Bond, context of the Bond and how projects were chosen on the Bond list.

WC-1 Bond was passed in 2000 and parameters were developed for the project list with three categories within the Bond. There is a fourth category, which is Libraries with \$10 million allocated towards libraries.

Ms. Budge reviewed the approved Bond Project List and amounts allocated for each category. There are a variety of projects throughout Washoe County both in City of Reno and Sparks funded. We were overwhelmingly successful in leveraging these bonds funds for grants, donations and other partnerships and are, at the point today, where we've completed all the funded projects, as well as the majority of the unfunded projects on the list. We never thought in 2000 that we would be so successful and a kudos to the three agencies that put this forward.

The map provided shows all of the parks, open space and trail projects throughout the region that have been funded by WC-1. There is still some funding and now working on those unfunded projects and determining which ones are feasible, trying to get every last dollar on the ground for the community to use and enjoy it.

Ms. Budge gave a brief overview of the approved, but unfunded projects in the three categories of Open Space, Trails and Park Projects. Washoe County is working with Reno and Sparks to determine the feasibility of each of the unfunded projects.

##### **Open Space**

- The Ballardini Trailhead is in progress. Cheryl Surface, Washoe County Park Planner, is the Project Manager. The next phase of the project is a trail system from Ballardini Trailhead through Arrow Creek open space and all the way to the Thomas Creek Trailhead.
- Canepa Ranch Trailhead. Washoe County purchased a large amount of land in Canepa Ranch and then sold it to the US Forest Service who then paid Washoe County using SNPLMA. Washoe County retained all the water rights. The Board of County Commissioners directed that the land sale proceeds be put back into WC-1 Bond fund. At this time. Washoe County does not have the resources to maintain an additional trailhead, so this project is on hold until we have the staffing.
- Truckee River Land is our greatest opportunity in the Open Space category, to spend the additional dollars. Washoe County, Reno and Sparks have been working with the Nature Conservancy, Nevada Land Trust, Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway and other federal agencies and local nonprofits to acquire land along the Truckee River greenbelt and corridor.

##### **Trails**

- The last project, Incline-Sand Harbor Bike Path, is in progress. We have a funding agreement with Tahoe Transportation District with the remaining funding and a partnership project with 20 other agencies.

## **Park Project**

- Bowers Improvement we anticipate starting this fall
- Rancho San Rafael Improvements we don't have anything that meets the definition in the Bond
- Rancho Ballfields we have discussed with City of Reno and could be an opportunity for additional funding for improvements
- Rancho/Arboretum Center will probably break ground in April on the Greenhouse

There was a stakeholder group that convened with representatives from each of the Parks Commissions and public agencies who took a look at the WC-1 Bond funding and opportunities in the future for spending the remaining balance. We had an opinion from Bond Council that the funding has to remain in each category. We couldn't take money from the Open Space category and move it to Trails. We had to focus on unfunded projects, or completing projects that were on the list. We are bound to the original list and Washoe County, Reno and Sparks staff have been working together to find ways to spend the funding for each category.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding the reconvening of the AdHoc Committee, Ms. Budge said she doesn't think there is a need at this time to reconvene. Staff is committed to working through the list and doing what we need to do and can provide updates to the Commissions or AdHoc Committee in writing, or at Park Commission meetings, to make sure everyone is kept in the loop with our progress.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding who is on the Bond Council, Ms. Budge said she believes it is a third party contract that Washoe County hired.

In response to Commissioner Byrom regarding would the total amount of the two Bonds be expended, Ms. Budge said yes.

In response to Commissioner Byrom regarding consideration to issue a new Bond, Ms. Budge said she would be happy to move forward on a discussion, but not sure what the community's appetite would be.

### **b. Review and discussion of regional dog off-leash areas to include planning, potential future sites, funding and management.**

Jeff Mann, City of Reno Parks Manager, said the City has two authorized off-leash areas; Virginia Lake, a  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre site and a one acre parcel at Whittaker Park. Both sites were established from exiting park sites with no real amenities at either site. Reno Parks Commission has recently toured sites to look at adding additional off-leash areas due to high demand. Two sites being considered is a one acre turf area at Paradise Park and the arena at Horseman's Park. However, as of this morning, Horseman's Park may not be an option as an independent group has inquired about utilizing the facility for horsemen to run programs for people with disabilities.

When Mr. Mann first started with Reno Parks he started a Mutt Mitt program; dog waste dispenser programs. Before Animal Services was consolidated, Parks was going to receive a \$2 per license fee to support that program through Reno Animal Services. After the consolidation, they lost that fee and as budget cuts took effect they stopped their dog waste stations program all together. They had sponsorships for the stations in the beginning, but that has dwindled down. The dispensers are still in the parks and we encourage the public to stuff them with their own plastic bags.

Eric Crump, Washoe County Operations Division Director, said Washoe County has two off-leash areas; a pasture at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park and the Link Piazza Dog Park at Hidden Valley Regional Park. The pasture is not a true dog park, as there is no fencing around it, but because of its vastness it works and is very popular. The desire to have additional off-leash areas in the community is out there and an underserved recreational opportunity. Staff spends a tremendous amount of time on calls from people looking for areas to take their dogs off-leash, as well as with conflicts with user groups due to dogs off-leash.

Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Washoe County District Park Manager said we have been dealing regularly with off-leash dog issues in Washoe County Parks for many years. In April of 2014, the Hidden Valley Homeowner's Association had requested our attendance at one of their meetings. There were roughly 50+ citizens expressing a desire for additional off-leash areas within Hidden Valley Regional Park specifically. The decision, at the time was that we would hold a public meeting to get public input. At the August 2014 public meeting, we came up with four areas we felt would be best for off-leash. In addition to the meeting, we also did a public survey with 72 responses. 83% were in favor of an additional off-leash area with 16.7% said no more.

The working group comprised of staff reviewed the four areas. The general discussion of the areas was that we were concerned for potential increase in resource damage, impacts on all user groups, effect on wildlife in the park and if we opened this up for off-leash it would have repercussions on all our other open spaces that are similar in nature.

Ms. Wallace did some national research contacting 12 different agencies throughout the U.S. and one in Canada. Some of the things other agencies are doing include:

- Since 2007 Boulder, Colorado has had a voice and site tag program. The owner watches a video on what voice and site control means. They are then given a tag for both owner and dog to show they've been through the program. There is a one-time \$15 fee. They've done a lot of research and have field studies done regularly and found that after four years the number of people who are complying actually went to preprogram levels. Owners are not picking up after their dog and do not have voice or site control of their dog. They are now going to where the owner has to show that they have control of their dogs before they are given their tag. Tags are now \$75 because the program has to be cost recovery.
- Portland, Oregon has an off-leash advisory council. The process started in 2005 with a small stakeholder group determining best areas for an off-leash area that then progressed, in the off-leash council.
- Seattle, Washington has a group called COLA, Citizens for Off-Leash Areas. They manage the off-leash areas themselves and meet with parks staff quarterly going over projects in the parks, or review complaints.
- Salt Lake City did an extensive Master Plan of best practices. They found there was over 50% difficulty with compliance.

All 12 agencies contacted, the Park Rangers have citation authority. Compliance is always going to be an issue and making sure there are people out there managing an issue, is going to be very important for the future of the programs.

Staff recommended to the Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission to create a stakeholders group to develop an off-leash management plan for Hidden Valley Regional Park. The group was created and we had our first meeting last week. The groups is comprised of different user groups; equestrian trail rider, mountain bike rider, dog off-leash walker, member of the Hidden Valley community, Animal Services and parks staff. The goal is have the off-leash management plan in draft form by the fall of this year. Information will be posted on the website.

Staff working groups feel it is more a regional issue and any plan created would have far reaching effects. We are hoping, if we come up with a good process, this could potentially go into City of Reno and Sparks and help the region do a better job in managing off-leash dogs with more areas for the public to go.

In response to Commissioner Guinn regarding the percentage of time staff spends doing maintenance or picking up feces from these areas, Ms. Wallace-Barnum said at this point in time staff does not clean up feces from these areas.

Ms. Wallace-Barnum added that we could spend several hours a day at every park we manage picking up dog feces; it is awful and is a problem at most of the parks. We have dog waste stations in a lot of the parks, but

the waste is a real issue. The health and safety concerning that waste has been brought up numerous times before this process began. Hidden Valley does have volunteers who go out picking up waste, but staff does not currently do this.

In response to Commissioner Guinn regarding the creation of all of these open spaces for off-leash, are we creating liability issues? Ms. Wallace-Barnum said Animal Services perspective is that it is the owners responsibility to pick up after their dog. Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent added there are County and City ordinances that require you to pick up after your pet.

Commissioner Guinn added he has been on many trails where people don't pick up the waste and thinks what we would start seeing, is the owner is now out of the picture. This is one County or City property and the County and City are liable for that property and the waste left there.

Mr. Mann said we also don't send our crews out to pick up the dog waste. If we did this, that's all they would do in the general park and off-leash areas. From their experience, at the off-leash areas there is more peer pressure to pick up after their pets. There is more compliance at an off-leash area than there is in the general parks. The two sites selected initially to expand off-leash areas are areas of developed parks that have very low general parking. They aren't really displacing anyone and, in his opinion, would not create a liability to a user.

Commissioner Sexton said he has a few concerns when designating an area as a dog park when it really is a combination of joint use. In the City of Sparks, we have a dog park that is fenced off and no one is using it for any other use than what it's designated for. His concern is once you designate an area that is not fenced off that has joint use, this would aggravate most people. When we allow more dogs, the frustration level increases.

Another concern is, in Ms. Wallace-Barnum's research she mentioned one community is charging a \$75 fee. Commissioner Sexton feels when you do something like this, no one is going to pay a fee for permission to walk their dog in a park; they're going to do it anyway.

Tracy Domingues, City of Sparks Parks and Recreation Director, said in Sparks they do have one designated dog park on the south shore of the Sparks Marina Park. It is very popular and unique because it has the water front asset. There are challenges with off-leash areas, but that is probably the cleanest part of that park. Park Rangers are there and spend a lot of their time cleaning up after other people's dogs and now it has become an expectation. The park users on the trail believe that is what the Rangers are there for. They are not, they are there to enforce the rules and encourage the public to follow them. Our hands are tied as our Park Rangers don't have citation authority and the community is aware of that.

A few years ago City of Reno, Sparks and Washoe County joint forces to create a campaign. The motto was "While everyone is looking out for number one, who is picking up number two. It's the law". The message is a single gram of dog feces may contain bacteria as high as 23 million as well as infectious parasite A. Dog walkers who carelessly choose not to clean up after their pets are creating a serious health and safety threat to our parks and public places.

Washoe County Code mandates that you must not allow your animal to defecate on public or private property without immediately removing and properly disposing the feces. You must contain a suitable container or other suitable instrument for the removal and disposal of dog feces.

This is the law, but the problem is resources and the ability to enforce it. Rangers and staff do the best they can with what we have to educate them. This message is in every activity guide we send out to Sparks residents.

Pah Rah Trailhead is a County trailhead adjacent to our Golden Eagle Regional Park and is littered with dog feces. Director Domingues has never seen anyone pickup after their dog and they also use it as an off-leash area. An off-leash area that is not fenced is probably one of the worse areas because the dog is off-leash; running around in the sagebrush and the owner is not going to follow the dog to find where they did their business.

City of Sparks is considering additional sites that they will present to their Commission in April. They will possibly do a tour with Commissioners then talk with Community Services Department and NCIP to see if there is a way to put other sites in their budget. They receive a lot of requests for additional sites and request for large and small dog areas.

In response to Commissioner Tavener regarding Sparks Parks Rangers not having citation authority, but do the other entities have them, Mr. Mann said NRS decides who has citation authority. In the State of Nevada only State Park Rangers and Clark County Park Rangers are P.O.S.T. certified and have authority to issue a criminal complaint, which is what Washoe County Code is a criminal complaint. Sparks staff can issue an administrative citation, but that requires the person to tell staff their name. That person is not required by law to tell staff who they are. One issue all three jurisdictions face is our Rangers do not have authority granted to us by the State.

Director Domingues said that was part of her understanding too with the City of Sparks. Her predecessors and Police Chief felt Parks and Rec should not be overseeing a police officer or citation authority type of position. The Police Department for some unknown reasons were not willing to take on those Rangers with that ability in their department.

Mr. Crump said in Washoe County is pursuing limited citation authority for our Park Rangers through some updates to our Chapter 95. Our Parks Rangers would not be P.O.S.T. certified. We are also looking at Administrative Authority, which we already have authority to do, but has not been implemented.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding a case where the police have issued a citation or fine, Ms. Wallace-Barnum said Animal Services would issue those and they have issued citations.

Ms. Wallace-Barnum also addressed Commissioner Tavener's question saying there are multiple agencies who have limited citation authority. Washoe County has it within Code Enforcement, in addition to Animal Services. Director Domingues added they've added the Washoe County Animal Control number to their signs. Mr. Mann added that they include the code and Animal Control's phone number.

In response to Commissioner Tavener regarding the \$2.00 fee to assist with waste stations, did all entities have this as well and did fees the stay the same? Mr. Mann said the fee was a City of Reno fee with the City issued animal licenses. The fee went to park maintenance for stocking the waste stations. Once the three Animal Control agencies were consolidated that fee went away.

Director Domingues said they have volunteers that help them keep the mutt mitt stations full.

In response to Commissioner Van Noy regarding sponsors for the stations, Director Domingues said there are sponsors for some of them. Andrea Spiegel, City of Sparks Recreation Supervisor and Administration and Marketing, said they don't have a lot in place, but has traditionally been annual sponsor. It was \$600/year sponsorship and has changed to \$300/year after realizing their rate was different from the other entities.

### **c. Regional aquatic facility needs and discussion on how to meet identified needs.**

Andy Bass, City of Reno Recreation Manager and currently Acting City of Reno Director, said there is a shortage of aquatic facilities, but their main concern is making sure we are maintaining the current facilities.

Manager Bass gave a presentation.

Commissioner Buckley said when she came to Reno 34 years ago there were two indoor and 2 outdoor pools. There are less now and the population has grown. She realizes that pools are expensive and City of Reno has not spent much money on pool maintenance. She has heard that there are problems with the Northwest pool's boiler. Manager Bass said there is, and the pool is going to close in April. When they finished the roof project and went to turn on the pool to circulate and heat it the boiler started to leak. It has been leaking for about six months. They do have the funds to replace it and will start that project in April. While the Northwest pool is closed they will open up Idewild pool.

In response to Commissioner Bybee regarding if any of the entities have access to the University's pool, Manager Bass said the pool is funded and operated by the University. All of the fees come from the students and is open for student use. They opened Idewild pool to service the High School teams because this was not an option.

Jennifer Budge, Washoe County Park Operations Superintendent added the University pool is available for Regional and State meets. They provide the pool for minimal large scale meets. Manager Bass added, it is not really a community pool like a park pool.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding covering Idewild, Manager Bass said it has been discussed multiple times, but it comes down to the cost and that is very, very high. It would be a down payment for a new facility. Yes they could cover it, but is it feasible and, is probably not the best option.

Tracy Domingues, City of Sparks Parks and Recreation Director, said they have Alf Sorenson pool; a heated indoor pool that was built in 1982. Deer Park has a seasonal pool that is outdoors, heated and built in 1942. At the Sparks Marina Park, there is a supervised seasonal beach front completed in 2000. A Bond to cover Opio Pool was presented in the 90s and failed. We closed Opio Pool approximately four years ago due to lack of use from the community, inability to implement ADA requirements and needed improvements. It was dismantled approximately two years ago. They are going to evaluate that site to see what the community would like installed there.

They have been approached by the Sparks Piranha swim team addressing the need for an indoor Olympic size swimming pool for competition and community use. The difficulty is finding funding not only for land, but also for operation and construction. They do believe another indoor pool is needed in Sparks, however they would like to locate it in west Sparks and it's a matter of finding a good location.

A week ago Monday, the Sparks City Council granted permission to the Parks and Recreation staff to pursue federal funding and grants to complete the Larry D. Johnson Community Center, provide new amenities adjacent to Sparks Middle School and a potential land acquisition. With the community center, the original plan was to add a pool, but it was too costly and the plan now is to finish that center, which would include indoor gymnasium. If we can acquire land, there might be potential for a pool site, unfortunately this pursuit is definitely a challenge with limited resources.

In the recently approved Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan approved in 2013, it was quite clear that the community did not want us to acquire new land or facilities. They felt we needed to put all of our efforts into maintaining what we have. We are at a crossroads with all of the communities growing with the expected Tesla affect. All the facilities are old facilities and when one pool closes the others have to take on high schools and other community programs. The indoor pool at Alf Sorenson has been closed since June 1<sup>st</sup> of 2014 and has been extremely taxing on the entire aquatic community. As a region, another facility is needed, it's just how many are needed when these older facilities breakdown and there is no backup.

Commissioner Van Noy said with the expected Tesla Affect they speculate there will be X number of additional elementary, middle and high schools based on the influx of populous. Has there been any discussion by any entity with the school district that when they do build those schools that they include an aquatic facility. Director Domingues said none that she is aware of. She will be receiving a letter of support as they pursue federal funding for a potential facility at Sparks Middle School. That is far into the future and remains to be seen, but she is unaware of any discussions. Neil Krutz, City of Sparks Deputy Assistant City Manager of Community Services, added that the school district has been focused on maintaining what they have. There has not been any discussion about adding new types of facilities into our schools.

In response to Commissioner Bybee regarding information on why Alf Sorenson has been closed for 10 months, Director Domingues said Alf Sorenson had a new ceiling installed in the summer of 1993. About five years ago a new roof was installed. This closure has been to replace the ceiling again and make great improvements to the HVAC system. They have had a problem with the air handling system. They've improved all the lighting, windows, doors and HVAC then the ceiling project has really been it. The intent was not to be closed for 10 months, but when we started the project, it all just kind of snowballed. They will be reopening in March, but right now we don't have an exact date.

Jennifer Budge, Washoe County Park Operations Superintendent said Washoe County has one seasonal aquatic facility, Bowers pool. It opened in 1962 and is more of a social swimming pool with swim lessons and public swimming. It is open during the 9-week summer season. This is an aging facility and at this point, if we don't get some significant input of funds and Capital Improvements, the facility runs the risk of not being open again. We are actively pursuing private donations, federal funds and other financing to get the facility up and running in a better way.

Previously Washoe County owned Sun Valley Pool, built in 1988. It is now operated and maintained by the Sun Valley General Improvement District. Along with the pool we have also turned over some parks in Sun Valley as well.

We have two splash parks; Melio Gaspari Water Park at the Lazy 5 Regional Park and the North Valleys Splash Park at the North Valleys Regional Park.

Ms. Budge added that City of Reno sponsored the Arts and Aquatics Bond issue in 2004, which also failed. This was in response to the WC-1 Bond issue we wanted to get additional Capital funding for those things that the Parks, Trails and Open Space Bond didn't cover. Arts and Aquatics were not covered by this Bond and the community wanted funded, but it didn't pass.

In response to Commissioner Van Noy regarding why does staff think the Bond failed, Ms. Budge said it wasn't as thoughtful and organized as the WC-1 Bond Issue. We had several years of planning with WC-1 so, it was not only about timing, but it was thoughtful, specific and the community knew what they were voting on. The Arts and Aquatics issue was a little reactionary and thrown together. Each agency supported that Bond Issue and really needed it, but the community was possibly confused as to what exactly it was funding.

Commissioner Guy said she's lived here since the 70s and has seen a massive growth since the 70s and all of the pools were built right around that time. She has taken her grandchildren to a few of the public pools and they are always packed.

Commissioner Buckley said she originally got involved with Parks and Recreation because of swimming. She has very strong feelings about and wonders how Carson City, Gardnerville, Minden in the last 15 years managed to each build their own large aquatics center and a much larger community can't do it. There is something missing there when they have two beautiful facilities in much smaller communities. The Bond issue that failed was very badly organized, no background or leg work and PR was not done. The bottom line is Washoe County's Parks and Open Space budget has been cut by 2/3s, down over 60% from what it was in

2008 and we have more and more parks and only 1/3 of the money. The community doesn't seem to have any idea that things have been cut this much. Now that the economy is returning she is not seeing any money going back into parks. The money seems to be going to people whose wages have been frozen, though she does understand this, the funding has to come back, if we are going to have decent recreation facilities and parks as it affects aquatics because aquatics is expensive. Until the funding returns and this community is prepared to fund Parks and Recreation properly, we're not going to have any good facilities. The public not being aware of the funding is all of our faults and we should do something about this.

Ms. Budge said Carson City and Gardnerville each has a dedicated, sustainable funding source for those aquatics facilities. One is the sales tax and the other special assessment. That money is for construction, operation and maintenance. Should there be an opportunity for something like that here, it would be a great solution, to not only get the funding in Capital to construct something, but to handle the operations and maintenance.

Commissioner Sexton asked if studies have been done on who is actually using the pools and the percentage that Washoe County Schools use the pools vs. the public. The schools are putting pressure on Parks to have aquatics so why don't we put pressure back on them for the funding. Ms. Budge said swim teams swim year round. You can compete in swimming year round and there are also other activities throughout the year such as water aerobics, pool rentals and a wide variety of other uses.

Director Domingues added that each school has their own block of time to use the pools. There is a joint-use agreement between the City of Sparks and Washoe County School District, but that only applies to the facilities. A few years back we started charging the School District for use of their pool because it's not a community developed facility, not helping to maintain it, so now they pay to use it. There are three teams at the pools at one time trying to make the best use of the facilities. They have a variety of activities at the pools and not just swim team activities. Director Domingues handed out their Activity Guide.

Manager Bass added they also have a variety of activities at their pools as well. The School District is seasonal; two months. It's more of the competitive swim teams that utilize the facilities.

Commissioner Taylor has been in Reno for 20 years and remembers, on the ballot, there was a bond issue and a lot of the stuff covered by the bond issue was recreational. Her perception was that they threw in everything but the kitchen sink. There were items on the bond that, if anyone felt were not needed, would not vote for it and one reason she feels some of these bond issues don't pass. We try and make too much of it, if we stayed focused on specific items there would be a better chance of getting it passed.

Commissioner Guy said, new facilities won't be built until our community realizes that we need money to fund these projects. Seems everyone she talks to says no new taxes, however they want to send their children to the parks, to swimming, a first class education and those are things they have to pay for. You cannot sit back and say no new taxes.

Commissioner Scalise said if there is a possibility for all three entities getting together to build one facility that can be used by all user groups in a neutral location. If it can be centrally located so all the teams and schools can use the facility and not have to commute to outlying areas. There are so many kids who would love to be on swim teams in the outlying areas, but there is no way to house them all.

City of Reno Council Member Jenny Brekhus, said she remembers the 2004 vote went down as a property tax vote. The Council was under the cap in 2011-2012, and they went to the cap to hire police officers, so she isn't sure if there is bonding capacity left for what was thought of in 2004. Reno voters have a distrust problem with their City Council and their spending. It's hard to restore trust, but we are making strides by going down \$50 million from the height of their debt. Councilwoman Brekhus added that we should find out if there is bonding capacity.

**d. Update, review and discussion on local and regional trail master plans within the jurisdiction of City of Reno, City of Sparks, and Washoe County.**

Jeff Mann, City of Reno Parks Manager gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding the connection from Mira Loma to Rosewood Lakes, Mr. Mann said there is a trail, but it dead ends because you're not supposed to go onto Rosewood Lakes.

In response to Kevin Joell, member of the public regarding when referring to trails and trail networks, is he referring to paved paths or natural surfacing, Mr. Mann said all of the above, it depends on the location.

Cheryl Surface, Washoe County Parks Planner, said just like the City of Reno, we have our own Washoe County Open Space and Natural Resource Management Plan. This was complete in 2006. There is an implementation piece, which includes recreation and primarily speaks to regional trail corridors and connections. While we haven't done anything as far as implementing the plan our intention now is to start working on implementation strategies, including the trail connection corridors and connections. We have been working on acquiring open space along the Truckee River, property by the Ballardini Ranch Trailhead and Washoe Valley intended for trail connections. We recently completed the Ballardini Ranch Trailhead project. It is a 3-mile loop trail and our intention this summer is to connect that trail to the Thomas Creek Trailhead.

This will be our second year of putting together our Trail Summit, to be held on April 29<sup>th</sup> @ Bartley Ranch Regional Park. This is a partnership between all the user groups and agency partners all the way from Douglas County to Plumas County. The theme this year is collaborative partnerships specifically geared towards trail connections. There is limited funding for opportunities and because we compete against each other we felt if we prioritize the segments and connections based on all our plans we can collaboratively go as a group, to get this funding. We have a lot of the infrastructure in place, we just don't have an overall plan yet to overlap them together and pick the priorities. Ms. Surface encouraged everyone to come to this year's summit.

Tracy Domingues, City of Sparks Parks and Recreation Director, said a challenge facing Sparks as well as other entities is connectivity. There is a great existing system, future systems and as the City is growing north it is very apparent on our maps that this is an issue. They are working on connectivity as a priority.

**Public Comment**

Kevin Joell said he represents multiple trail organizations and what is missing is all the other agencies that have natural surface projects going on. They put six miles of new multi-use trails on Peavine Mountain. In the last 15 months they have also worked on projects at Galena, south tip of Washoe County, Incline Village, as well as in Nevada State Parks. In Washoe County they are currently in the planning phase for 40 miles of trails. Trails are the number one thing people look for when they are looking for a place to live, resort amenity. There are documented socioeconomic benefits, property values depending on the proximity to a trail, tax payers. Part of the collaboration that needs to happen is everyone needs to be on one page so we can truly put in a world class trail system that has the connectivity between the networks along the Sierra fronts, ties in with the Tahoe Basin, Carson City, Minden and Gardnerville. They are working hard to make Lake Tahoe as a world class mountain bike destination and multiple trail projects. The reason they can do this is because they are working with the land managers. They work as volunteers. Mr. Joell added that they received a grant to purchase a trail builder and if anyone has a project where this is needed it is available for minimal fee.

Ms. Surface added that we use our volunteer organizations to the maximum at Washoe County. We couldn't do it without the nonprofit partners we have. One thing we're missing is that effort to put down what our

priorities are. We have a lot of people who want new infrastructure all the time, but we want to make sure that anything we establish at Washoe County has a good design, laid out properly and is built to sustainable standards. We have a lot of social trails within Washoe County and City of Reno and Sparks that have been poorly designed and constructed and are a maintenance and liability nightmare. For us moving forward into the future, not only to our partners but we look to ourselves in order build sustainable trails, so that they will be here in the future.

**e. Budget presentations of funding and staffing levels related to each jurisdiction.**

Andy Bass, City of Reno Recreation Manager gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Byrom regarding, is the budget less than what they had in the past years, Manager Bass said from 2005 to 2010 it was close \$20 million and now we're kind of hovering around \$10 million.

In response to Commissioner Byrom regarding does he think it's kind of stabilized, Manager Bass said yes.

Commissioner Buckley regarding any discussion of the full Parks budget being restored, Manager Bass said they are going through the budget process right now and basically we will have what we had last year. We do have the opportunity to present special requests for additional funding that can be used for additional positions, maintenance, equipment and this goes to the City Council, for their approval. We are requesting additional staffing levels.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding the bottom line, are they staying at half of what they were getting a few years ago, Manager Bass said yes. From the City of Reno most departments are going to show this same trend, it's just a matter how we grow. They did have an increase in staffing. The City and Civil Service Commission changed the rules for how they use their part-time staff. Through the process they converted some of their temporary positions into regular part time non-benefited positions working 20-30 hour.

In response to Commissioner Van Noy regarding are the budgetary reductions equitable across all departments, Manager Bass said he is not an expert in the other departments' budgets so he is not able to answer that. Commissioner Buckley added that Parks and Recreation took the biggest hit. Manager Bass said they did take a 50% reduction.

7:33 p.m. Commissioner Sheakley left.

Eric Crump, Washoe County Operations Division Director gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Stille regarding any discussion on selling parcels for revenue, Mr. Crump said it does come up occasionally. Sky Ranch Park on Pyramid Highway and La Posada we are in the process of selling that parcel. Back when that park was built, Pyramid Highway was not what it is now and we recognize now that is not a good location for a park. We have built parks that are relatively close to it, to serve the needs of that community.

In response to Commissioner Stille regarding chances of selling parcels along the Truckee River, Mr. Crump said probably slim to none. The Truckee River is a jewel in this community, public access is a high priority and we, with the WC-1 Bond, have been trying to acquire public land along the Truckee River.

Commissioner Daniel said the one sad situation is the City of Reno Parks is down since the recession 50%. It's appropriate to say that Washoe County Parks is down over 60% in their budget from the recession, Mr. Crump said that is an accurate statement. Much like the City of Reno, at our peak we had 103 full-time

equivalents, we are roughly about 44 right now. We had a reduction of 100% towards seasonal budget and that has been restored in the last few years. It is not to the level of what it was, we used to have upwards of a million dollars for seasonals, we now have about \$300,000. Things are being restored slowly.

Tracy Domingues, City of Sparks Parks and Recreation Director, said their budget is the same as the City of Reno and Washoe County. She did a comparison from Fiscal Year 04-05 to the last Fiscal Year 13-14.

- In 2005, they had 23 Parks staff and 17 Recreation, Events and Admin staff. Now there are approximately 10-12 Parks staff and only nine Recreation, Events and Admin staff.
- In 2010, the City decided to consolidate a maintenance crew so their Parks Department does not include Parks Maintenance staff. It is now in the General Fund under the Community Services.
- Expenses in 2005 were \$7.1 million, now it is \$3.2 million – less the Parks Maintenance Division.
- Revenue in 2005 was \$2.9 million, now at \$2.6 million. Last year they saw their first bump in revenue so that was a good sign.
- These are operation costs only and do not include Park District funds or Capital Improvement funds.
- Their Parks and Recreation Department is their own fund and are tasked with being cost recovery, as much as possible. They do recreation administration as well special events. As of June, they were at 80% cost recovery. To become whole they rely on that 20% coming from General Funds. In 2014, that amount was \$650,000 transferred in to make them whole.
- They have seen an increase in their volunteer hours since the recession.
- They have increased their developed park acreage from 436 to 513 acres in 10 years.
- Undeveloped added an additional 1,200 acres.
- They had seven facilities 10 years ago and now have seven. The interesting part of this is 10 years ago they had the Opio facility and the Don Mellow Sports Complex. Those facilities are no longer part of their inventory and have added the Golden Eagle Park and Larry D. Johnson Community Center.

Director Domingues said our public is not aware of the devastating cuts to Parks and Recreation. A lot of this in Sparks is due to the ability of staff to continue operating at a high level of service with little impact to the community. We did ourselves a disservice because we didn't realize the crunch as well as trying to maintain a certain level of service but realizing we can't do this. When they did their Comprehensive Plan in 1996 they were behind the curve. Their facilities did not meet the requirement for our population and haven't made any strides toward reaching or meeting the needs of the growing population.

They used to produce several events and have made a transition from event production to event recruitment, which is a recent change. In their Events Division, they are over 90% cost recovery and very proud of this.

Golden Eagle Sports Complex is their gem with 15 synthetic fields. It opened in 2008 and in 2013 that facility brought in \$21 million in economic impact to the Truckee Meadows. The facility attracted over 1 million participants, spectators for league and tournament games with approximately 9,000 games played on all 15 fields just through 2013 with over 1,000 visiting teams. This is an important facility for City of Sparks and is owned and operated by them.

Director Domingues added that they couldn't do what they do without their volunteers and great interdepartmental interaction with Community Services. This is a step in the right direction to bring all three entities together and discuss their regional issues and impacts. She looks forward to continuing these efforts.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding with maintenance no longer being part of their budget, is it possible to determine a percentage of the decrease since the recession to present, Director Domingues said staff has been cut by 50%, but she didn't have a chance to contact their Finance Department for that information.

Commissioner Daniel thinks it's important to have that number because it would be easy to communicate to the community the percentage of cuts each entity took.

## **6. Comments from Councils, Commissions, Boards and Managers**

City of Reno Council Member Jenny Brekhuis thanked Commissioners for their service and encouraged them to talk about Parks during budget time. They have hearings in April, not sure of the day, and the Annual Strategic Workshop on March 10<sup>th</sup> at the DRI. There is sometimes a story behind budgets and she and others sometimes need to dig a little deeper on some of the funding sources to see what we can eek out for our Parks Department. One source is the RSCVA, who is a Fair and Recreation Board that we take 1% of the room tax from.

Commissioner Bybee, Sparks City Council, said she is new to Parks and Recreation, so this is all a new learning experience for her. She thinks bringing all three entities together is great. City of Reno and Sparks City Council and Washoe County's Board of County Commissioners have had two concurrent meetings looking at the Tesla affect and regional issues because everything that we do, though separate entities, we're really not as we impact each other and need to work in cooperation. She is big on not consolidation, but cooperation and collaboration are important. They are starting their budgeting process and she likes to think that things are moving in the right direction though we're not nearly where we need to be. City of Sparks made huge cuts starting in 2007-2008 and Parks and Recreation is just one piece of a whole city that was decimated by the recession, yet she respects the fact that when you don't have a lot of money, you're not spending money. City of Sparks lost a 1/3 of their staffing to cuts so she is hoping with EDawn doing a good job there is good financial and fiscal news for the region and as things move in a positive direction for all of us we will have the money to put back into the budgets and money spent for all the needs we have for Parks and Recreation and everything else as the economy improves. She is cautiously optimistic that things are going to continue to improve, but it will take some time.

Commissioner Jeanne Herman, Washoe County Board of County Commissioners, thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, presentations and information provided.

## **7. Public Comment**

No public comment

## **8. Adjournment**

Motion by Commissioner Guy to adjourn. Second by Commissioner Buckley. Meeting adjourned.