

MINUTES

Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission June 7, 2016

Commissioner Thomas Guinn called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

1. **Roll Call**

Members Present: Anne Buckley, Douglas Doolittle, Thomas Guinn, Nathan Daniel, Janet Davis and Allan Sheakley

Board of County Commissioners Liaison: Jeanne Herman

Staff Present: Dave Solaro, Deputy District Attorney Michael Large, Eric Crump, Dennis Troy, Bill Carlos, Pat O'Mara, Andy Mink, Cheryl Surface, Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Ademar Saucedo, Nick Steuer and Joanna Schultz

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Public Comments**

Cathy Bradhorst discussed issues of importance to herself.

Chris Nenzal discussed issues regarding Betsy Caughlin Donnelly Park. In the last two weeks the majority of the park, pasture area specifically, has been closed off to the public. The pasture is used for many different things by the public. It has been used for so long that trash cans for dog waste have been setup at both entrances/exits. Residents on the east side of the park have put in gates into their backyards to access the park. Recently it has been closed off and Mr. Nenzal requests that this Commission consider reopening it. They have coexisted with the farmer in the past and sees no reason why they can't continue to coexist. The citizens of Washoe County deserve and need a park that size to take their dogs and families and enjoy the park. Please consider taking a look at the decision to close off the pasture area.

4. **Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of June 7, 2016**

Commissioner Guinn said Jennifer Budge needs to be removed as the Park Operations Superintendent.

Motion by Commissioner Doolittle to approve the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of June 7, 2016. Second by Commissioner Davis. Motion carried.

5. **Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of March 1, 2016**

Motion by Commissioner Buckley to approve the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of March 1, 2016. Second by Commissioner Sheakley. Motion carried.

6. **Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of April 5, 2016**

Motion by Commissioner Davis to approve the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of April 5, 2016. Second by Commissioner Doolittle. Motion carried.

7. **Acknowledgement and recognition of Park Operations staff for their outstanding service and contributions to Washoe County**

Eric Crump, Operations Division Director, acknowledged and recognized Ademar Saucedo for 10 years of service.

8. **Presentation by Eagle Scout Candidate Giovanni Calderoni on his rabbit pen at the Nevada Farms and Families at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park**

Andy Mink, District Manager, introduced Giovanni Calderoni.

Scout Calderoni gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding funding for this project, Scout Calderoni said his family funded the project.

Commissioner Guinn thanked Scout Calderoni for his service.

9. **Presentation by Eagle Scout Candidate Darius Fiore on his trail marker installation project at Hidden Valley Regional Park**

Nick Steuer, Park Ranger, introduced Darius Fiore.

Scout Fiore gave a presentation.

In response to Michael Large regarding the number of people on the project, Scout Fiore said six scouts, including himself, and two parents the first day. On the day they installed the markers there were seven scouts and four parents.

Commissioner Guinn thanked Scout Fiore for his service and appreciates the time they spent on this project.

10. **Acknowledgement of the Gold Leaf Award for outstanding Arbor Day activities presented to the Wilbur D. May Arboretum and Botanical Garden**

Eric Crump, Operations Division Director, said many of us know all the great things that Horticulturist Bill Carlos and his staff do, so it should come as no surprise that they were the recipients of the Harry J. Banker Gold Leaf Award. This award is through the Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture. Mr. Carlos was able to travel to Anaheim to the annual conference in May to accept this award.

Even through the economic downturn, Mr. Carlos and staff continued to keep the Arboretum going. Mr. Carlos has a great relationship with the Arboretum Society, Wilbur D. May Foundation

and is really good at getting donations as well. Mr. Crump thanks Mr. Carlos and staff for all of their hard work.

Bill Carlos, Horticulturist, said it was an honor to receive this award for Washoe County and the State of Nevada. It was not only an award for the Western Chapter, but also an International Award. There were over 500 people at the 86th Annual Conference for the International Arboriculture Conference and it was a great honor to accept this award. We were nominated because of 30 years of having an Arbor Day celebration, as well as hosting the Arborist prep classes.

Commissioner Doolittle congratulated Mr. Carlos. Commissioner Doolittle also thanked Mr. Carlos for taking the extra steps, especially during the downturn when they had to continue to keep the park in good condition, serve the public and especially all the work done with volunteers.

Commissioner Guinn said this Commission thanks Mr. Carlos and staff for all their work.

11. Presentation and discussion on the donation of an additional 5-acre expansion of Gator Swamp Park

Dennis Troy, Park Planner, gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding access, Mr. Troy said access is off of Dromedary. Vehicular and pedestrian access is to be determined, but we do have the option to add it in.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding, is it part of the development and required, Mr. Troy said the County was approached by Hawco 15 years ago and nothing has been done with the 21 acres and were there plans to develop them. Based on funding, the answer was no, but would probably have a need to expand the park, to address some deficiencies of the park, such as parking. Hawco has been great at providing park areas to the County and are currently in preliminary discussions for land on the east side of Pyramid Highway. They contacted Washoe County School District and us to discuss our needs to be taken into consideration for when a tentative map proposal go before the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Daniel said what concerns him is that there are only two Park Planners for the entire County and a huge development boom that we are likely to see. Commissioner Daniel inquired about any Washoe County Code regarding requirements for developers, Mr. Troy said the Regional Plan, when updated, will have information on the number of acres that the County would need to allocate within different districts. It may, or may not, discuss about specific areas where the parks need to be located, but will breakdown the acreage based on populations.

Dave Solaro, Director, added that there is not a requirement within County Code. We have Master Plans and work closely with the development community to identify locations for parks. Most developers value what parks bring to their developments and a lot of them are willing to work with us to set aside land. We make recommendations as their developments come through and the majority of the time the developer works with us to set aside land for parks.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding operating budgets potentially bringing on more acreage, Director Solaro said operating funds is a struggle for us to have the funds available to maintain additional park lands. The first question we think about as staff is, how are going to

afford to develop this piece of property? There is Residential Construction Tax for building, and if this development goes through, there will be additional money for building. The long term maintenance is what we are always concerned with moving forward. Decisions are made very cautiously for expanding.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle regarding the remaining 16 acres, Director Solaro said currently the land is in the name of the developer and was identified in a Master Plan to be parks. We are working through the process of a zoning change for the remaining 16 acres, to make it residential from open space. At this time this is preliminary, was identified as a park and we are working with the developer to determine what is best for them and Washoe County.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding zoning, Director Solaro said it is zoned for parks and will need to go through the Planning Commission for a zone change.

In response to Commissioner Davis regarding needs of the community, Mr. Troy said we would go through a public process to determine what the community wants. We have heard that there is a desire for more parking and an expansion of flat fields.

Motion by Commissioner Doolittle to accept a donation of an additional 5-acre expansion of Gator Swamp Park. Second by Commissioner Sheakley. Motion carried.

12. Review, discussion and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners regarding an update to the Washoe County Code Chapter 95

Deputy District Attorney, Michael Large said he and Parks staff have been working on updating Chapter 95, which has not been updated for years. Chapter 95 as currently written, is out of date and refers to departments that no longer exist within the County and a lot of issue arose due to that. We found the easiest way to do this, is to simplify the Code by consolidating and rewriting it. Much of the updated Code now reflects other Chapters within Washoe County Code.

Mr. Large and staff are requesting that Commissioners review the draft given to them today and provide comments between now and the July Parks Commission meeting. Staff will collect Commissioner comments, update the Code and make a formal presentation with a potential motion.

Areas of concern Mr. Large pointed out, is the largest piece of information that is changed, which begins on page 14. 95.490, reflects citation powers of officials. One main issues Park Rangers and staff have, is enforcement of a Code within Parks property. We have attempted to give them citation powers within the parks themselves for violations of Chapter 95. This Chapter, in conjunction with Chapter 55, which is also a citation empowerment, will allow Rangers to have this power to cite people within the parks. Enforcement power is an important function. This tries to balance the safety aspect of the community, but not giving them criminal powers that involve arresting people. This will be civil citations and will go through a civil process.

Eric Crump, Operations Division Director added that we've been working on this for a long time and have brought it to this Commission multiple times. Changing County Code is, and can be a long process.

There are notes in the columns and we left those there on purpose to hopefully spur some thoughts for the Commission. The civil piece Mr. Large discussed, is a cut and paste from Chapter 55 that currently exists related to Regional Animal Services. This will be removed, but wanted to give Commissioners a sense of what that might look like.

Comments or questions can be directed to Mr. Large and Mr. Crump or to Joanna Schultz, who can route them appropriately.

Commissioner Doolittle said he supports the citation ability and asked if staff has determined how much administrative time will be needed for this change. Mr. Large said, currently we have not and is something we have to take into account. He can bring this information to the Commission when a formal presentation is done.

Commissioner Doolittle said the concern is, if staff is spending a lot of time in court because they are writing a lot of citations, it could lead to other issues.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding comments deadline, Mr. Large said, comments will be needed by the next meeting and can be sent via an email to Mr. Crump and himself.

In response to Commissioner Daniel enforcement definition and powers, Mr. Large said 95.010, Subsection 6, defines what an enforcement official is. Officials in terms of Parks' staff will be designated by the powers of the Director under Subsection 4, 95.050. The Director of the Community Services Department will be able to designate who will be a citation official.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding the formatting, Mr. Large said they will make sure the formatting is similar to the Washoe County Code format.

Commissioner Daniel said in the plant molestation section he doesn't feel excluding all gleaning from fruit and a plant in parks is best. In national parks you do have the right to collect for personal use.

Commissioner Guinn said it is good to give these powers to staff. He doesn't want to put them in harm's way, so a training program or procedure would be needed if it is approved. Commissioner Guinn would like to know what program/procedure is put in place in a future meeting.

Mr. Crump said we recognize that and staff is in harm's way now. This is another tool that will have a long implementation phase with a lot of training and education. We hope the citation would be the last resort, but the option, or threat of citation, will help gain compliances versus how we try to get it now.

13. ***Program/Park of the Month: Come in from the Cold Series and Robert Z Hawkins Amphitheater***

Pat O'Mara, Recreation Coordinator gave a presentation.

14. **Parks Reports**

Eric Crump, Operation Division Director highlighted reports.

Commissioner Guinn acknowledged the donation from Tim and Julie Gregory who donated \$40,000.

15. Director's Report

Dave Solaro, Director, recognized a \$2,500 donation from Board of County Commissioner Lucey to District 2 Parks to go towards tree replacement.

Jennifer Budge, Park Operations Superintendent's, last day with the County was May 20th. She has accepted the Director of Parks for the City of Carson City. Director Solaro has her contact information, if Commissioners did not receive this from her.

Walk with Washoe program starts this evening at 6:30 p.m. with County Manager John Slaughter. Walks are the first and third Tuesdays of the month through various parks and trails in the Washoe County system. Tonight's walk is at the May Museum to walk through the May Arboretum gardens. More information can be found on our website at, www.washoecountyparks.com.

Betsy Caughlin Donnelly Park pasture area has been closed due to the drought. We are rehabilitating the pasture and the rest of the park is open. We have some water this year and we are working with the rancher who has the lease on that pasture. This is a temporary closure to get the grasses reestablished and keep the weeds out. We apologize for the inconvenience this causes the public, however we feel it is necessary to be able keep that park as a viable park.

In response Commissioner Guinn regarding posting with timeline for reopening, Director Solaro said we will get a schedule posted. We've had to change the posting a couple of times due to question regarding the area was an off-leash dog area, it is an on-leash dog area. As of right now we don't know when it will reopen, we have to see how this progresses with the amount of water we are given.

16. Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Doolittle thanked staff. It's start of the summer season, it's going to be a tough year as usual with the amount of parks to maintain, and he encourages staff to stay positive, keep doing what you've been doing because the parks look great.

Commissioner Daniel and Guinn thanked Jennifer Budge for her long service to Washoe County and wishes her well in Carson City.

In response to Commissioner Sheakley regarding the lack of Golf Report, Michael Large, Deputy District Attorney said the Board of County Commissioners gave direction in regard to the Washoe Golf Course, at their last meeting. There is an issue with regards to potential litigation and he has directed Parks staff not to provide a golf update except through public comment and a properly agendized item.

Commissioner Doolittle would like to see a letter or something from this Commission recognizing Jennifer Budge's service to the Department and Washoe County.

Commissioner Buckley said this should be her last meeting, but was informed that she could continue to serve until her replacement is made. She encouraged staff to find her replacement.

Commissioner Guinn would like to see an agenda item regarding replacement of Commissioners.

17. Public Comments

Cathy Bradhorst discussed issues of importance to herself.

18. Adjournment

3:51 p.m.