

PARKS, WELLNESS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 10, 2018 Meeting Minutes 6:00 p.m., City Hall - Council Chambers 117 Macneil Street, San Fernando, CA 91340

PRESENT: Commissioner Adriana Gomez, Commissioner Nina Herrera,
and Commissioner Anna Lopez

ABSENT: Commissioner Saydith Navarro and Commissioner Joe Ponce

ALSO PRESENT: Julian Venegas, RCS Director
Linda Bowden-Moreno, RCS Office Specialist

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

- Meeting called to order at 6:12 p.m. by Commission Chair, Adriana Gomez
Present: Gomez, Herrera, and Lopez
Absent: Ponce and Navarro

II. Pledge of Allegiance

- Led by Commissioner Lopez

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion was made to approve the agenda of the Parks, Wellness and Recreation Commission meeting for July 10, 2018 with the following amendments: table agenda items 4 and 6.

Motion: Herrera Second by: Lopez
For: All
Against: None
Abstained: None

IV. Public Comment

- Maritza Duarte, Las Palmas Park Club Member, addressed the Parks Commission about a petition circulated in May which gathered 177 member signatures opposing the increase in dance ticket costs. Attendance has dropped

significantly due to the increase in cost. Councilmember Fajardo contributed funds towards the cost of one of the dances, however, the members would like a more permanent solution. Most seniors are on a fixed income and options for outings are limited. In addition, trips have also increased significantly making it difficult for residents and club members to participate. Ms. Duarte is requesting costs be reduced to make programs more affordable for seniors.

- Patty Lopez, a City resident, is concerned about the current issues affecting seniors. She is asking the Parks Commission to consider the request pertaining to lowering costs for senior activities. Seniors contacted her to ask for her support in this matter. She is asking the Commission to respond to these requests in writing and also provide translation services during public meetings as is done at the Council meetings. It is important for Commissioners to understand residents who are Spanish speaking. Ms. Lopez is also requesting that the City seek funding to bring back the Fourth of July event. Residents can be cited up to \$1000 for using illegal fireworks. The City needs to seek funding to invest in more community services instead of focusing on fund raising for political campaigns.
- Marsela Rodriguez, a City resident, is speaking today to request the City bring back the Fourth of July event. People want to celebrate the holiday, however, without a designated place to view fireworks, people purchase and use illegal fireworks. Citations are issued to those who use small fireworks and not to those who light large fireworks. She also expressed concern regarding the drinking fountains at the parks which often times are not functioning. The weather has been extremely hot and with so many families attending little league games, access to drinking water is important. In addition, park restrooms are not clean and are not properly stocked with supplies.
- Mary Mendoza, Las Palmas Club member, addressed the Commission regarding the issues discussed by Maritza Duarte. A petition was circulated among Club members requesting transparency, open communication, voting on decisions that impact members, a moratorium on fee increases without membership approval, to provide account balances to members at monthly meetings, to maintain current benefits and to vote if changes to those benefits are being considered. The cost of dance tickets has significantly increased which has affected attendance. On the upside, there are a lot of good programs for seniors and staff works very hard to provide these services. She is requesting cost of dance tickets be decreased and that current member benefits not be changed.

V. Consent Calendar

- Approval of Minutes – March 13, 2018

Motion was made to approve the Minutes from the March 13, 2018 Parks, Wellness and Recreation Commission Meeting.

Motion: Herrera Second by: Lopez
For: All
Against: None
Abstained: None

VI. New Business

A. Alcohol Use Policy in City Facilities

- Julian Venegas reported that the City is considering the development of an Alcohol Use Permit Policy for use of alcohol in City facilities. An Ad Hoc Committee has been created to discuss this issue.
- There are several versions of what the policy may look like. It is recommended that alcohol be served by a licensed caterer hired by the attendee. Insurance and security would be required and a limit of 5 hours to serve alcohol would be enforced. There is a consideration to include open areas such as a street festivals or other outdoor events.
- A Community Meeting may be conducted to allow public comment. The Ad Hoc Committee may be asking for this Commission's input.
- Commissioner Lopez requested additional details regarding the policy. Julian Venegas informed commissioners that the policy is in its infancy. Staff is looking at other cities with alcohol use policies in order to adopt a similar policy. Staff is also looking into the best format to allow for public comment.
- This item will be presented to the Council in the near future. Staff will keep the Commission informed of any new developments.

B. Las Palmas Senior Club Program

- Mr. Venegas provided some history on the Las Palmas Senior Club Program. This Club was independent for over 40 years. The governing board was elected by the membership to run the operations of the Club and make decisions. Due to some dissention among the members, the City was approached by Club members to assist with functions of the Club.

- The City began to handle the administration of financial matters. Subsequently the members held a vote and decided to have the Club be under the direction of the City. Certain changes and new policies came into effect. For example, food that is sold must be provided by a licensed caterer. This increased the costs of dances. The policy of handling money also changed. Once the City took over, money had to be collected at the front desk and be recorded and entered into the City's accounting program by staff. Another change is that there would no longer be a need for a governing board. The City elected to have an advisory board which would not have the same authority as before.
- The transition has been a process. Staff is working hard to look at the problems and address the concerns of the membership. Staff is working on being more transparent and providing all the required information while staying within the policy and procedures of the City.
- The Club is a self-sustaining program. The City does not provide any funding to offset costs towards the program. Approximately \$35k in staff time goes towards the operation of the program. Volunteers assist with coordinating dances and trips. The club account operates on a reserve which goes towards covering deposits on dances, trips, caterers, etc. The reserve is not extra money earning interest.
- As an example, the July dance will cost a total of \$6746. At \$15 a ticket, the average sales would only bring in \$3375 resulting in a significant loss. Pricing on activities is not designed to increase the coffers but to keep the reserve going for future deposits. Staff is seeking sponsorships to assist in offsetting costs.
- Commissioner Herrera had questions regarding methods of communication to the membership regarding the changes that occurred when the City began to oversee the Club. Mr. Venegas reported that it appears they were not fully aware of the changes that would take place and that decision making authority would be affected.
- Commissioner Lopez had questions regarding the communication and transparency between the City and the membership. Based on the public comment, it seems that members have a lot of questions and have not been advised on various issues. Would subcommittees help disseminate the information to the general membership? Mr. Venegas reported that staff is working hard to be as transparent as possible. Many of the current challenges regarding concerns of transparency have been around for quite some time. The process of not fully transitioning from a governing board to an advisory board really hampered the situation. Monthly reports detailing finances

including expenditures and balances are available, minutes of the advisory board and general membership meetings are available, upcoming activities and cost information is available. The supervisor at Las Palmas, Juan Salas, attends meetings and is always available. Staff is always willing to provide information upon request and all reports are posted in the lobby.

- Commissioner Lopez likes the idea of staff seeking sponsorships but would also like to see the Commission assist in this effort.
- Commissioner Gomez asked when the City took over the Club and asked if the Club utilized the same facilities when it was independent. Mr. Venegas reported that the change occurred in 2016. The Club has always used City facilities with no official MOU in place.
- Commissioner Gomez commented that the biggest cost increases seems to be the catering. She also asked how revenues are raised. Does the Club fund raise or pay membership dues? Per staff, members are required to pay annual membership dues of \$36 per member.
- Commissioner Gomez asked if the cost of the July Dance includes City and staff time. Mr. Venegas reported that City and staff time are in-kind.
- Commissioner Gomez asked if the recent price increases are a result of the City taking over the Club. Staff informed that Commission that any price increase is to sustain the Club program. Members are presented with options related to spending. They choose whether the Club reserve takes a loss when making certain expenditures.
- Commissioner Gomez asked if the previous board transitioned to the advisory board. Mr. Venegas reported that the previous board did in fact transition to an advisory board. Elections are coming up which will allow opportunities for others to participate on the board. Volunteers are also needed for the other positions such as the sunshine club, decoration committee, trip coordinators, table captains, etc.
- Commissioner Gomez asked if the Club is a 501(c) (3) which can accept donations. Mr. Venegas informed the Commission that the Club falls under the City which is tax exempt. Some donations are tax deductible. The IRS will be providing a description of the specifics related to tax exemption.
- Commissioner Gomez inquired if there is an opportunity for two Commissioners to participate with the Ad Hoc Committee. Staff will relay this request to the current members of the Ad Hoc which includes two Councilmembers.

C. Parks and Recreation Month

- Staff reported that July has been declared Parks and Recreation month which recognizes the contributions provided to communities and the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle. A proclamation was presented by City Council at the last Council meeting. The Healthy City Campaign will be kicking off in August and Commissioners are invited to participate in the eight events planned for this campaign. Please save the date for the 5K/Dia de Los Muertos event coming up in October.

D. Goals and Objectives for 2018-2019 Fiscal Year

- The suitability and program use of Rudy Ortega Park will be evaluated. Staff will look for opportunities to plan new activities at this park.
- Staff will research the feasibility of running a Farmers Market in the City. Staff will refer to other cities to gather information about how Farmers Markets function.
- Staff is looking to develop a Veterans Appreciation Day to honor the men and women who have served our country.
- Staff will research if this City has the ability to run a Community Garden. Staff will consider the availability of land, location and cost.
- The RCS Department will be evaluating all the contracts with organizations utilizing the City's facilities such as the partnership with the YWCA and the Jr. Tennis Program. Staff wants to optimize working with these organizations.
- Staff will work on identifying funding sources to implement the recommendations identified in the Park Master Plan.
- Commissioner Gomez commented that the Commission has previously identified annual goals and objectives they wish to focus on. Perhaps it is a good time to come up with Commission Goals and Objectives.

VII. Continued Business

E. Park Master Plan Implementation Update

- The first phase of the improvements at Layne Park has been completed. Some upgrades include installation of a new picnic bench, a barbeque grill, solar

security lighting, and reseeded of an area to house youth soccer programming.

- The second phase is planned to include a junior size soccer field, installation of upgraded irrigation system and drought tolerant plants.
- The Rededication Ceremony is targeted for August 25, 2018. All Commissioners are invited to attend.

F. Santa Rosa Little League Update

- The Santa Rosa Little League has reorganized to an eight member board tasked with ensuring the league runs efficiently and according to the contract.
- The same president has been re-elected. Staff has not met with the board yet. A meeting will be planned to go over the contract and to discuss what is expected of the league.
- Commissioner Herrera asked about the voting process for league president. Staff reported that the process of voting included all members: parents, coaches, board members and volunteers. A meeting with the board was held prior to the voting to discuss the possible loss of park use due to breach of contract.

VIII. Staff Communication

- Staff informed the Commission of upcoming trips and activities.

IX. Commissioner Comments

- No Additional Commissioner Comments.

X. Agenda Items for Next Regular Meeting (September 11, 2018)

- Commission Goals and Objectives for 2018-2019 Fiscal Year

XI. Adjournment

- Commissioner Gomez adjourned the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

For: All

Against: None

Abstained: None