

PARKS, WELLNESS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

June 9, 2020 Meeting Minutes

6:30 p.m., Teleconference – Per Governor’s Executive Order

PRESENT: Commissioner Joe Ponce, Commissioner Jason Hayes,
and Commissioner Saydith Navarro

ABSENT: Commissioner Sandie Richards, Commissioner Nina Herrera

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

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

- Meeting called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Commission Vice-Chair, Joe Ponce
Present: Ponce, Hayes, and Navarro
Absent: Richards, Herrera

II. Pledge of Allegiance

- Led by Commissioner Ponce

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion was made to approve the agenda of the Parks, Wellness and Recreation Commission meeting for June 9, 2020.

Motion: Hayes Second by: Navarro
For: All
Against: None
Abstained: None

IV. Public Comment

- No Public Comment

V. Cultural Arts Liaisons Report

VI. Consent Calendar

- Approval of Minutes – January 14, 2020 and February 11, 2020

Motion was made to table Consent Calendar Items until the next regular meeting of the Parks, Wellness and Recreation Commission on July 14, 2020.

Motion: Hayes Second by: Navarro
For: All
Against: None
Abstained: None

VII. New Business

A. Prop 68 Grant

- RCS Director Venegas reported to the Commission on the Prop 68 Grant award of \$1.1 million to renovate Layne Park. Renovations will include artificial turf soccer field, new basketball court, rest rooms, renovation of play area to include ADA and shading, irrigation system improvements, new drought tolerant landscape, new fencing and new solar powered lighting for the basket ball court. The City will seek a landscape architect design, cost estimate and a contractor to perform the upgrades and construction. Bid for contractor is projected to go out in October or November of this year.
- Commissioner Hayes and Commissioner Navarro commented that this grant award is exiting news and they are looking forward to the upgrades at Layne Park.
- Commissioner Ponce inquired if surplus funds could go towards upgrades at other parks. Per RCS Director Venegas, funds are designated for use only to upgrade Layne Park. Surplus funds must be returned to the State.

B. Department's Response to Covid-19

- RCS Director Venegas went over the recommendations from the County and discussed the City's response to the pandemic. The City is following the

County's guidelines and "Safer-at-Home" order.

- The City is currently in Phase 2 of the reopening plan. In Phase 3, there may be the possibility of Summer Camps, General Recreation and Senior Activities/ Programs. RCS Director Venegas discussed the guidelines and restrictions necessary for the re-opening plan in Phase 3. Face coverings would be required at all times except when eating or drinking, social distancing and ratio of staff to participants will need to be observed once activities begin to reopen.
- Staff will use PPE and will be trained to properly sanitize the facilities in order to follow the safety guidelines.
- Monitoring participants to avoid the spread of Covid-19 will be an important part of the reopening phase. Team sports are not recommended at this time. Sharing of equipment will not be allowed.
- Staff has processed a large volume of refunds to clients as a result of cancelled activities and programming. This has significantly impacted the RCS Department.
- Commissioner Hayes had questions regarding cleaning materials, staff training and PPE for City staff due to the current pandemic. He further commented on park, maintenance and facility staff performing jobs that are now dangerous as a result of Covid-19. Per Director Venegas, staff will be provided with PPE and proper training to perform job duties.
- Commissioner Ponce recommended placing hand sanitizing stations at City indoor facilities. He also added there may be a potential spike in Covid-19 cases as a result of the recent protesting.
- Commissioner Ponce asked if the City is obligated to follow County guidelines during the reopening phase should there be a spike in cases. Per Director Venegas, the City has the discretion to act on its own accord to protect City residents. Hand sanitizers, plexiglass counter barriers, and greeters will be provided to monitor the public during the reopening of City facilities.

C. Budget Fiscal Year 2020-2021

- Director Venegas shared the Department's accomplishments during FY 2019-2020 including the Youth Diversion Program, the Veterans Recognition Banner Program, and the new online registration system to name a few.
- Director Venegas discussed the Departments Objectives for FY 2020-2021 such as seeking funding to go towards a Community Garden project, continue seeking

partnerships to offer more programming and activities to the community, redesign the Department brochure, implement a Community Theatre Program, etc.

- The financial impact of cancelling programs and activities due to Covid-19 will result in a 10% reduction of the operation budget. Summer programming and special events are on hold for the time being.
- Commissioner Hayes inquired about staffing the Community Garden. Per Director Venegas, the garden would be managed by a staff person or volunteer. Participants would require membership and must adhere to rules and regulations.
- Commissioner Hayes suggested the 5K/Dia de Los Muertos event going virtual in order to stay connected, spread community spirit and boost morale. Staff will look into this option.
- Commissioner Navarro suggested community members and local businesses set up alters for Dia de Los Muertos outside their home or business as option to participate.
- Commissioner Ponce asked about layoffs of any RCS staff due to the current budget issues. Commissioner Ponce also expressed that events should be put on hold due to the financial cost in an effort to avoid laying off staff. Director Venegas reported that there have not been any layoffs at this time, however, part-time staff has not been working due to events being cancelled.

D. Virtual Programming

- The RCS Department is offering virtual classes and programs such as *Lunchtime Trivia*, *Loteria* and exercise routines available to the community. Information is available on the City Website.
- Commissioner Navarro asked how these programs are being promoted. Per staff, the main methods of promoting the Department's virtual activities are through social media, the City website and email marketing using Constant Contact. Individuals without internet access are referred to public libraries.
- Staff is conducting Wellness Calls to the senior population and informing them of existing programs and services. Now that businesses are beginning to open up, perhaps posters can be placed at store fronts with details on virtual programming.

E. Farmers Market Grant Application

- Staff continues to seek funding opportunities for a Farmers Market. A new

grant was submitted to obtain financial support in opening a Farmers Market in Parking Lot No. 8 on Celis St. and Brand Blvd. Staff is waiting to hear back on the grant application.

F. New Department Heads

- RCS Director Venegas announced the recent hire of two new Department Heads. Julia Fritz is the new City Clerk and Matt Baumgardner is the new Public Work's Director.

VIII. Continued Business

G. Community Theatre Program

- RCS Director Venegas discussed the community meeting to be held at the end of April but was put on hold due to Covid-19.
- Commissioner Hayes recommended taking this item to the Council for approval of this item. Community meetings can be conducted via Zoom or in an outdoor venue providing social distancing is observed.
- Commissioner Ponce commented that he would prefer to have all Commissioners in attendance for this motion, however, he will support it given that there is quorum to move forward.
- Commissioner Hayes commented that this item will be discussed in more detail at the next PWRC meeting so that all Commissioners have a better understanding of this project and so everyone is on the same page.

Motion was made to recommend that the Parks, Wellness and Recreation Commission form the Community Theatre Working Group Project and seek City Council approval at the upcoming City Council meeting to move forward with this project.

Motion: Hayes Second by: Navarro
For: Ponce
Against: None
Abstained: None

H. Las Palmas Park Renovations

- Julian Venegas reported that the City is close to signing off on the contract and move forward with the renovations of the lobby, kitchen and banquet room are which will include repainting, new flooring, safety barrier to the front desk, and adding automatic doors to the main entrance and to the restroom. The project should be starting around mid-July.
- Commissioner Ponce asked if automatic doors were ever installed at Las Palmas Park and will there be any lighting upgrades around the baseball fields as it is very dark.
- RCS Director Venegas informed the Commission that there have never been any automatic doors installed at Las Palmas. As far as lighting upgrades, that project was part of the Prop. 68 Grant which was not funded. Staff will look into other funding opportunities for outdoor lighting.

I. Youth Reinvestment Grant Program

- This program has continued through virtual meetings with the students. A ceremony was held for those students who completed the first session of the youth program.
- This program will be moving forward with summer sessions conducted virtually. Future sessions are planned and will be conducted in accordance with the recommended guidelines by the County.

J. Open Streets Event

- The Open Streets Event for 2020 has been cancelled at this time due to Covid-19.

VIII. Staff Communication

- Staff continues to conduct wellness calls to the senior community regularly since the closure of park facilities. Staff provides resource information and referrals to seniors in need of services. Virtual programming is expanding to keep our seniors connected and physically active.
- Commissioner Ponce commented on the need to provide training to seniors on how to use smart phones and other devices. Commissioner Hayes added

that focusing on virtual programming and supporting seniors in learning about technology is an inexpensive and useful tool for seniors. Commissioner Navarro supports the idea of offering training on the use of devices and technology.

- RCS Director Venegas reported that a seminar on using smart phones and other forms of technology was a planned workshop for this year's Senior Expo which had to be canceled. Staff will look into offering training tools to seniors.

IX. Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Hayes commented that he is glad the Commission is meeting again and wished the LGBTQ Community a very happy pride month. He also thanked Mayor Fajardo for his comments in support of community members of color and support of the Black Lives Matter movement.
- Commissioner Navarro commented that she is happy to be meeting once again.
- Commissioner Ponce commented that meeting virtually is a convenient way to stay connected and safe and he urged everyone to stay healthy.

X. Agenda Items for Next Regular Meeting on July 14, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

- Commissioners may email agenda items to staff.

XI. Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Motion: Ponce Second by: Navarro

For: All

Against: None

Abstained: None