

MINUTES
PLACENTIA RECREATION AND
PARKS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
June 10, 2013

Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Bartelt, Emrick, Granger, Jackson, Newman
Absent: Dougherty, Hunt (late arrival)
Staff Present: Steve Pischel, Director of Administrative & Community Services
Jon Nicks, Deputy Director of Community Services
Ward Smith, Deputy Chief of Police
Maria Elena Maurer, Community Services Coordinator

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Commissioner Newman

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – Britt & Stephen Sweet, 874 Carew Dr., Placentia.
Stephen Sweet is in Boys Scouts and he is meeting a requirement for a communications merit badge by attending the Commission meeting and taking notes.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND REPORTS -

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – May 13, 2013

MOTION by Commissioner Granger to approve the minutes of May 13, 2013 as submitted; **SECOND** by Commissioner Emrick and **CARRIED** by a **5-0-2-0 VOICE VOTE** (Dougherty, Hunt Absent).

2. **POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

Staff Pischel indicated that based on Commissioners' request to address safety and security issues at City parks and facilities, Deputy Chief of Police Ward Smith was asked to provide an update. Deputy Smith provided an overview of his personal experiences living and attending schools in Placentia, his involvement in various Placentia non-profit organizations i.e., Boys & Girls Club and Placentia Rotary Club as well as working closely with the Parks and Recreation, Neighborhood Services and Public Works Departments. Staff Ward stated that it takes a collaborative effort and partnership with these departments and church organizations to maintain strong public safety. The Placentia News Times article regarding suspicious activities in parks came about from a neighborhood meeting prompted by the Merchants Association and held at the Nazarene Church in Placentia to address gang activity, mainly in the downtown area. As a result of this meeting, the Placentia Police Department has focused on having a strong presence in the area, enforcement measures, public contact, pedestrian and vehicle stops, etc.

Secretary's Note: Commissioner Hunt arrived at 7:18 p.m.

Staff Ward added that as facilities are improved, negative activities do not seem to take place. Recently, a neighborhood meeting was held in the Jaycee Parkette area to address drugs, drinking, graffiti and gang activities and the community was tired of it. All the issues were identified and one by one they are being addressed. In the 1000 block of Cypress Street in the La Jolla area, similar problems existed but thanks to the partnerships with Yorba Linda Friends Church, the LDS Serve Days, Officer Rubia Rivas involvement, improvements to the playground equipment and landscaping, the neighborhood has transformed. At the High School level, officers have adopted a school to come on campus to have a dialog with staff and the students trying to avoid problems in the schools.

Commissioner Jackson mentioned that she had been approached regarding a call into the Police Department, and this person was told that officers were on a higher priority call. Staff Ward replied that Police do respond to calls based on priorities and an officer will respond to the call; the report will not be dismissed. In summary, Staff Ward stated that when partnerships are created, there is value and communities are stronger and safer. He asked to be contacted if any questions or concerns come up in the future.

3. MONTHLY REPORT

Staff Nicks indicated that on the first day of summer registration for residents, Saturday, May 18, 2013, a total of \$20,000 was processed. On Monday, May 20, registration opened for non-residents bringing in a total of \$16,000. A total of \$43,000 in facility rentals, excursions classes and sports activities was processed in May. The excursion to the California Strawberry Festival in Oxnard was a huge success. Staff attended a meeting with other cities from SCMAF where the main topic was skate boarding. A skate boarding competition is in the planning process and Coordinator Zambrano will be gathering information on the details.

Staff Nicks added that the Placentia Community Foundation held their 3rd Annual Summit. The Heritage Festival, recreation swim program and parks after-school program qualified to receive grant money last year from the Foundation.

Staff Pischel reported that he attended the Friendly Center's annual banquet last week with 300 in attendance. These are people that donate to the Friendly Center's programs that help support cities like Placentia to continue to offer services to the community. A second grader that attends the Cathy Torrez Learning Center wrote an essay about what it means to be able to attend the after school program and she was there to read it to the audience. This type of impact puts it into perspective. The Friendly Center is committed to continue to provide their services.

4. PARKS AND FACILITY PROJECT UPDATES -

Staff Nicks added that staff had met with the County at Tri-City Park and they have made a lot of improvements in the last five months i.e., all the lights have been repaired, two of the pumps for the filtration system in the lake that helps with the clarity of the water were replaced, both restrooms' lighting, plumbing, toilets and sinks were replaced, installation of three stands for doggie bags and drinking

fountain, replaced all trash cans with lids and replacement of the bridge that goes to the island. Staff will continue to provide updates.

In regards to the Concerts in the Park, the County had some concerns about the parking of cars in the turf area. They realize there is not enough parking at Tri-City Park, especially for a large event, and suggested to park the cars in the North West corner in the underdeveloped area of the park. This would be a long walk for those attending the concert. Further discussion will take place to resolve this concern.

Commissioner Hunt commented that his neighbors are very pleased with the Tri-City Park improvements and they are now asking when Tuffree Park will be renovated.

Staff Nicks indicated that some of the sports groups, JUSA, Placentia Football Steelers, Pony Baseball and AYSO came together to offer a contribution (in-kind and monetary) towards the wiring for the field lights at Kraemer Middle School. Most of the expense will come from the purchase of the copper wire. Commissioner Hunt stated that it is important to keep the fields operational and use money from the Park Development fund to fix the lights. It may be necessary to stress to City Council that the lights be a priority to be fixed. Commissioner Granger added that if it has been more than a year since the lights are not functional, a motion to let City Council know may be in order. Staff Pischel added that this can be addressed during the agenda budget discussion.

Staff Nicks concluded that the cell tower at Kraemer Park is almost complete. Had a walk through with the contractor and the turf area needs to be fixed. As a result of this project, a nice feature for the park included the trash enclosure as well as new picnic tables and trash can near the south side of the Backs Building.

5. SKATE PARK PROPOSAL – FORMER BOYS & GIRLS CLUB FACILITY

Commissioner Newman commented about the newspaper blurb indicating the “Recreation and Parks Commission had approved the sale and for the City to go forward with the Skate Park project.” What was approved was to send it back to City Council for further research. Commissioner Bartelt agreed that there was interest in the project, but the Commission’s recommendation was to continue the process. Staff Pischel mentioned that from staff perspective, the Commission approved the “concept” and provided some feedback about the project for City Council’s consideration.

Commissioner Hunt stated that he was concerned when someone asked him why the Commission had approved to spend money for a building that was going to be demolished to use for parking. Staff Pischel replied that the process is continuing and City Council is not going to invest in a building that would later be demolished. It is not anticipated to be needed for parking, but the final decision has not been made. The Commission performed their role by making their concerns clear and agreeing that this would be a recreational amenity for the community. Staff is making sure to follow up on those concerns and the Commission can be confident that it will not be misrepresented. Once all the

issues are flushed out, and City Council approves it to go forward, the construction of the facility is anticipated to take 120 days.

Staff Nicks added that in further conversations with Daddy O's, they are looking at validating the revenue projections, looking at comparable facilities, sponsorships, higher level tournaments, and other opportunities to support the operations of the Skate Park. In addition, staff is looking at another investor as an alternate funding source than the Park Development fund. The money invested would be paid off through the earnings; therefore, a revenue validation analysis would need to be completed. This type of an investment has great revenue potential.

Staff Ward commended the Commission for their approach at this type of project. From the youth side of things, the Police Department is really behind this type of concept as it promotes youth involvement in a positive way, and it would offer a unique experience than what a regular park could offer.

6. BUDGET REVIEW -

Staff Pischel indicated that there is a second study session on the budget scheduled on Wednesday, June 11, 2013 starting at 6:00 p.m. followed by a public hearing and continued to June 18, 2013. Staff will receive some feedback from the Council and direction to address the \$1.45 million deficit. One of the potential revenues is a franchise lease of an electronic message board along the corridor adjacent to the freeway that would be a revenue producer of \$700,000/year. The Planning Commission will be discussing it at their meeting on June 11, 2013. If the Skate Park came to fruition, its potential revenue would be considered.

Staff Pischel added that City-wide, all departments were asked to come up with a 2.5% budget reduction that amounts to \$450,000.00. This is not an easy task as it would impact services. Community Services Staff identified and put together a list of items that represent 2.5% in cuts. Some of the items on this list include: Koch Park originally budgeted to be opened 4 days a week – reduce it to 3 days; Recreation swim from 4 days to 3 days a week; Eliminate the last Concert in the Park; Cathy Torrez Learning Center – reduce one staff. There is a potential to look at assessment districts to help pay for public safety, parks, etc. Staff will be given solid direction after the meeting on June 11, 2013. City Council may have other suggestions that will help reach the deficit gap. Staff Pischel added that staff is open for new ideas, concepts or revenue enhancements that may come from the Commission.

Commissioner Hunt proposed to consider some funds from the Park Development fund to repair the lights at Kraemer Middle School, because it affects a large percentage of the youth sports groups. Commissioner Newman stated that it would be a good show of solidarity to the sports groups that the City is willing to work them.

MOTION by Commissioner Emrick to recommend that staff partner with the sport user groups and the School District in a collaborative effort to fix the lights at Kraemer Middle School using a portion of Park Development funds; **SECOND** by

Commissioner Hunt and **CARRIED** by a **6-0-0-1 VOICE VOTE** (Dougherty Absent).

7. **SPORTS ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE** -

Staff Nicks reported that the only comment received was from Placentia Pony Baseball regarding the age requirement for Tuffree fields. Currently it is designated for 9-12 years old and they suggested changing it to 7-12 years old. A meeting will be scheduled prior to August 1, 2013 to finalize the policy.

PARK INSPECTION REPORTS -

STAFF COMMENTS - Staff Pischel announced that Veronica Ortiz, Community Services Coordinator, was named Employee of the Quarter.

AGENDA BUILDING AND MEETING SCHEDULE - It was agreed the July 8, 2013 Commission meeting will be held at Koch Park.

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business, **MOTION** by Commissioner Hunt to adjourn to Monday, July 8, 2013 regular meeting; **SECOND** by Commissioner Emrick and **CARRIED** by a **6-0-0-1 VOICE VOTE** (Dougherty Absent). Meeting adjourned on June 10, 2013 at 9:20 p.m.

Maria Elena Maurer, Recording Secretary
Recreation and Parks Commission