Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
Board of Directors Meeting

MINUTES

April 18, 2019 6:30 p.m.
Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
4201 Guardian Street, Activity Room 3
Simi Valley, CA 93063
(805) 584-4400; www.rsrd.org

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chair Freeman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Kate O’Brien.

2. ROLL CALL – Director Dennert, Director Johnson, Director O’Brien, Vice Chair Abele, and Chair Freeman were in attendance.

   Staff in attendance included: Legal Counsel Brian Hamblet, Greg Laranjo, Wayne Nakaoka, Dan Paranick, Theresa Pennington, Legal Counsel Brian Pierik, Gabrielle Pittle, Brian Reed, and Gina Viecco.

   Guests in attendance included: Gene Hostetler and family members of Gabrielle Pittle. Guests who completed Speaker Cards are listed below.

3. AGENDA REVIEW – There were no requested changes to the Agenda.

4. PUBLIC STATEMENTS (ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA) - NONE

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

   a. Regular Meeting April 4, 2019 – Changes or approved as written -- Director O’Brien requested we correct the VCSD Meeting guest speaker’s last name from “Chris” to “Christ”. Director Johnson moved to approve the Minutes as amended. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

6. SCHEDULED ITEMS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

   a. Presentation of the Part-time Employee of the Month Award for March 2019 to Gabrielle Pittle – Director of Administration Theresa Pennington presented Ms. Pittle with her plaque and check, she has worked with the District for over 6 years and this is her first Employee of the Month Award. Gabrielle thanked everyone for the award. Chair Freeman commended her for keeping a clear head during an emergency at the Recreation Center.

   b. Presentation by Director Johnson Regarding Golf Fees – It is very competitive for Golf Course Managers to attract and keep their patrons. Johnson spoke with a
large number of golfers. By his observation one-third of the patrons are seniors, they come out because it is affordable, local, and they enjoy the management provided by Golf Manger Brian Reed. In his estimation, an average amount of money spent on other services at the course is approximately $45 per golfer, per day. 12 years ago golf brought in over $1.2 million in excess revenue with a large reserve fund. This income has shrunk over the years, he feels the District won’t want to lose additional income due to the higher $2 cart fee increase. He contacted 6 different courses in Palm Springs and found they raise rates based on the needs of the golfers. He feels 6 months is too long to re-evaluate this issue. Johnson stated if you lose 1 golfer per day due to the increase, that could actually be up to 3 others who go with them. When you factor in the $45 spent by these golfers the annual amount lost could be quite high. Johnson feels with a $1 increase no one will leave but based on his research the $2 increase could drive some golfers away. He would like the Board to come to a consensus for what is best for the District.

c. Presentation by Vice Chair Abele Regarding Golf Fees – His comments are not intended as a rebuttal to anything that Director Johnson said. Abele feels the job of Board Members is to direct Staff on District Policy. He does not feel the chances of losing the amount of revenue stated is plausible. Economically it does not make sense to him. The Senior Discount is not going away and Simi is the only course that offers this discount. Abele stated there are 3 ways to increase revenue: attract new golfers, sell additional rounds of golf, or raise rates when appropriate. Discounting rates too much and failing to raise rates when appropriate are the leading reasons for losing money. The rates are a small factor in making or losing money. In his opinion, the District has a good, well maintained course, a great Golf Course Manager, and great amenities such as food. There is some risk in raising the cart fees by $2 but feels it is miniscule compared to the value being offered. He sees a great golf course and Manager, new owners at the grill, and brand-new golf carts. He has not personally heard of any negative feedback and is not looking at the downside of things. Abele feels if money is lost, it will not only be due to the $2 cart fee increase.

Gene Hostetler addressed the Board. He feels raising rates too high will be a shock, especially for the middle class. He suggests raising the fee by $1 for 6 months to 1 year, then add the additional $1 at a later date. He feels it is important the Board listen to suggestions made by Staff.

Director Dennert inquired of Mr. Hostetler what the Golf Committee does. Hostetler replied, it gives Golf Course Manager Brian Reed the chance to share what he feels needs to be done and then discuss with the Committee before bringing any items to the Board Meeting.

7. CONSENT AGENDA (Matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered routine and shall be acted upon without discussion by one motion approving the Consent Agenda. If discussion is desired the item may be removed from the Consent Agenda upon a Director’s request.)
a. 3/29/19 Payroll Check Register; 4/15/19 Accounts Payable Check Register – Staff responded to questions from the Board. Director Johnson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

8. CONTINUED BUSINESS – NONE

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of Resolutions (1977, 1978) Accepting Two Easement Deeds for Trail Purposes (Multi-Purpose Public Recreational Trail Purposes) within the Runkle Canyon Residential Development from Runkle Canyon, LLC – The staff report was presented by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. The two easements deeds will extend and complete the trail link between Runkle Canyon Park and Runkle Canyon Open Space. Chair Freeman inquired about a marker for the trailhead and if there is an existing trail. Nakaoka responded there is an existing trail that goes up to the dry lake area just short of Rocketdyne and Staff is working on a master plan for the trail markers. Director Johnson inquired if all new trails will be added to the maps. Nakaoka responded yes, the District updates the maps annually. Director Dennert wanted to know if the public will be notified of the new trails, he felt this would be a good thing to post via Social Media. District Manager Paranick added he will issue a press release as well.

Director Johnson moved to approve Resolutions 1977 and 1978. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Abele, Dennert, Freeman, Johnson, and O’Brien
Noes:
Abstain:
Absent:

b. Approval of Resolution 1976 Modifying District Policy Manual, Chapter 12 Facility Use, Fees and Conditions: Pages 8 and 9 Regarding Employee Use of District Facilities – The staff report was presented by Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration. This resolution will modify the District Employee Manual as directed by the Board at the April 4, 2019 Board Meeting. Director Dennert commented he listened to former Board Member Gene Hostetler, who always advocated for taking care of District Staff. Director Johnson requested a follow up report on the amount of fees that are lost due to this discount. Director of Administration Pennington responded the District does track that every month and will provide those figures. Director Dennert added the Board should keep in mind there will be money gained as well due to employees who may not have utilized the District services previously.

Vice Chair Abele moved to approve Resolution 1976. Director Freeman seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Abele, Dennert, Freeman, Johnson, and O’Brien
c. Consideration of Participation in the Clean Power Alliance for Electric Utility Service Used by the District - The staff report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Paranick outlined how the Clean Power Alliance (CPA) operates and provided several options for the Board to consider. The Ventura County default rate is 100% CPA. The City of Simi Valley default rate is 36% power provided by CPA. Staff recommends the 36% option for Simi Valley and Oak Park, adding the District can decide to opt out at a later date. Director Johnson commented there doesn't seem to be a negative, but feels the decision should be reviewed after 1 year. Director Abele added he is a bit skeptical of how this will work out. Paranick agreed, it is a bit of trial and error and feels this would be a continued discussion going into the 1st to 2nd year between the CPA and Edison. This will provide the District approximately 1-2% in lower power rates. Chair Freeman feels the CPA is not figuring the basic cost of operations into their plan and she is skeptical of this as well. Director Dennert likes the idea of getting clean power at a discount. He added the School District is already using solar power and feels it also provides transparency via the website of what is being used and for what purpose.

Director Johnson moved to implement Option 1, participating at the 36% percent rate. Director O'Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

d. Consideration of Letter of Support for Senate Bill 140- Endless Summer License Plate – The staff report was provided by Dan Paranick, District Manager. This bill was introduced by Senator Henry Stern to generate funds for the State Coastal Conservancy. Staff recommends the Board consider approving the letter in support of this effort. Director O'Brien inquired if the Coastal Conservancy is affiliated with the Coastal Commission. Paranick responded there is no connection between the Conservancy and the Commission. Director Dennert likes the idea of conserving Coastal access, especially for the community and youth.

Director Johnson moved to approve the letter as written. Director Dennert seconded the motion. The motion carried with Directors Dennert, Freeman, Johnson and O'Brien in favor and Vice Chair Abele abstaining.

e. Consideration of the Structure/Use of Committees and the Policy Decision Making Process of the Board of Directors – The staff report was provided by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Paranick presented the Board with several questions and current Committee information to assist with the discussion process.

Director Johnson asked if there are 3 Board Members that want to change this or if this is just a discussion. Chair Freeman responded it is just a discussion at this time. She appreciates the report provided by Paranick and feels this is an important discussion. She has seen this system work for 60 years successfully, the
Committee system provides an opportunity for a better and more thorough discussion of topics before recommendations are brought before the Board. In her opinion, the system works and does not need to be fixed.

Vice Chair Abele feels the District has been successful but doesn’t feel the Committee structure has been a success. The Board represents the people of the Community. Even though the meetings are open to the public and the Brown Act is followed, he feels this is not actually meeting the public’s interest. He noted the public were not present at any Advance Planning Committee meetings over the previous year but they did attend the regular Board Meetings. In his opinion the Board is not serving the people who have voted them into their positions. He would like to be involved with important decisions from the time they are initially discussed and before any recommendations are brought to the Board.

Freeman stated all Board Members do have a voice as the issues ultimately come to the entire Board, at which time everyone can weigh in. Staff brings Committee recommendations before the Board; at which time, it opens the conversation to everyone.

Director Johnson added the District rotates the Chair and Vice Chair position every year. This assures all Members have a chance to participate in all aspects of District operations. He also added, Board Members should only provide direction to the District Manager, members should not be giving any direction to Staff.

Legal Counsel Pierik stated these are Brown Act Committees and open to the Public. Any Board member can attend Committee meetings as an observer, however are not allowed to comment.

Director Dennert suggested we could eliminate a number of committees that are possibly not needed any longer. He asked Abele if the fact that you can attend the meetings alleviates some of his concerns.

Abele replied, somewhat but is still concerned about not being able to comment. He feels 2 Board Meetings per month is a lot, this is when the District provides information to the community not through the Committee Meetings. He will maintain his commitment to represent the community. If something is important to him, he will make it known he wants to weigh in before a recommendation is made to the Board. He would prefer the Board is always presented with options, as opposed to one recommendation from a Committee. Abele noted the Historical Society Committee as an example. He would have liked to be included in the discussion regarding the move of the Colony House due to the $500k cost and also the rental rates at Strathearn Park. He would have liked more input as opposed to only 2 members weighing in before coming to the Board with recommendations.

Johnson feels it is important to trust other Board Members who are serving on those Committees and District Staff to make the best, most informed decisions. If the Board feels Staff is not up to it, then they should be replaced. If there is really
an issue, then it should be brought to the District Manager directly. He added, Committees are used as a sounding board for Staff to figure out where to go next and decide what actually is brought before the Board.

Freeman added the Historical Society has their own Board and Budget; the Committee is necessary in this situation.

Dennert asked what topics the Advanced Planning Committee handles. Freeman responded the Chair and Vice Chair meet with the District Manager to discuss future park projects, they meet as needed depending on the current plans. Dennert inquired what Committees could be eliminated.

Freeman provided a list of her recommendations to her fellow Board Members and District Manager Paranick.

Abele would like Paranick to come back to the Board with a new proposed list of Committees. He feels more comfortable with informational meetings and does not want a strong recommendation coming from a Committee to the Board. He would still like important issues be brought to the entire Board. He is conceding to the idea of having some Committees as needed. He feels the issue is not about trust, it is about the transparency. He added he would like to know in advance if a Committee will be meeting so that he can attend as an observer.

Paranick will include any upcoming scheduled Committee Meetings and the Agenda during his comments at the end of the Board Meetings.

Freeman stated it is good for the Board to have a better understanding of the process of dealing with Staff and the District Manager. Board members should always take their comments or directions only to the District Manager. The Board will give Paranick a chance to look at the directions from this meeting and come back with a proposed list of Committees.

This topic was discussion only, there was no action taken by the Board.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS OF NOTE – NONE

11. REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

   Director O’Brien attended Community Action of Ventura County Meeting. She brought some friends of hers to see the Activity Center, they were very impressed with the building. She wanted to confirm the date for the Oak Park Community Cleanup day. Paranick responded the event is April 28th, he will send a flyer to the Board Members. O’Brien also added she attended a 2 step CPR presentation and suggested a possible demonstration for staff. Paranick responded the District has their own Certified Instructors through the Lifeguard Program.

   Director Dennert attended the Soccer Foundation meeting with Director Johnson, they requested the District reach out to the School District, as ongoing field needs will be an
issue. They are also recruiting new members for their board. He met new City Council Member Luevanos, who is interested in arranging a special event at a park. He attended Junk in the Trunk; it was great event. Dennert feels the District should be sharing film clips of projects filmed in Simi Valley via Social Media. Dennert requested an agenda item be included in an upcoming meeting discussing film productions done here in Simi Valley. Paranick responded Staff will schedule a presentation at a future Board Meeting.

Vice Chair Abele attended the Oak Park Committee meeting. Director Dennert had requested presentations from some of the After-School Clubs and he was wondering what has been done. Paranick responded Staff will provide an update quarterly and most likely bring in 2 or 3 clubs each time.

Director Johnson attended the Soccer Foundation meeting. CARPD is getting ready for the upcoming conference. They are looking for new Board Members if anyone from our Board is interested, applications are due by 5/17/19.

Chair Freeman reminded everyone about the upcoming 50th Anniversary celebration for the City of Simi Valley. On April 27, 2019 Strathearn Historical Park will host a Time Warp Picnic from 11:00 am - 3pm. The City will also host a Barn Dance in October. She attended the Oak Park Committee meeting. She received a call from a gentleman who plays both tennis and pickleball and had some suggestions for this issue. New Assembly Member Christy Smith met with her and Paranick yesterday, they showed her around the Activity Center and gave a presentation regarding the District. Smith was very impressed.

12. REPORT BY DISTRICT MANAGER – Comments were provided by District Manager Dan Paranick. Staff is currently working on an Emergency Preparation Policy. Staff from the Grocery Outlet Store reached out and are interested in sponsoring some District Events. The Simi Valley Leadership Group will be providing bleed kits to the District. The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall plans for Memorial Day Weekend are moving along. Some upcoming District events: Leadership day on May 5th, two Easter events this weekend in Simi Valley and Oak Park, and the Oak Park Cleanup event is on April 28th. The May 2nd Board Meeting will be held in Oak Park, agenda items include: Pickleball and Tennis Court issues, Bids for District Vehicles, and replacing fire damaged items in Oak Park.

Paranick announced there is a need for an Advanced Planning Committee Meeting to discuss the Skate Park, Activity Center Phase 3 and Rancho Santa Susana Community Park. Golf Course Manager Brian Reed is also requesting a Golf Committee meeting before the upcoming Budget Meetings.

13. CLOSED SESSION – Chair Freeman announced the meeting to Closed Session at 9:05pm.

a. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.95

Claimant: Kevin P. Flahavan, ESQ on behalf of Emma Moss
Agency Claimed Against: Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
b. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6

Conference with Labor Negotiator:
Agency Negotiators: District Manager and Director of Administration
Employee Organization: Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Middle Management Association

c. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6

Conference with Labor Negotiator:
Agency Negotiators: District Manager and Director of Administration
Employee Organization: Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Employees Association (“Bargaining Unit”)

d. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6

Conference with Labor Negotiator:
Agency Negotiator: District Manager and Director of Administration
Employee Organization: Unrepresented Employees

Chair Freeman announced the Meeting back to Open Session at 9:32pm and reported for Item A, the Board unanimously rejected the Claim. There was no reportable action taken on the remaining items.

14. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Freeman adjourned the meeting at 9:35pm in memory of William L. Morris Jr. who passed away on March 28th.

[Signature]
Dan Paranick, District Clerk