Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
Board of Directors Meeting
M I N U T E S
May 2, 2019 6:30 p.m.
Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
1000 N. Kanan Road
Oak Park, CA 91377
(818) 889-9845; www.rsrpd.org

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chair Freeman called the meeting to order at 6:37pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Oak Park Chair John Watts.

2. ROLL CALL – Director Dennert, Director Johnson, Director O’Brien, Vice Chair Abele, and Chair Freeman were in attendance. Staff in attendance included: Dave Demaio, Tracy Engel, Wayne Nakaoka, Dan Paranick, Renee Peace, Theresa Pennington, Legal Counsel Brian Pierik, Ranger Jim Rosales, and Gina Viecco.

Guests in attendance included: Oak MAC and Oak Park Committee members Janice Smets, Carolyn Cass-Barton, James Ebert, John Watts and Sherri Wentworth as well as members of the tennis and pickleball communities. 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)

Dennis Wheeler participated in the Oak Park Cleanup event last weekend. He enjoyed the experience and was happy to participate in helping the community. He is organizing a community cleanup group that will be working with the District and Oak Park Maintenance crews. He passed around a notebook to the public if anyone was interested in helping.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular Meeting April 18, 2019 – Both Director O’Brien and Vice Chair Abele noted the final page of the Minutes was missing from the packets. Vice Chair Abele also requested a change to the wording of his comments on page 5, the 2nd paragraph, last sentence. Chair Freeman requested a correction to page 3; it was incorrectly typed as Chair O’Brien.

No action was taken by the Board tonight, these Minutes will be included with the next Agenda for approval.

6. SCHEDULED ITEMS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS
a. Update from Oak Park Advisory Committee Member – Oral report was presented by Oak Park Committee Chair John Watts. An update on Committee items and an overview of upcoming events in Oak Park was provided.

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. 4/12/19 Payroll Check Register – There were no 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. Review of Tennis and Pickleball Usage in Oak Park and Consideration of Usage Option at Deerhill Park, Indian Springs Park and Mae Boyar Park – The staff report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. An overview of the current issue and a timeline of past discussions was provided by Paranick. The District conducted surveys to assess the usage, safety, and traffic/parking issues that were cited during public comments. Paranick thanked the community members for attending the meeting and apologized for any previous miscommunication between the District and the community.

   Vice Chair Abele asked if there was any difference with safety issues at Deerhill park when tennis or pickleball players were on the courts. Paranick responded there was no difference. Abele also inquired about the cost of building new courts and if there is room in the District Budget for this. Paranick responded the cost of building two brand new courts would be approximately $600-700,000; converting existing courts would be approximately $300,000. District wide, it could be possible to Budget but existing projects would need to be reprioritized.

   Director Dennert inquired about sharing pickleball courts with the local middle school. Paranick responded there has not been much discussion with Oak Park School District yet.

   Chair Freeman opened the meeting to Public Comments at 7:22pm.

   Sue Dermott and Deet Ezra provided a PowerPoint Presentation. They were representing approximately 32 residents who are opposed to converting the Deerhill Courts to pickleball only. They looked at data provided by the District and feel it is not accurate. The short-term recommendations included: continued shared use of Deerhill Park, only 2 pickleball nets not 4, no free lessons at any time, enforce current court rules, and no tournaments for pickleball at Deerhill Park. They feel the tournaments cause a parking and safety issue. They also feel the Pickleball Players do not follow the park and court rules. The suggestions for longer term solutions include: Seek grant money and build additional pickleball and tennis
courts. Since Oak Canyon Community Park has been devastated by the Woolsey fire, use the money earmarked for restoration, trees and landscaping for cement instead. Move the pickleball nets to Medea Creek School where there is more room. The Oak Park Community Center has an under-utilized basketball court that could be converted to pickleball. They also have a petition with approximately 376 resident signatures opposing dedicated pickleball courts at Deerhill Park. In conclusion, they thanked the tennis community for coming together and stated as neighbors and friends they would like to work together. The following attendees ceded their time in lieu of speaking: Lei Liu, Sylvie Van Colt, Lois Koval, John Koval, Lianzh Guo, Kelly Mills, Paul Garron, Ben Chu, Eric Zhong, Kim Kavett, Amy VanCott, Greg Urfry, Kim Scherzay, Judie Berro, Tina Wang, Weijie Zhang, Angela Hong, Qining Zhary, John Craven, Victor Le, Ted Volk, Linda no last, Han Feng Yuan, Li Yuan, Tong Wang, Sasha Xu, Nancy Way, Yan Cheng, Chris Ruan, Amy Hu, Ivy Peng, Ling Yun, Soyon Hardy, Linda Kapitz, Sheldon Xu, Melody Tu, Wini Tu, Christy Pernin and Steve Hu.

Daniel Young, member of the Oak Park High School Tennis Team does not want one sport to dominate, he wants to see everyone share the courts and is against exclusivity.

Declan Farriday, member of the Oak Park High School Tennis Team is against exclusivity and he does not agree with data presented by the District.

Trent Chu is a member of the Oak Park High School Tennis Team. He grew up playing on Deerhill Courts and feels it is hard to access the other parks in the area.

Pan Cheng, this is her 6th time speaking up for the tennis courts. She is disappointed with the options provided. She feels the Board is biased towards pickleball. She stated the Board members are not Oak Park residents, so they do not understand.

Janice Smets, representative of the MAC Board, submitted her response to a May 2nd letter from District Manager, Dan Paranick. A copy was provided to everyone on the Board.

Tim (last name unknown) is concerned about safety after 7pm at Deerhill Park, he does not want his daughter there. The courts at the High School are trashed and they might lock those courts. Finding an available court on summer evenings is difficult. He feels the best time to play pickleball is Saturday or Sunday mornings, he has no issue with that and wants to make it work.

Alon Glickstein, longtime Oak Park resident thanked the Board for meeting again and postponing the original decision. He stated sometimes you can make a wrong decision without all of the information and is hoping the Board does not keep the original decision.

Jay Kapitz, longtime Oak Park resident and former MAC Board member feels shared use is the way to go, as all things should be shared. No tournaments or exclusivity, all courts should remain multi-use.
Jason Stern, lives near Deerhill Park. Oak Park is known for the School District, that is why his family moved here. He stated families play tennis not pickleball. He is curious about the data the District presented; it does not seem correct as he rarely sees pickleball players. He feels sharing is an important value.

Drew Koval has lived in Oak Park his whole life. Closing the tennis courts would be a huge disappointment for him and others. He is a competitive tennis player and Deerhill Courts are the only ones in walking distance, other than the High School. He has observed pickleballers sitting on the courts doing nothing.

Yi Tu, plays tennis with his 2 daughters. The parking is a problem when pickleball players have tournaments. please find a better place, not in the residential area. He would like to see the courts remain shared.

Keif Adler stated as a Pickleball Community they decided to have a minimal number of speakers. They are happy to share courts. Tennis players should put the racket on the net and they will give them the court next. He is a 30-year resident of Oak Park. These parks do not belong to Oak Park, they are public which includes everyone.

Andrea Ziegler moved to Oak Park over 40 years ago. Times are changing, at that time there were not many older people. She previously played tennis, but no longer has the stamina. She can play pickleball for hours though. This sport has given Seniors a community to be part of. While it is mostly Seniors, pickleball is more inclusive for all ages. Deerhill Courts have become a Senior Center in some ways, all people are welcome to join them.

Michael Foore is a proud member of the Pickleball Community. He thanked the Board for listening. He supports a dedicated place or dedicated times for Pickleball. He feels the best place is Deerhill Park. There is no cost and could accommodate up to 6 Pickleball Courts. He feels both sports would benefit from dedicated playing areas.

Jerry Burdick is almost 80 and still plays tennis. If Coach Paul (Tennis Coach) gave free lessons everyone would show up. He keeps hearing let’s share, but doesn’t feel that’s what pickleball players want.

Susan Pourzia is a 30-year resident of Oak Park. She plays pickleball as a sport during her retirement. It is a sport that fosters community. Deerhill is an ideal location here in Oak Park. Senior residents should not have to leave the area to play. She feels the District is aware of the explosive growth of this sport.

Gary Gossett is a resident from Simi Valley who plays pickleball in both locations. He supports both tennis and pickleball players. He donates 3 hours a week teaching pickleball. It is a perfect sport for Seniors. He proposes looking for grants for new courts and suggests sharing for the time-being.

Robyn Britton represents the 145 members of Oak Park Pickleball. Tennis has more courts available, pickleball only has the courts at Deerhill Park. She reminded
everyone that parks and courts are public and for all to use not just residents. If Deerhill is not exclusive, then she would like to see all courts striped for multi-use.

Mike Ricken started playing pickleball 18 months ago when there were only 5 people playing, now the community has grown to over 145 people. They turn over the courts as fast as they can so people have enough chances to play. He would like to see dedicated times on Tues/Thurs and Sat/Sun. Pickleball is expanding, all abilities can play, it’s easy and fun. Fitness, fun and friendship is what Pickleball represents. Thank you to the Board for listening.

Steve C. (last name unknown) agrees with the tennis presentation. He feels the real solution is to build new courts. He asked why they can’t build new courts here in Oak Park or Agoura Hills, they were built in Simi Valley. He does not want to see the arguments in the community.

Scott Esterson said thank you to the Board for their hard work. He plays pickleball and drove around today; within 5 mins of this location he found courts available. There are so many tennis courts available locally, at least 47. There are only 4 pickleball courts.

Monica Craven has never seen a pickleball court until recently. She moved here as a single mother and wanted a safe environment. Her son loves tennis; they have to drive around looking for courts. Do not take away from people who moved to this Community for one reason. Oak Park values sharing. Let’s work with each other to come together with solutions.

Pan Cheng stated Oak Park is a small city with many schools and asked the Board to be considerate of the children.

At 8:53pm Chair Freeman read the Pink Comment Cards with names for or against the proposal. There were 40 Comment Cards for the Proposal and 81 against. Chair Freeman added most of the cards in favor of the Proposal did have Oak Park addresses.

Collete B. (last name unknown) is the Pickleball Ambassador for USA Pickleball. The PowerPoint was nice, but not a good representation for pickleball. Traffic and parking are a City issue, not a park issue. She is married to a tennis player and they still get along, she is hoping 2 groups can work together. She heard a lot of comments from tennis players about what pickleball wants to take, they are not trying to take away from the Community, they are wanting to add an alternate to tennis. There are many courts in Oak Park but pickleball only has one location.

Mike Pirzadeh understands the needs of the pickleball players, but you cannot solve the problem by taking courts away from tennis.

Robbie Otten, an Oak Park resident would like to see the courts remain shared.

Chair Freeman closed the Public Hearing at 9:18 pm.
Chair Freeman stated the District had a shared use agreement with the Oak Park School District and staff kept the tennis courts on campus in great condition.

Director O'Brien had questions on how the data and surveys were conducted. Paranick provided a response. O'Brien asked if we had received any safety or crime information from the Sheriff's Department. Paranick responded the District gathered the information from the District Ranger reports, not from the Sheriff.

Vice Chair Abele stated the previous Board decision was made with the information they had at the time. He added the District needs to do a better job in the future with communicating with the community. While he grew up as a tennis player, he feels it is undeniable pickleball is a sport growing in popularity. Even though his heart is with tennis, logically there needs to be room for both. It is costly to build anything new and not possible to carelessly spend funds. Building anything new in Oak Park would require more input from the entire community, not just tennis and pickleball players. He likes the idea Dennert suggested for pickleball courts located at the Middle School and would like to see staff follow up on that option. Personally, he does not see a safety issue with pickleball. Parks are meant to be used regardless of the sport, as a Park District, parks in use are a good thing. Legally speaking the District cannot stop people from using a public park. He felt there were good arguments made on both sides. The Board now needs to find a way to proceed.

Director Johnson has been on the Board for 30 years. These are public parks, the reason for a public park is to get people to use them. There has to be time available for both tennis and pickleball. Most pickleball players are seniors and use this as a social activity as well. There should be dedicated times for seniors to use the courts, they love Saturday mornings. Simi Valley Middle Schools all have pickleball, the kids love it. He is not a fan of tournaments as they take away from public play. Pickleball is a fun sport and the District needs to provide activities for the seniors as there is no Senior Center in Oak Park. Johnson suggests continued shared use with dedicated pickleball times on Tuesday and Thursday from 4:00 to 10:00 pm, he feels the Saturday time should not be an issue as the District offers classes during those hours.

Director Dennert would like to congratulate the kids who spoke tonight. He also commended the father who promoted sharing. He likes the idea of solving problems, not creating another. He likes the idea of dedicated times and feels getting courts at the Middle School will be a good way to alleviate the problems. He requested that the community work together in finding solutions. How people treat each other is very important, you could be on the other side of an issue next time. He added dedicated times does not mean if no one is there, that the other group cannot play.

Chair Freeman called a Recess at 9:50 pm.

Chair Freeman called the Meeting back to order at 10:02 pm.

Chair Freeman would like all pickleball tournaments held at Rancho Simi Community Park in Simi Valley, as opposed to Oak Park. During the upcoming
budget session, she would like staff to look at grants for possible building of courts. She suggested possibly having designated times for both pickleball and tennis. She feels the District may want to change the Saturday morning pickleball classes to a different time, such as 1:00 to 4:00 pm on Saturdays.

Vice Chair Abele is leaning towards the first option with dedicated times. Paranick suggested a Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday schedule fills the natural space and would allow time for more players.

Miguel Encisos, the District Pickleball Instructor, stated there were 3 Tournaments in the last year in March, December, and July, all on Saturday mornings and all players were off the courts by 12:30pm. Classes are already scheduled for Saturday mornings, he wants to see the class continue at realistic times so people will still come.

Director O’Brien is partial to option 1 and 2 combined, she feels striping other courts would take some pressure off Deerhill Park.

Dave Demaio, Recreation Program Specialist, added there are Level I and Level II pickleball classes scheduled from 8:00am until 11:30 a.m. on Saturday mornings; it is an important time for seniors, they most likely will not participate if the time is moved.

Renee Peace, Oak Park Recreation Supervisor, added it could be over 100 degrees at 1:00pm in Oak Park, there are no lessons of any kind held outdoors in the afternoon for Spring or Summer.

Chair Johnson moved to designate dedicated Pickleball times at Deerhill Courts on Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00pm to 10:00pm and maintain the existing recreational programming on Saturday morning from 8:00 to 11:00am. All other times will be multi-use. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following Roll Call vote:

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

Chair Freeman moved to designate all pickleball tournaments be held at Rancho Simi Community Park, must be permitted and on the District Calendars with the times, and no music allowed to be played. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion did not carry with the following Roll Call vote:

Ayes: Freeman, O’Brien
Noes: Abele, Dennert, Johnson
Absent:
Abstain:
Chair Freeman moved to allow pickleball tournaments at any location other than Deerhill Park and must be permitted and on the District Calendars with the times. The motion carried with the following Roll Call vote:

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

Director O’Brien excused herself for the next two Agenda items due to a conflict of interest.

b. Approval of Land Lease Agreement between Los Angeles SMSA Limited Partnership, dba Verizon Wireless, and Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District for a Wireless Telecommunication Facility on Park District Open Space Property in Oak Park (aka Conifer Water Tank Site) – The staff report was presented by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. Staff is recommending the Board approve the Lease agreement for an additional telecommunication facility at the Oak Park location.

Chair Freeman inquired if new technology will eventually due away with these agreements. Nakaoka responded it would be possible in the future but due to the terms of the Lease Agreements it would not be a surprise loss of revenue.

Director Dennert moved to approve the Lease Agreement. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote with Director O’Brien abstaining.

c. Approval of Option and Land Lease Agreement between Los Angeles SMSA Limited Partnership, dba Verizon Wireless, and Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District for a Wireless Telecommunication Facility on Park District Open Space Property in Oak Park (aka Churchwood Cell Site) – The staff report was presented by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. There were several issues that delayed this process including close proximity to an Elementary School and certain deed restrictions. Staff worked to resolve these issues and is recommending the Board approve this Lease Agreement.

Director Johnson moved to approve the Lease Agreement. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote with Director O’Brien abstaining.

d. Approval for the Purchase of Two (2) John Deere 210L Tractor Loaders through National Purchasing Partners (NPP) – The staff report was presented by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. Due to the loss of vehicles during the Woolsey Fire staff is requesting approval to purchase two additional vehicles for the Oak Park facility. The expense would be covered by the District insurance carrier.
Vice Chair Abele moved to approve the purchase request. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

e. Authorization to Solicit Bids for the Eagle View Park Play Area Equipment Replacement Project – The staff report was presented by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. Due to the Woolsey fire the Pre-Teen Area at Eagle View Park was destroyed. The cost for this Project will be reimbursable through the District’s insurance carrier. Staff is requesting the Board authorize solicitations for bids on this process which will be the renovation process for the fire effected areas.

Director Dennert was very excited about the plans and felt they looked great, he asked what material was being used for the ground area around the play structure. Nakaoka responded wood chips.

Director Dennert moved to approve the solicitation of bids. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS OF NOTE – NONE

11. REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Director O’Brien attended the Community Action of Ventura County Fund Development Meeting, as well as the Simi Valley Police Eagle Awards dinner which was a fun event.

Director Abele had no meetings to report as he was enjoying his vacation in Maui.

Director Johnson attended 3 CARPD meetings. He also had the Santa Monica Conservancy Meeting and was able to tour the LA River Cleanup project, the Mural looks beautiful. Sadly, a local Mountain Lion was killed due to ingesting rat poison. Johnson also attended the Oak Park Cleanup Event.

Director Dennert attended an event at Madera Elementary school and the City of Simi Valley’s 50th Anniversary Event held at Strathearn Park. He requested the Board look at the issue with the use of poisons and pesticides. District Manager Paranick responded the Oak Park Committee also requested looking into this issue and Staff will provide the Committee and Board with a report.

Chair Freeman attended the Strathearn City of Simi Valley 50th Anniversary Event, it was a beautiful day. She attended the Oak Park Cleanup Event and felt it was very successful. She met with the Simi Valley Chamber Leadership group when they presented the Bleed Kits to the District and attended the Police Foundation dinner.

12. REPORT BY DISTRICT MANAGER – Comments were provided by Dan Paranick, District Manager. He thanked Staff, specifically Tracy Engel, Eugene Molnar and Renee Peace, for organizing the Oak Park Cleanup Event, they did a great job. Some upcoming events of note: Simi Valley Street Fair on May 4th, RSPRD Steamfest on May 4th, and the District Employee Appreciation Event on May 17th. The May 16th Board Meeting will
include After School Club reports, Volunteer of the Year Award, Bids for RSSCC parking lot refurbishment, as well as bids for the Colony House restoration.

Paranick requested the Budget Workshop scheduled for Thurs. May 30th be changed to Wed. May 29th due to his daughter's Graduation on the 30th. All Board members were agreeable to the change.

Committee Meetings are requested for Advance Planning, Golf, and Special Events.

13. CLOSED SESSION – NONE

14. ADJOURNMENT – Director Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Director Dennert seconded the motion. Chair Freeman adjourned the meeting at 11:20pm.

[Signature]
Dan Paranick, District Clerk