Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
Board of Directors Meeting
MINUTES
July 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.rsrpd.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 Ed Abele.

2. ROLL CALL – Directors Dennert, Johnson, O’Brien, Vice Chair Abele, and Chair Freeman were in attendance. Staff in attendance included: Laura Ballantoni, Alex Barsky, Miguel Chavez, Tracy Engel, Tom Evans, Dylan Gunning, Tracy Heminuk, Jeannie Liss, Janice Martin, Barbara Meinel, Wayne Nakaoka, Dan Paranick, Theresa Pennington, Legal Counsel Brian Pierik and Gina Viecco.

Guests included: Judy Pepiot, Don Novell, and Alex Walker, Board Members from Strathearn Park, Basem Mosaad representing MRCA, and Jake Finch from the Boys/Girls Club Board of Directors.

3. AGENDA REVIEW – District Manager Dan Paranick requested the addition of a special presentation for the Chair and Vice Chair after Item 6.b below. The Board agreed to the change.

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

   a. Regular Meeting June 20, 2019 – Chair Freeman requested the following changes: On page 3, Item B add to Vice Chair Abele’s comments “Oak Park eliminated 2 part-time positions, and added one 1 full time.” On page 7 under her comments, adding “and have great parks.”

      Motion: Director O’Brien moved to approve the minutes as amended. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

6. SCHEDULED ITEMS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

   a. Part Time Employee of the Month Award for June 2019 Presented to Alex Barsky – Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration presented Mr. Barsky with his plaque and check. He has worked for the District for over 5 years, this is his second Employee of the Month Award. Chair Freeman thanked Alex for his service and keeping things running on schedule. Pennington added this is the one position the District can’t function without and Alex does a great job. Vice Chair Abele enjoyed meeting with Alex and congratulated him. Alex thanked everyone for this award.
b. Full Time Employee of the Month Award for June 2019 Presented to Ron Aaron – Mr. Aaron was unable to attend the meeting tonight; his plaque will be delivered to him at work.

Director of Recreation Tracy Engel and Volunteer Coordinator Jeannie Liss thanked the Board for their time and dedication to Community events. They presented a special certificate and thanked Chair Freeman and Vice Chair Abele for their service during the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall Event. Freeman stated what a wonderful surprise, it is an honor to participate during these events. Abele thanked Engel and Liss, adding they are the ones who deserved the award.

c. Public Hearing and Adoption of Resolution 1982 Making a finding of Significant Public Benefit and Other Findings in Connection with a Proposed Revolving Credit Agreement for, and Issuance of Related Promissory Notes by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to Finance the Authority’s Grants and Annual Operating Costs – The staff report was presented by Basem Mosaad, representing the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA.) MRCA has two current lines of credit which will be expiring. Mosaad presented details on the proposed agreement with new lender BBVA USA, their Financial Officer recommends BBVA as the best option.

Director O’Brien asked if it is common for these Credit Agreements to expire and why the increase from 1 million to 2 million. Mosaad responded yes, they are always a term agreement. 1 million has no longer been enough to cover expenses over the last several years. O’Brien also inquired if this was tax exempt. Mosaad replied one account is, the other two are not.

Director Johnson asked if this new credit line is a savings over the previous one. Mosaad replied yes, overall it is. This is hard to compare but MRCA feels there will be a savings.

Director Dennert asked why the District is having a Public Hearing and why would District constituents possibly object. Mosaad stated MRCA felt it was a good idea to allow the Public more opportunities to weigh in, this method has allowed four public hearings as opposed to just one. District Manager Paranick added MRCA is a joint powers agency, the Park District is one of the agencies MRCA are partnered with. The District Board sits on the Board of the MRCA. Dennert also inquired if this implies any liability for the Park District. Chair Freeman commented; the Resolution states the District would not have any liability. Mosaad also added the Credit Agreement is backed by a property owned by MRCA.

Chair Freeman opened the Public Hearing at 6:46pm. There were no comments from the public. Chair Freeman closed the Public Hearing at 6:47pm.

Motion: Director Johnson moved to approve Resolution 1982. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following Roll Call Vote:
Ayes: Abele, Dennert, Freeman, Johnson, O’Brien
Noes:
Absent:
d. Public Hearing on the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Annual Budget and Planning and Maintenance Projects for Fiscal Year 2019-20 – The staff report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. On June 20, 2019, the Board approved the Preliminary Budget for fiscal year 2019-20, no material changes have been made since that time. There will be an additional public hearing in Oak Park on August 15, 2019.

Chair Freeman opened the Public Hearing at 6:51pm. There were no comments from the public. Chair Freeman closed the Public Hearing at 6:52pm.

There was no further action taken by the Board at this time.

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. 6/15/19 Accounts Payable Check Register, 6/21/19 Payroll Check Register – Staff responded to questions from the Board. Director Dennert suggested the District look into collaborating with the School District to help reduce internet expenses.

Motion: 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 Resolution 1983 Establishing the 2019-20 Appropriations Limitation in Accordance with Article XIII B of the Constitution of the State of California – The staff report was presented by Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration. With the Board’s approval during the meeting on June 6, 2019, the legal notice for the public was published in the Ventura County Star. To date staff has not received any input from the public. Staff recommends the Board approve Resolution 1983 establishing the Appropriations Limitation of $20,046,099 for fiscal year 2019-20.

Motion: Director O’Brien moved to approve Resolution 1983. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:
Ayes: Abele, Dennert, Freeman, Johnson, O’Brien
Noes:
Absent:
Abstain:

b. Approval of Consent to Assignment and Assumption of Sublease Relating to the Use of District property for the Boys and Girls Club Facility located at 2850 Lemon Drive, Simi Valley – The staff report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Due to a merger of the Simi Valley Boys and Girls Club with the
Moorpark Boys and Girls Club they have requested the District provide consent to the City of Simi Valley to assign the sublease to the new entity.

Chair Freeman asked if the District uses this facility. Engel responded; the District runs a pre-school every morning 10 months out of the year at this location.

Motion: Director Johnson moved to approve the Consent to Assignment and Assumption of Sublease Relating to the Use of District property for the Boys and Girls Club Facility located at 2850 Lemon Drive, Simi Valley. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

c. Renewal of Permit Agreement for Use of Recreational Facilities at Sinaloa Youth Ballfields – The staff report was presented by Tracy Engel, Director of Recreation. The proposed renewal Permit Agreement will now include permit fees assessed at an annual rate of $1350 per field for 2019 and $1400 per field in 2020. Original agreement was 6/6/2004, a 10 yr agreement. League requested a continued waiver of fees; staff declined their request.

Vice Chair Abele inquired if the League is okay with this agreement. Chair Freeman stated they would like the waiver continued, as they are solely responsible for the maintenance of the field and feel the District does not provided maintenance as we do at other locations. The League may ask the District to take on mowing or some other regular maintenance.

Director Dennert asked if the District Manager Paranick can negotiate. Paranick responded from a staff perspective the negotiations are complete, unless the Board requests further negotiations take place.

Vice Chair Abele feels this proposal is the fair way to go, he admires the League but supports the staff recommendation.

Director Johnson added this is the only League that has not paid the fees. The District as the property owner does fix and maintain the location. It is fair for them to pay what everyone else does.

Motion: Director Johnson moved to approve the renewal as per Staff recommendation. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

d. Authorization to Solicit Bids for the Waterline Extension for the Future BMX Bike Park Site – The staff report was presented by Tom Evans, Landscape Designer. There is a water line which terminates to the east of the proposed BMX park. Extending the line will provide water service to the park. The City of Simi Valley is currently widening West Los Angeles Avenue, it would be best to co-ordinate the waterline extension with this project to save costs. CA Dept of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW), has caused some delays with the project, staff will acquire updated information on their recommendations and will adjust the timeline as needed.

Vice Chair Abele stated there have been three changes since this project was originally approved: Environmental Reporting is causing more issues and expenses,
there has been no fundraising help from the BMX group as was expected, and most importantly it appears the District will likely have to operate and maintain the track in the future. Abele feels the District should re-evaluate this project based on these developments.

Director Johnson asked when the City will be paving the street. Evans responded it looks like September or October 2019. It would be an additional $70K more to extend the waterline after this and have to do the paving again, it would almost double the cost. Johnson is concerned about who the operator will be and what will be the final costs of this project.

Vice Chair Abele inquired when staff would be able to get the answers to the Board’s concerns. Director of Planning and Maintenance Nakaoka responded at least 60 days to include the revised study for CDFW and the City reviewing the information.

Chair Freeman is concerned about this project getting through CDFW. The question tonight is, does the Board want to proceed with the waterline to avoid additional costs later.

Paranick added the District most likely will not have the full cost of the project prior to the City paving West Los Angeles Avenue.

Vice Chair Abele asked if Paranick could contact the City of Simi Valley and the BMX representative to address the concerns about this project. Paranick responded he would do so. However, moving forward at some point the District will be programming and maintaining the BMX Track and it is unlikely that any funds will come from fundraising efforts by that group. Abele added the current BMX Operator (Tony) is the person that keeps the program going.

Director O’Brien asked if the District solicits bids with a longer window would staff be able to have more information when bringing the bids back to the Board, probably in September 2019. Nakaoka responded 60 days is the usual timeframe for bids. Legal Counsel Brian Pierik suggested having the bids open for 90 days, this would take it at least to the end of September and provide time to identify the actual costs.

Chair Freeman feels there is more going on with these issues, it seems there are other groups interested in this property. At some point the Board will have to decide if it makes sense to continue with this Project. Freeman would also like Paranick to contact the BMX group and discuss with the City of Simi Valley. She would also like to know how many Simi Valley residents use the BMX site, she felt most seem to be from Santa Clarita.

Vice Chair Abele stated his vote tonight in no way indicates how he will vote on this project in future.

Motion: Director O’Brien moved to authorize Staff to solicit bids with a 90-day window. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.
Chair Freeman called a Recess 7:52pm. Chair Freeman called the Meeting back to order at 7:57pm.

e. Response to Grand Jury – Youth Sports and Public Liability – The staff report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Paranick presented information regarding the Grand Jury Report. Staff has prepared a letter in response to the Report and is recommending the Board’s approval. Paranick added this is a County wide report, not just pertaining to the Park District. It requires the Park District and other local agencies to enforce the laws; ensuring the leagues are being compliant, responsible for holding the waivers, and carrying additional insurance. The District agrees with the new laws, but does not feel as an agency we should be in the role of enforcing the regulations for Youth Sports Leagues.

Chair Freeman asked if all Districts are responding the same way. Paranick responded they are in agreement.

Motion: Director O’Brien moved to approve the response. Vice Chair Abele seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

f. Review and Discussion on the Park District’s Use of Rodenticides – The staff report was presented by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance who provided an overview of different chemicals and the current procedures utilized by the District. The District currently contracts with Orkin for buildings in Simi Valley and Oak Park. Nakaoka discovered there is use of anti-coagulants on District sites, Bromadiolone is placed in the black boxes around the structures. All Rodenticides are not bad, the worst right now, as being reported, are anti-coagulants (Curcumin, Vitamin K, etc.) These build up in animal’s blood stream, but not in humans, making these the safest for humans and household pets. Cities do not prohibit the use of these anti-coagulants but recommend limiting them. The District currently uses Metal Phosphides in house. There have been no incidents, this is not an anti-coagulant, they are tablets placed in gopher holes throughout the parks. Nakaoka feels this is necessary as gopher holes can cause injury to park patrons. Staff has provided six different alternatives for the Board’s consideration. Staff has no particular preference but does request the continuation of the use of the Phosphides for gopher holes and the possible use of Vitamin D3 as an alternative to the anti-coagulants. Vitamin D3 creates a buildup in animals and works synergistically with anti-coagulants. It would be about a 20% increase in costs to switch to Vitamin D3.

Director O’Brien asked if Nakaoka had any information on a product that smells like coyote urine. Nakaoka asked O’Brien to send him the information.

Chair Freeman reported at Oak Park’s Committee Meeting; Member Janice Smets feels strongly the District should not use any anti-coagulants. She found a product called ContraPest as a possible alternative for a longer-term solution. Nakaoka responded this product has only been out since 2016. It is not known yet of any long-term effects or secondary kill information. Also, it just became commercially available only 9 months ago.
Director Dennert asked if there have been any complaints from the Oak Park Community regarding gopher holes. Nakaoka responded the District only uses mechanical traps there and have received no complaints at this point. He did point out there is much less park space as opposed to Simi Valley. Dennert stated he is okay with the Phosphides and use of Vitamin D3, he will support that. He feels keeping trash cans clean and replacing them with more secure cans in the future will help as well.

Motion: Director Dennert moved to approve Staff recommendation #2, no anticoagulants with no restriction on staff to use other options, and communicate to the public regarding the new District procedure. Vice Chair Abele 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 Historical Society Meeting, they discussed the Colony house budget issues. She attended the Community Action of Ventura County meeting; the District Manager will be leaving at end of year and they will be looking to replace her. Betty Eskey’s (of the Simi Valley Samaritan Center) fundraising goodbye at the Birdie Bar was a very nice event. The tickets were $60 per person and Evelyn (Owner of the Birdie Bar) announced all the proceeds will be donated directly to the Homeless Shelter. She feels that Evelyn and Tony are doing a great job with the Birdie Bar, they are a great selection by Brian Reed. O’Brien also added she will miss Renee Peace from Oak Park.

Director Dennert likes the free events every day during summer for the community, he attended kickball and large games and appreciates the staff’s effort. He suggested the idea of bringing out the Gaga Ball Court during the Concerts in the Park. He also suggested the District somehow let parents know about the After-School Club at the Middle Schools. He’s not sure if the parents are aware of what a great resource this is. Dennert feels the District needs some type of lighting at the Dog Park, possibly using solar. He also suggested a small obstacle course for the dogs and posting pictures of them to Social Media Sites. He would like to see the Historical Society work with the School District so that schools could send students based on what they are learning. Chair Freeman added the tours are currently geared to 3rd grade students.

Vice Chair Abele stated there have been some contentious issues over the last few months between the Board Members and feels some of the comments have gone over the top. He apologized for any comments he has made that have been too strong. Regarding the comments made at the end of the last meeting about the assessment: It was voted on by homeowners through a mailing and not put on a ballot. He added, regardless of a yes or no vote, he always makes decisions with great deliberation and thought. This is the first year he has made a no vote to this issue, he used the same amount of thought for the full 3 years, with a lot of responsibility to the public and District. He feels all votes should be respected by fellow Board Members regardless if they agree with the vote or not.

Abele also was not comfortable with a statement made at a previous meeting suggesting it was not appropriate for Board Members to attend Committee Meetings as observers. Board
Members can attend Committee Meetings as observers and should not be discouraged to do so.

Abele attend the July Historical Society Meeting as an observer. He attended events for Renee Peace and Betty Eskey at the Birdie Bar, both were great. He added that Eskey has done so much for the homeless and the community. He attended the July 4th event but left before the fireworks. He is a bit concerned if the organizers are making enough revenue for this event or not. He attended the July 11th Oak Park Committee Meeting, the Oak Park Concert in the Park, and visited with both Employees of the month. Regarding the Oak Park Concert, he commended Brian McQueen and Richard Lemmo for doing a great job. Oak Canyon Community Park is a great location and very busy at the splash pad. The show was packed and well received; he personally felt the band was excellent. He did hear some comments among the crowd regarding the name of the band, which was “Erotic City a Prince Tribute” that it may not be appropriate for a family orientated concert, especially with children present. In the future, he suggested staff be clear that the entertainment is not necessarily for all ages. Abele requested a future Agenda topic discussing the option of videotaping the District Board and Committee Meetings, just a brief presentation of the possibilities.

Director of Recreation Tracy Engel commented Fast Times (an 80s Tribute Band) will be the replacement for this Saturday’s Concert in the Park, as the previously scheduled band was not able to make it.

Director Johnson was on vacation so did not have any events. He did report that CARPD had a long discussion regarding Prop 68 disbursement of funds. Additional conditions are being added; money is there but not being disbursed. This is making it more difficult especially for the smaller Districts. CARPD will be opposing SB 13.

Paranick responded there are some additional guidelines and an application to complete before funds are disbursed. He does not foresee an issue with the District receiving funds.

Chair Freeman attended the CSDA meeting via webinar and CARPD. The Historical Society took the news pretty well regarding the Colony House bids being over budget. The priority is to get the building sealed and they are willing to wait on the rest of the project. Strathearn Park will be hosting a Barn Dance on Sept. 21st and a Dia de Las Muertos Event in October. Freeman attended both events at the Birdie Bar, both were great. She also attended the 4th of July Event and will find out next week how much revenue was received. She felt District Manager Dan Paranick did a great job going over the budget at the Oak Park Committee Meeting, it seemed like the members understood the information. Freeman added the District has fixed things in Oak Park, but not the pretty things, such as the lagoon. They are anxious to get it fixed.

Freeman responded to the comments made by Vice Chair Abele. She is concerned about the loss of income if the District were to lose the Assessment. It was not about not disrespecting the other Board Members.

12. REPORT BY DISTRICT MANAGER – Comments were provided by Dan Paranick. The recruiting for the Executive Assistant position has started, 335 applications were received and the first round of interviews will be held on July 30th. The listing for the Recreation Supervisor for Oak Park closes tomorrow. Staff is currently working on completing an
Emergency Plan as requested by Director O'Brien. Staff will also be kicking off the Fee Study for the District. Regarding the Oak Park Committee, there is some frustration from a few but most members understand the process. Right now, they are 2 different ideas of how to fix the Lagoon. Some want to make the Lagoon what it was, the some want to slow down, form a committee and decide what would be best for the environment. The first Oak Park turtle rescue is set for July 27th, about 90% of the volunteer work will be done the first day with staff supervising. The Murphy Property did close escrow, the sale was $6.9 mil with 14% of that amount going to the District. The Calleguas water line should close on August 16th, $100K will be coming to the District from them. The fiscal year closed on June 30th; it was a positive close with nothing unexpected to report.

Upcoming District events include: Simi Valley Concert in the Park this Saturday and a Movie in the Park on July 27th.

Future Board Meeting topics: The Colony House, Parking lot Project at RSSCC, and CSDA elections.

Upcoming Committee Meetings: The Historical Society will meet the first Monday in August. No other committee meetings are scheduled at this time.

Chair Freeman added, Janice Smets from the Oak Park Committee brought paperwork from a law firm that will be suing So Cal Edison for damages from the Woolsey Fire. Smets feels the money would come faster through a lawsuit. Paranick discussed this with District Legal Counsel Brian Pierik, it is an option for the Board to consider. There is a 2-year window to take action. Pierik stated any further discussion on this matter should be done in a Closed Session.

13. CLOSED SESSION – NONE

14. ADJOURNMENT – Director Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Director Dennert seconded the motion. Chair Freeman adjourned the meeting at 9:30pm.

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Dan Paranick, District Clerk