1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chair Abele called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Danielle June.

ROLL CALL – Director Freeman, Johnson, O’Brien, Vice Chair Dennert, and Chair Abele were in attendance. Staff in attendance included: Alex Barsky, Hayley Church, Douglas Duran, Tracy Engel, Tom Evans, Tracy Heminuk, Danielle June, Richard Lemmo, Teresa Moore, Wayne Nakaoka, Dan Paranick, Theresa Pennington, District Counsel Brian Pierik, and Gina Viecco. Guests included: Numerous supporters of the BMX Track, and family members of the Employees of the Month.

2. AGENDA REVIEW – Staff had no requested changes to the Agenda.

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

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

   a. Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Board Meeting – February 6, 2020 – Motion: Director Freeman moved to approve the minutes as written. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote with Director O’Brien abstaining.

5. PRESENTATIONS, SCHEDULED ITEMS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

   a. Presentation of the Full Time Employee of the Month for January 2020 to Tracy Heminuk – Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration presented Tracy with her plaque and she will receive a paid day off. Tracy has been with the District for 7 years, this is her 2nd Employee of the Month Award. Tracy thanked everyone for her award.

   b. Presentation of the Part Time Employee of the Month for January 2020 to Hayley Church – Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration presented Hayley with her plaque and check. Hayley has been with the District for 3.5 years; this is her first Employee of the Month Award. Hayley thanked everyone for her award.

6. 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. Approval of 1/31/20 Accounts Payable Check Register & 1/31/20 Payroll Check Register – There were no questions from the Board.
b. Authorization to Solicit Bids for Weed Abatement Services at Various District Parks and Open Space Areas – The Staff Report was prepared by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. There were no questions form the Board.

Motion: Director Johnson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Director O'Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

7. CONTINUED BUSINESS – NONE

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review and Discussion Regarding Current Status of BMX Bike Park and Consideration of Its On-Going Feasibility – The Staff Report was presented by Tom Evans, Landscape Designer, who provided a brief timeline of the project for the Board. There have been some complications with the project stemming from the environmental report and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife identifying two protected species on the land. The current projected cost for this project is $1.8 million. District Manager Dan Paranick added the District as a whole looks for projects that have the maximum benefit for the most park users for the cost. Historically, the BMX community has done the bulk of the work for the track, there is currently a concern regarding the future operation once the track is completed. There is $1.5 million budgeted for this project. Staff recommends the Board discuss the continued feasibility of this project.

Director O'Brien asked how the District originally became involved with the track and what is the concern regarding the operations. Paranick responded the District had the land and allowed the building of the track. The current operator Anthony Nigro has previously indicted that he is looking to move on from the operation of the track.

Vice Chair Dennert asked if there are any ongoing programs the District operates, if the track will be open to the public, and if the biological issues would continue in the future. Paranick responded the District operates a basketball league but no other sports. The hours for the track have not been identified, in the past it was only open while staffed by the operator. Directors Freeman and Johnson added the land will continue to be regulated by the State.

Chair Abele stated in previous discussion the cost for the project was estimated to be lower than the budgeted $1.5 million, he is wondering what has changed the projections. Paranick responded those figures were assuming the District received the dirt for free and being able to run the water lines before the environmental delays. Abele added at the first meeting 2 years ago there were discussions about the BMX Community contributing by fundraising. Paranick responded up to this point in time nothing has come from that.

Dennert asked if the water is really necessary. Evans responded it is required through the City permitting process. It is a health and safety issue as well as providing for landscaping and restrooms.

Chair Abele opened the topic to public comments at 6:59pm.

Rick McClure has owned a bike shop in Simi Valley for 30 years. The JC's helped to put the track together in 1978. BMX provides an outlet for kids who don't want to participate in
group sports. He feels there are more BMX riders than skateboarders, he hopes the District finds the funds to complete this project.

Noah Adams has been a rider since 1985. He lost his way in his 20's and racing has saved him from the wrong path. He added the track represents family.

Stephen Partida has been in the bike business for many years. He thanked everybody for coming out and supporting the project. He has personally built tracks of this magnitude for free and is questioning the high cost. Riding has also saved his life and provided a way forward.

Robert Sandoval thanked the District for having them at the meeting. BMX is the strength of the community and establishes family connections. Above money, this sport brings families together and Simi Valley has always been a family community. He added riding helps kids to focus, benefits physical fitness, and helps with ADHD.

Russell Voorhees is one of the three current operators of the track with Anthony and Chris. He and Chris are willing to stay and run the facility when Tony leaves, this has always been the plan. They are committed for at least 7 to 10 years, they do it for the kids. He added Sapwi Park is very busy and the riders are looking forward to the track.

Gary Boswell works for the City and was born and raised in Simi Valley. The first time he rode was in 1974, he then rode with his son. He was disappointed when the track shutdown, the location is great. BMX has always been part of the Community in Simi Valley; motocross was born here. So many of the riders from this area have gone to be successful adults.

Kevin Kollenkark is here from Santa Clarita. He started racing with his son, right now it’s too far to travel to other tracks so he has not been riding. Simi Valley is doable for them. They also eat here in the area and bring new business.

Elise Hughes has 2 boys that have been raised on the BMX track. They live in Thousand Oaks and currently go to Camarillo to race; this is too far for most families. All tracks are volunteer run, there is never an issue with volunteers. Tonight was race night at Freedom Park in Camarillo otherwise at least 20 other families would have been here. She is willing to help fundraise and has many ideas.

Chris Quinn rides with his son. Volunteers are not a problem; they are all willing to pick up a shovel and get the track built if necessary.

Ruth Luevanos spoke representing herself tonight, not the City of Simi Valley. We need to invest in the future for children. There are not many things especially for pre-teen and teens to do in the area. There are so many people here tonight willing to volunteer and help get this track built. She suggested it could be possible to use the track for filming which could generate some income. She would like to see this built for the youth and is in support of completing this project.

Lisa Seino has lived in Simi Valley for over 50 years, some of their best years were spent at the BMX track. She and many others have volunteered in the past and will gladly volunteer in the future. She does not like to see promises made and then taken away, she will be so incredibly sad if this does not happen.
Marie Sjoquist stated sometimes you build things just because it’s the right thing to do, money should not be the only factor. The volunteers come from the families, there will always be someone to step up. The BMX community will fundraise, just give them a figure and they will raise it.

Hannah Sjoquist added she and her brother grew up on this track. They were able to access it since it was in the community and did require driving out of the area. There is a need and want for the track.

Tirrell Lazada-Smith has been here before, he is not happy, but not surprised. He feels this is just bureaucracy. He has made Simi Valley his home and has given himself to the community. The Park District is here to serve and provide recreational services to the community. The sale of the original property generated money and it is entrusted to the District to provide for the people. World Class riders have come from this town, it will be a shame if this track is not completed.

Cami Gadboi is here from Santa Clarita but her daughter learned to ride here at the Simi track. They spend a lot of money whenever they come into town. Her daughter had been able to ride here with her heroes on the track. There are so many good memories, they really miss coming here.

Jessica Farell is a Nurse, Mom of 3, and a mountain bike coach. Her goal is to see more kids and especially girls on bikes. They are happy to have the children out and riding, she votes for completing the track.

Kyle Gress stated his father’s ashes were spread at the previous track and they were very sad when it was taken down. The economy boost of having a track in the area is immense. This project means so much to the community, he is hoping the project moves forward.

Anthony Nigro is the current operator of the BMX Track. He is questioning if they need an expensive building, $300k of lighting, or even bathrooms, the previous track had a trailer for an office and porta potties, all they need is the dirt, that’s it. There are so many volunteers here tonight that are willing to work. They will fundraise when there are official plans for the park, it is hard to raise funds if the project might not be completed. He stated that he will not be retiring or leaving. He is staying to see this project to the end.

Chair Abele closed the public comments at 7:50 pm. Abele read aloud the names from the Speaker Comment Cards, there were 61 cards in favor of the proposal.

Director Freeman assured the group the Board and District have been committed to finding a location and had been looking for a location since before the property was sold.

Director O’Brien thanked everyone for being at the meeting, she appreciates seeing such a tight knit community. She is wondering if it is possible to cut down the cost of the project and the possibility to coordinate the fundraising. Paranick responded the plans do need to go through the City, it’s not the 70s any longer and there are requirements that need to be met. The entire project is currently compliant with City code. However, it is possible to scale back on the lighting and proposed structures. Staff can assist the group by hosting a meeting.
with them; there is a need to have their own group to do the work for fundraising and operating the track.

Vice Chair Dennert agreed with the group that it is hard to raise funds without the actual track. What he would like to see is an Organizational or Flow Chart from the group which would show who and how many volunteers are committed to the project. For Fundraising he suggested an Opening Day Pledge Fund, as a good faith offer from the community, no actual money collected until near project completion. He likes the idea of scaling back on the plans to save money. He is committed to helping the group and finding a way to have the BMX track in Simi Valley. He congratulated the previous speaker, Tami whose daughter rode in the BMX Championships. He would like to see the track open to the public so there would be time for the community to just ride for fun. He would also like to know if the track will be good enough to host National or Championship racing.

Director Johnson thanked the group for coming out. He does have some concerns: how many riders are actual Simi Valley residents, does the BMX group have a Board of Directors, he wants to see a structured organization, and the amount of time the track will be open to the public. The current amount is over what was budgeted, he would like to see costs cut back. He pointed out income into the area benefits the City of Simi Valley and not the Park District. The District does operate on a limited budget and have to take that into account.

Chair Abele added at the end of the day it is about the money. If this project had come in under $1 million then there would not be an issue moving forward, but we are now looking at a $2 million project. There are environmental and other issues the District must adhere to when completing projects. He feels the District needs to see where costs can be cut back. There are other projects that are important to other community members. He voted to move forward with the Track previously, the public now has expectations and that cannot be taken lightly. The Board will need to know who will be operating the Track now and, in the future. He would like to see the group provide structure for the operations and fundraising efforts. The BMX track is an important part of the community and the parks, he appreciates the current operators and the care taken with the kids.

O’Brien suggested Staff start looking at ways to reduce the costs of the project and possibly contact Ruth Luevanos to see if the City could work with the District. She would like to see Staff host a meeting with Tony and the BMX Community to brainstorm on volunteering and fundraising.

Paranick added the District wanted to build a quality track at the outset of this project, so it is possible to reduce some of the costs. However, this will extend the completion time for the project, at least 3 to 4 months. He suggested the BMX leaders start to look at what their structure and plans for operations and fundraising will look like.

Dennert asked if this project could be implemented in phases. Director of Planning and Maintenance Wayne Nakaoka responded the bathrooms, parking lot, fencing, and water line will be required by the City of Simi Valley. It is possible to cut costs on the lighting and office and/or concession buildings, this could save approximately $365,000. He recommends bringing the revised full plan to the City and later amend it to phases. Dennert asked if Staff could look for other sites in the area that could work for the track. Nakaoka responded there was an extensive search done previously and other options were ruled out.
Paranick added he has taken note of all these items and will investigate the possibilities for implementing the requests.

Motion: Director Freeman moved to continue this item until Staff can look at alternatives for lowering costs and meet with the City to discuss options. As well as meet with the BMX Group to create a structure for their organization and put together a Fundraising plan. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Chair Abele called a Recess at 8:29pm.

Chair Abele called the meeting back to order at 8:37pm.

b. Consideration of Televising / Streaming Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Board of Directors Meetings – The Staff Report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Currently the District does not provide video recordings for the public only audio recordings available by request. Paranick presented the Board with 6 options that would provide a video recording for the public. The only option for the meetings to be televised live would be to move the meetings to Simi Valley City Hall. Staff recommends implementing recordings of the meetings onsite and making the recordings available online.

Freeman asked who would be recording, would it be a current staff member or someone new. Paranick responded he would look to give additional hours to a Part-Time employee to attend the meetings. Freeman asked will the purchased equipment need to be upgraded in the future. Paranick responded the equipment would need to be upgraded periodically.

O’Brien does not like the option of going to City Hall, especially since the District purchased the Guardian building.

Johnson added going to City Hall is not an option for him. He does have some concerns about the cost factor of acquiring equipment.

Abele asked Paranick if the cost would be an issue. Paranick does not consider the cost prohibitive.

Dennert likes option #2 as this will also enable Staff to get better at technology and it could be used in other areas. He doesn’t really see the value of broadcasting on TV, he feels streaming is more mainstream these days.

Abele also does not like the idea of meetings at City Hall. He feels the District needs to do this for transparency. He suggested starting with Option #1 and transition to #2. It might be a bit more cost but would put less stress on Staff.

Paranick likes the idea of implementing Option #1 to get good quality video results right away, then transition to District Staff.

Motion: Director Dennert moved to implement Options #1 and transition to #2 once video recording is established. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.
c. Review of Before and After School Club, Teen Club and Day Camp Proposed Fee Adjustments for School Year 2020-21 and Summer 2020 – The Staff Report was presented by Danielle June, Recreation Supervisor. Staff is projecting a fee increase for the school year 2020/21 due to increased operation costs in various areas. Generally, a 3% increase on current fees for the Before and After School Clubs, Teen Club, and Summer Day Camp is recommended. The increase is necessary to continue to provide services in the coming years due to cost increases in wages, leases, and goods/services needed to run the programs. The increase is not anticipated to effect enrollment numbers and a 20% discount is still offered for families who need assistance. Staff has researched several options for funding from outside sources, at this time nothing has been deemed viable for the District.

Paranick added this program is more than covering its costs currently, this will keep pace with increased costs of programs over the next year.

Freeman inquired how our District rates compare with other childcare programs in the area. June stated, very comparable with the Boys & Girls Club and YMCA. Freeman added the increase seems conservative and hopes it would not affect the families too much. June feels it should not be an issue.

Dennert is concerned about Middle School programs. Families may not be willing to pay when childcare is optional. He is wondering if the District could do a better job of promoting those Clubs. June responded currently the District relies heavily on school personnel as the programs are specific to the actual school. Paranick added it is possible to work with the School District’s social media to spread the word.

Paranick stated when looking at fees, if the Board feels strongly about subsidizing certain areas in the District it could be accommodated. However, the increase would be seen in other programs. This can be discussed further during review of the official Fee Study when completed.

Abele commended Staff for their efforts to not over price the fees for a needs-based program such as the After-School Club programs.

Johnson added the District knew this was coming, especially with the minimum wage increases. He feels it is important to not outprice people who need the childcare.

Motion: Director Freeman moved to approve Alternative #1, implementing staff’s recommendation for the fee increase. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

d. Approval of Resolution No. 1990 Directing Preparation of the Engineer’s Report for the Continuation of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Maintenance and Improvement District of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District – The Staff Report was presented by Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration. To continue receiving funds from the previously adopted maintenance and improvement assessment, the Board must annually direct the preparation of an Engineer’s Report. Pennington stated this Report is for Fiscal year 2020-21, the date is incorrect in the report.

Motion: Director Freeman moved to approve Resolution No. 1990. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:
e. California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Calling for Nominations To Fill Coastal Network Vacant Seat B on their Board of Directors for the Remainder of the Current Term from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2022, and for Expiring Seat C for the New Term from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2023 – The Staff Report was provided by Dan Paranick, District Manager. It is recommended the Board consider providing nominations to fill CSDA’s vacant Seat B and/or expiring Seat C. This a regular nomination and replacing someone who did not complete their term.

Director Freeman recommended Jack Curtis, if he is still interested.

Motion: Director Freeman moved to have the District Manager contact Jack Curtis to see if he is interested. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

9. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS OF NOTE – NONE

10. REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Director Freeman had no additional comments or meetings to report.

Director Johnson reported planning for the CRPD conference in Lake Tahoe is going very well. There are some new Districts participating this year.

Director O’Brien was sorry to miss the last meeting. She attended a Chamber of Commerce event.

Vice Chair Dennert attended a meeting for the Homeless Task Force. The Rangers are doing an excellent job, it is great the District has a few Rangers with expertise in this area. At the end of the meeting there was a motion by Ruth Luevanos to set goals for next year. He is looking forward to celebrating Earth Day in whatever way Staff plans. Director of Recreation Tracy Engel stated there is a plan for April 21st at Berylwood Park.

Chair Abele briefly met with the current Employees of the Month. He thanked his fellow Board members and District Staff for helping to make it a professional meeting.

11. REPORT BY DISTRICT MANAGER – Comments were provided by Dan Paranick. In regards to insurance payments from the fires, good news, most items will be funded as expected. He thanked Theresa Pennington for her work in securing funds from FEMA and CalOES. He reviewed the District investment portfolio a few weeks ago, LAIF is still the best option for investing the money. He was not able to schedule a special meeting regarding the Mae Boyar tree, so that will be on the Oak Park Committee Meeting agenda in April. The District Budget process has kicked off internally with Staff. He and Nakaoka will be working on the deferred maintenance list to keep up with aging District items. The Tri-Agency Liaison Meeting is scheduled for April 22nd with Abele and Dennert. Youth Council will be holding their meeting here at the Activity Center on March 5th, they have been invited to attend the Board Meeting that night as well. The Youth Summit will be held at the
Activity Center on March 12th. Paranick and Nakaoka are working on a Parking Plan for the Activity Center.

Upcoming Events: Civil War Days at Strathearn March 7th and 8th.

Future Agenda Items: possibly the Strathearn caretaker agreement, vaping in the park policy, presentation on the District Communications plan, Strathearn fee schedule will come back to the Board, and Indian Springs bike riding in the park.

Committee Activity: The Historical Society Meeting is the first week in March, they will hear the proposed Strathearn fee increase at this meeting.

12. CLOSED SESSION – NONE

13. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Abele adjourned the meeting at 9:30pm.

[Signature]
Dan Paranick, District Clerk