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 Owen Patel, acting Chair of the Youth Council group.

2. ROLL CALL – Director Freeman, Johnson, O’Brien, Vice Chair Dennert, and Chair Abele were in attendance. Staff in attendance included: Hayley Church, Nikki Collier, Sandee Covone, Tracy Engel, Danielle June, Richard Lemmo, Shana Moore, Teresa Moore Wayne Nakaoka, Dan Paranick, Theresa Pennington, District Counsel Brian Pierik, Brian Reed, Carolyn Valdez, and Gina Viecco. Guests included: Youth Council Group members, family members of the Employees of the Month, and Mustang Marketing representatives Diane McKay and Scott Harris.

3. AGENDA REVIEW – District Manager Dan Paranick informed the Board there is a Supplemental Report added for Item 8.b for their review.

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

   a. Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Board Meeting – February 20, 2020 – Motion: Director Freeman moved to approve the minutes as written. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

6. PRESENTATIONS, SCHEDULED ITEMS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

   a. Presentation of the Full Time Employee of the Month for February 2020 to Shana Moore – Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration presented Shana with her plaque and she will receive a paid day off. Shana has worked for the District for 14 years; this is her 3rd Employee of the Month Award. Shana stated she has amazing co-workers and supervisors which makes her job easy. Tracy Engel added Shana not only works hard but she works smart. The sky is the limit with Shana, she is so skilled and bright.

   b. Update Regarding Status of Communications and Outreach Plan – The Oral Report along with a PowerPoint Presentation was presented by Diane McKay and Scott Harris of Mustang Marketing. District Manager Dan Paranick noted that Staff is looking at this to be part of everyone’s job. There will not be a specific job position, responsibilities will be delegated to different departments. Recreation Supervisor Danielle June provided some additional details regarding the plans for the implementation of the program. June
then introduced Scott and Diane from Mustang Marketing; they will be working with the District to implement the program. Diane provided a PowerPoint presentation which outlined a goal-oriented program which will measure the success of the marketing efforts. They will be meeting with Staff regularly to evaluate the efforts. They have worked with the City of Thousand Oaks, City of Ventura, Fire Departments, and the Census Bureau and provided examples of their work.

Paranick added funds have been allocated in the Budget for the project and Staff will be moving forward with Mustang Marketing.

Freeman added she looks forward to the marketing efforts.

Dennert commented he has seen the work they’ve done with other agencies and he’s pleased the District has selected them to work with.

There was no action taken by the Board.

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. Approval of 2/15/20 Accounts Payable Check Register & 2/14/20 Payroll Check Register—Staff responded to questions from the Board. Motion: Director O’Brien moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

8. CONTINUED BUSINESS

a. Proposed Fee Adjustment for Facility Rentals at Strathearn Historical Park & Museum and Approval of Resolution # 1991 Modifying District Policy Manual, Chapter 12. Facility Use, Fees and Conditions—The Staff Report was provided by Carolyn Valdez, Historical Park Specialist. The facilities at Strathearn are available for wedding rentals from the last weekend in February through the 2nd weekend in October. There have been only nominal fee increases since 2016. Valdez provided an overview of the proposed fee increases for the Board’s consideration. Implementation of a Resident of Simi Valley and Oak Park and Non-Resident fee has been included in the proposed increase. This information was presented to the Historical Society. They were fine with the increases as there is a constant demand for rentals, they are hoping this will increase resident rentals.

Director Freeman thanked the Board for honoring her request to continue this item from the previous meeting. She also likes the idea of monitoring the resident and non-resident fees.

Chair Abele thinks it’s outstanding Strathearn has bookings into 2021. He wonders if the increase is even enough, he feels the District may have lost some revenues over the last several years by not implementing an increase sooner. He is strongly in favor of the proposed increase.
Motion: Director Freeman moved to approve the staff recommended fee increase and approve Resolution No. 1991. 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: 

b. Review and Discussion Regarding Bicycles, Skateboards, Roller Skates, Rollerblades, Scooters, or Other Forms of Non-Motorized Conveyances at District Parks – The Staff Report was presented by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. During the meeting held on February 6, 2020 the Board Members in attendance voted 2-2 in a roll call vote on 2 different motions. District Counsel advised this item could be brought for further discussion at a later date. Staff did some additional research as requested at the February 6th meeting regarding any reported accidents or claims with riding in public parks. Nakaoka provided the Board with the updated information. Staff researched the issue with neighboring Park Districts and there is nothing notable due to bike riding in park. There have been no claims within the District’s parks, there is however, a current claim for biking on the Arroyo Simi Bike Path. There have also been some minor incidents with skateboarding.

O’Brien asked if skateboarding is more dangerous than bike riding and if this will affect insurance premiums for the District. Nakaoka stated it is an inherent risk. There will be no additional cost upfront. However, if there are claims then in the future then that will change.

Dennert asked if the District has received claims for injuries that happened while walking. Nakaoka responded yes.

Abele added at this point possible claims seem to just be a “what if” scenario. He stated there appears to be no evidence of any increase in liability or claims in parks where bike riding is allowed. Nakaoka agreed with his statement. Abele asked how long has the District been restricting bike riding. Nakaoka replied he cannot say exactly how long but it has been the entire 32 years he’s been with the District.

Johnson stated if it is not allowed, then the District cannot be sued. If the posted Rules stated no bike riding, then there are no claims.

Freeman wanted to clarify if the District Manager stated liability premiums will increase. Paranick responded they will not at this time, but the exposure is increased due to not having a rule against bike riding. Abele added allowing walking and running also increases the District’s exposure.

Chair Abele opened the meeting to public comments at 7:26pm.

Rylan Downey and Chloe Dennert, students from Simi Valley addressed the Board. They feel it is safer and more fun to bike ride at the parks, this would encourage kids to get outside more, and they felt if you say no, they will just want to do it more.
Chair Abele read the Public Comment Cards that were submitted, there were 14 in favor of this proposal.

Chair Abele closed the public comments at 7:33pm.

Freeman pointed out the issue was brought to the Board due to a child being injured by another child riding a bike in the park. The mother actually asked the Board to enforce the rule of no biking. She feels opening the parks up to these activities will expose the District financially, the Board has a duty to minimize claims against the District.

O’Brien stated she is leaning towards a yes vote, but she is concerned about increased liability. She inquired about any restrictions or limitations. Paranick replied the District can requiring helmets, yielding to walkers, and could include an age limit. Also including a nuisance rule which the Rangers could enforce as needed.

Johnson felt the last vote the Board took was all or nothing. Bike riding can cause damage to the parks that will then need to be fixed by District staff. Currently if someone is hurt, they are breaking a posted rule which is important to protect the District’s liability. He feels this could possibly work at smaller community parks, he does not think it is a good idea at the larger and more public parks.

Abele disagreed with Johnson, he did not feel it was an all or nothing vote, there were two proposals voted on, one allowing riding at all parks and one that only allowed riding at 1 community park. He is in favor of option 2 or 3, allowing riding at all District Parks with appropriate restrictions or limitations. He would defer to Staff’s suggests.

Dennert does not like the idea of allowing riding at only one park, that would then make the other parks less fun. If there is an inherent risk, that cannot be avoided, there is also a risk of kids missing out on using the parks. He does not want to create a special rule for one park only. He likes option 2 and feels the District’s goal is to encourage people to use the parks. If there is some additional maintenance needed on walkways this could reduce other accidents due to tripping. Dennert asked Johnson what recommendations he would make for limitations. Johnson would suggest riding only be allowed for ages 10 or 12 and younger and no riding near Tot Lots. Dennert appreciated Johnson’s comments, even though he is not 100% in agreement.

Abele stated he is willing to compromise. However, anything you do in a park increases liability. He added Freeman and Johnson have valid concerns regarding liability, but this is a recreation agency so recreational activities should be encouraged. Based on staff’s additional research, the liability increase seems to appear minimal.

Motion: Director O’Brien moved to approve Alternative #2, with the addition of including appropriate restrictions and/or limitations, including an Advance Planning Committee meeting if necessary, to determine what those will be. Director Dennert seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 3-2 vote, Directors Freeman and Johnson voted no.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Confirm the Appointment of Candidates to Serve on the Oak Park – Park and Recreation Planning Committee – The Staff Report was presented by Dan Paranick, District
Manager. Elections for this Committee were held at the Oak Park Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) meeting on Jan. 28, 2020, at this time 3 Committee Members were selected. Staff requests the Board confirm the appointment of Nicole Lelie for a 1 year term, Harry Medved for a 2 year term, and John Watts for a 2 year term.

Motion: Director Freeman moved to approve the Oak Park Planning Committee appointments. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS OF NOTE – Director Dennert received an email from a member of the community, he will have her send the information to the entire Board.

11. REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Director Freeman attended the Historical Society Meeting, there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Colony House on April 6th at 4:00pm. The Simi Valley Garden Club will be providing landscaping for the house. The roof repair for the Adobe should be completed soon, the $1500 price was great. This weekend is Civil War Days at Strathearn, there will be a lot of activities and music. They will hold a Barn Dance on Friday, this is not open to the public, but Board Members may attend. They are also looking at ways to raise money to finish the interior of the Colony House. The opening day for Baseball was great, the kids were amazing and made it hard to judge the banners. She also attended Read Across America last Saturday at the Simi Library; she was surprised they were not sure what RSRPD stood for. The For the Troops fundraiser was last Saturday, they had a great turnout and it was well done.

Director Johnson attended the CARPD teleconference regarding financials. At this point they are still planning on holding the upcoming Conference.

Director O’Brien attended the Historical Society with Freeman. She added the ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on the anniversary of the day the Colony house was moved. She attended Girls’ Softball Opening Day. She spoke with Keith Mashburn while there regarding the BMX project. He says the City of Simi Valley is anxious to help with this project.

Vice Chair Dennert attended the Baseball and Softball Opening Days, he was really impressed with all the volunteers that came out. He attended the Santa Monica Conservancy Meeting; it is a huge room of people. There was concern expressed about the recent mountain lion sightings. The consensus was this is not due to the fires, it is most likely more cameras on homeowner properties capturing pictures. They will be handling brush clearance; they will not be spraying though. He thanked the public speakers for their comments, it was his daughter’s idea to speak at the meeting. He suggested the District should encourage residents to complete the upcoming Census, possibly via Social Media. He is a lot more excited about the Civil War Days event now with Harriet Tubman represented. He thanked Freeman for attending the Read Across America event. He also thanked his fellow Board Members for always maintaining polite interactions, even when not agreeing with each other at times. He appreciates the points they make for their opinions and it gives him something to think about.

Chair Abele thanked everyone for their comments regarding the bike riding issues. He wasn’t able to make it out to the Baseball or Softball League Opening Days due to illness. He attempted to meet with Employee of the Month Shana Moore but he missed her.
12. REPORT BY DISTRICT MANAGER – Comments were provided by Dan Paranick. There may be some insurance coverage for the Landfill from CAPRI for damages caused by the Easy Fire. He met with the new Oak Park Committee Member, Nicole Lelie, for her orientation. He and Nakaoka met with the City Manager regarding the BMX project, there are some additional issues to be dealt with. Staff has been receiving regular updates regarding COVID-19 virus, if necessary, the next step would be a separation plan. Staff is currently reaching out to get proposals for video recording of Board Meetings. Pickleball players in Oak Park have recently requested more court time. Tracy Engel is working with Oak Park staff to accommodate the request. Dennert asked if staff has reached out to the Middle School in Oak Park, they have the courts and he thinks this could be a good solution. Engel replied she will follow up with the Oak Park School District. Abele asked if this could be resolved between staff, the pickleball and tennis groups without coming to the Board. Engel responded it looks like they will be able to resolve it. Paranick informed the Board new chairs for the meetings are on order. Gerald Davis, an Irrigation Crew Leader for the last 19 years has retired, he will be missed. The Guardian Building will be implementing a new parking plan for staff. The City will allow large event temporary parking on the street.

Upcoming Events: Civil War Days this weekend March 7th and 8th, Youth Summit at the Activity Center on March 12th, Medallion Hunt on April 1st, and the Colony House Ribbon Cutting will be at 3:30 (not 4:00pm) on April 6th.

Future Agenda Items: The meeting scheduled for March 19th has a very light agenda and Paranick will not be able to attend. The Board unanimously agreed to cancel this meeting.

Committee Activity: The Historical Society meeting will be held the beginning of April.

13. CLOSED SESSION – Chair Abele called the meeting to Closed Session at 8:43pm.

   a. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.95
      Claimant: Dr. C.R. Joshi
      Agency Claimed Against: Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District

      Chair Abele called the meeting back to open session at 8:51pm and reported the Board accepted the claim with a unanimous vote.

14. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Abele adjourned the meeting at 8:52pm.

   Dan Paranick, District Clerk