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 Wayne Nakaoka.

2. ROLL CALL – Director Freeman, Johnson, O’Brien, Vice Chair Dennert, and Chair Abele were in attendance. Staff in attendance included: Miguel Chavez, Tracy Engel, Tom Evans, Lee Martin, Wayne Nakaoka, Dan Paranick, Theresa Pennington, District Counsel Brian Pierik, and Gina Viecco.

Guests included: Basem Mosaad, Representative from MRCA, Susan Barnes from SCI and other members of the Community, those who gave comments are listed under the appropriate item below.

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

4. PUBLIC STATEMENTS (ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA)

David Callis, representing Hermosa Beach Volleyball Club, stated they are interested in bringing additional beach volleyball courts to Simi Valley. Adding these courts would make the facilities in Simi Valley the largest beach facility not located near a beach. This would be great with the current COVID-19 situation, as the sport serves all ages, youth players are able to possibly receive scholarships for college as well. Tournaments held at the courts will bring revenue to the Community. He thanked the Board for their time and is looking forward to bringing a presentation to an upcoming meeting.

Director Dennert requested the addition of their proposal be added to a future Meeting Agenda. Paranick responded that staff would add the item to a future agenda.

Linda Bosley, President of the Historical Society is concerned about the leaking roof on the Adobe portion of the Strathearn House. The leaking is happening where the Adobe joins with the Strathearn house, the wall of the Adobe is damaged as well. Currently the repairs are budgeted for the 2021-22 fiscal year. This house is a Historical Landmark and she is encouraging the issue be addressed sooner to preserve the history of Simi Valley.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Board Meeting – May 26, 2020 – Director Freeman requested an addition to her comments on page 3: “I have an interest in keeping the BMX Project.” Motion: Director Johnson moved to approve the Minutes as amended. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.
b. Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Special Board Meeting – May 28, 2020 – Motion: Director O’Brien moved to approve the Minutes as written. Director Freeman seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

c. Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Board Meeting – June 3, 2020 – Motion: Director Freeman moved to approve the Minutes as written. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

6. PRESENTATIONS, SCHEDULED ITEMS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Status of the Districts Response to the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic – Verbal Report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Staff is currently working towards opening all facilities, we are moving forward every day. The Activity Center, Oak Park Center, and Summer Camps opened this week. The pool facility will open on June 22nd with restrictions. The District will resume issuing some permits for park and facility usage next week. In-person programs for fitness-related courses will be scheduled soon. All large events scheduled for July have been cancelled. Paranick and Engel are working on a large Community event once the State/County allows larger groups to gather. All full-time staff are returning in-person next week, part-time staff will begin to return to work as needed. May financials look steady, there are no surprises.

Dennert asked if small group classes, such as dog training, will be allowed to resume in the parks. Paranick responded they will be able to resume their classes this week and apply for permits next week. Dennert asked if the After-School clubs are accepting applications and the status of the Splash Pad. Engel responded yes to the Clubs; Staff will have to research the options for the Splash Pad as social distancing would be hard to enforce. Dennert also inquired if sports camps could be allowed, for skills practice without having an actual game. Paranick will have Staff look into this, currently sports are not allowed in a team environment.

John Tolson asked when dog training classes can resume. Abele stated he spoke with County Supervisor Huber and trainers can go ahead and hold training in the parks. They will be required to obtain the appropriate permits from the District soon.

Abele inquired when are the next scheduled wedding and receptions. Nakaoka responded there is nothing in July, the first events are the 1st weekend in August. Abele asked if the current State guidelines refers only to Indoor Play Equipment. Paranick will check if it specifies indoors, but he doesn’t think so. Abele added he is frustrated by the State and County mandates as there seems to be a lot of hypocrisy with the decisions, his confidence in the County decisions is questionable.

Dennert added, he is frustrated with the decisions regarding playgrounds and youth sports because they are not giving any timeframes. He would like more information from them.

Freeman agreed, if people can go to Home Depot, Lowes, grocery stores, etc., it doesn’t make sense to prohibit playgrounds and youth sports.

b. Public Hearing and Approval of Resolution 1996 Approving Engineer’s Report, Confirming Diagram and Assessment and Ordering Levy of Assessment for Fiscal Year 2020-21 – The Staff Report was presented by Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration. The District has received no questions or comments from the Community after posting the Notice of the
Levy. Paranick added there are several Budget considerations if the CPI increase is not added this year. Without the increase there will be an approximate shortfall of $59,730. Those funds could be replaced by adjusting the Budget in regards to two budgeted vehicle purchases, or by reducing the deferred maintenance budget.

Freeman asked the condition of the two vehicles in question. Paranick responded they could go another year if necessary. Freeman stated the CPI increase is only a $0.10 (ten cent) increase per residence, per month, it is not much.

Abele inquired if money that had been budgeted for the cancelled 4TH of July event could be used towards the CPI amount or the vehicles. Paranick responded, yes, it is possible. Abele stated a tax increase right now would send a bad message to the public. Any increase is questionable right now, especially since park goers have been denied using the amenities this year. He added he would like to see the Board present a unified front on this issue this year.

Dennert asked if any money is budgeted to the BMX track for this Fiscal year. Paranick responded, no, the work has been halted. Dennert asked if the assessment is voted down how would that affect the Budget. Paranick responded approximately $2 million is budgeted from this assessment, some of these funds pay for part-time rangers and maintenance employees. Dennert disagrees with voting it down, especially since there is no push back from the community, he is strongly in favor of the assessment itself. He suggested the District research Solar Power and options for reducing the need for water to help to address Budgetary issues in the future. At this time, he would favor the vehicle cuts, over cutting any service provided to the public.

Johnson added the purpose of the assessment is to help fill in Budget gaps. Deferred maintenance costs are part of the need for funds, the assessment also helps to keep the Budget solid. He does agree it might not be a good a good time for an increase even though it is only an additional $.10 cents per month. He is in favor of the CPI, does not feel an increase would affect anyone negatively. In his tenure as a District Board Member, the community has never complained about the assessment. In his opinion voting to keep the assessment is the rock bottom, he is personally in favor of adding the additional CPI amount for this year.

Abele feels it sends the wrong message to increase taxes without full use of the parks being available. A tax increase during these difficult times is just a bad idea. He is in favor of voting to keep the assessment at the current amount without an increase. Paranick added if you forgo a CPI increase, it can be recovered in a future year. Susan Barnes via teleconference confirmed Paranick’s statement.

O’Brien asked how this could affect the Ranger Program and Park Maintenance. Paranick stated if the District does not accept the assessment at all, there is a possibility of losing part-time Rangers and 13 part-time maintenance workers, in addition to the utility and maintenance related funding. These salaries are paid through the assessment funds. The Budgetary impact options, with no CPI adjustment, is to lower the deferred maintenance budget or postpone the purchase of two vehicles.

Chair Abele opened the topic to Public Hearing at 7:10pm. There were no public comments. Chair Abele closed the topic to Public Hearing at 7:11pm.
Motion: Chair Abele moved to approve and continue the current assessment amount without the CPI increase. Director O'Brien seconded the motion. The Motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

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

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 6/15/20 Accounts Payable Check Register and 6/5/20 Payroll Check Register – Staff responded to questions from the Board.

b. Approval for the Purchase of a New Chevrolet Colorado 4x2 Pick-Up Truck through California Multiple Award Schedules (CMAS) – The Staff Report was prepared by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. Vice Chair Dennert was impressed with the purchase amount for this vehicle.

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

8. CONTINUED BUSINESS – NONE

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 – The Staff Report was prepared by Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration. Basem Mosaad, Dep. Financial Advisor for MRCA is available to answer questions. To assist MRCA, the District reviews and approves their Budget each year. Mosaad added they are continuing to work on the budget, trying to reduce expenses without impacting staff and the public. Currently they are not allowing any overtime and there are no raises other than the mandated minimum wage increase. They are looking into options for reducing irrigation costs.

O'Brien questioned the amounts in their Budget for Land and Improvements. Mosaad responded this is due to land acquisitions, some are very large amounts. This amount is very conservative right now and will be changing by the final budget.

Dennert asked if MRCA have any planned land acquisitions in the District's area. Mosaad stated he does not have that information; but he will research the question and provide an answer to the Board.

Motion: Vice Chair Dennert moved to approve the MRCA Preliminary Budget. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.
b. Adoption of Preliminary District Operating and Capital Improvement Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 - The Staff Report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager who provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining changes made since the Budget Workshop in May. The Budget will have to be further amended to account for the loss of the CPI this year. He is currently looking at late September, early October for Final Budget approval.

Freeman asked if the funds for the Greenway are included in the Budget. Paranick responded the focus for that project will be in the next fiscal year, Phase 3 of the Activity Center is the focus this year. Freeman added she is not in favor of deferring any maintenance expenses, she prefers the deferral of the vehicles if they can be kept running for another year.

Johnson defers to the District Manager for direction, but he does agree with Freeman and prefers deferring the vehicles.

Abele added it is possible to recover the amount for the vehicles sooner if the District does better with the recovery from the impact of COVID. Paranick agreed with this statement.

Freeman asked if the District has funds for the Adobe roof at Strathearn. Nakaoka responded it is budgeted for 2021-22. There were some repairs done this year, but it is still leaking, he recommends replacing the roof. The roof can be covered in plastic while waiting for next year. The cost is approximately $75,000. Director Freeman also requested that signs at Corriganville park be replaced this upcoming year. Freeman suggested reprioritizing funds from the Knolls Station parking lot to the Adobe roof repairs.

Motion: Director Freeman moved to adopt the Preliminary Budget with the reduction of the two vehicles, substituting the Adobe roof project for the Knolls Station parking lot, and including funds to replace the Corriganville signs. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

c. Approval for Publication of Legal Notice Allowing for Public Inspection of Preliminary Budget and Specifying Date and Time of Public Hearings on District’s Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 - The Staff Report was presented by Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration. The annual budgetary process requires the publishing of a legal notice for the public’s information.

Motion: Director Johnson moved to approve the publication of the legal notice. Director O’Brien seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

d. Adoption of Revised Ordinance No. 3, an Ordinance of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Board of Directors Establishing Rules and Regulations Governing Use of District Parks and Facilities and participation in District Programs and Related Resolutions Regarding the Berylwood Skate Plaza – The Staff Report was presented by Tracy Engel, Director of Recreation. Helmets, knee, and elbow pads are required by State Health Safety Codes. There will be no bicycles or motorized vehicles allowed in the Plaza.

Jessica Gesell thanked the Board for putting in the Skate Park. She loves that helmets will be required. They currently skate in Moorpark and lots of kids don’t wear them. She wanted to know how the rules will be enforced. Paranick responded Park Rangers will monitor and give friendly reminders, then move to citations only if needed.
Dennert added he doesn't deserve any more credit than anyone else, he is lucky the Plaza is being completed while he is serving on the Board. He was wondering if there could be special time for bike riders.

Engel responded staff can add events if there is a demand. They have included code of conduct verbiage to help with regulating the rules. Protective gear is required for everyone, even adults.

Dennert suggested possibly supplying helmets in the beginning if someone does not have one.

Freeman recommends larger type and in red for the rule regarding protective gear, as well as an indication there is no age limit for these rules.

Chair Abele requested District Counsel read the Title of Ordinance No. 3 at 8:23pm.

Motion: Director Freeman moved to waive further readings of Ordinance No. 3 by District Counsel. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion: Director Freeman moved to adopt Ordinance No. 3 with the recommend amendments. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion: Director Freeman moved to approve the proposed Skate Plaza Rules signage with the recommended amendments. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

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

e. Election of Candidate to Serve as California Special Districts Association Board of Director's Representative Coastal Network (Seat C) – The Staff Report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Director Freeman suggested Vincent Ferrante, all other Board Members agreed.

Motion: Director Freeman moved to nominate Vincent Ferrante. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.
f. Discussion of Recognition of Former Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District General Manager Jerry L. Gladden - Verbal Report was presented by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Gladden has recently passed and Director Freeman asked this item to be added to the Agenda. She would like the Board to discuss how to honor him. Freeman feels it would be an honor to have a room named for him, he has done so much for the District. Paranick responded possibly the Conference Room in Administration. This could include a plaque with his biography in the room, the family can be invited to the dedication. After discussion, all Board Members agreed this was a good idea. Paranick will have Staff follow-up on this item.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS OF NOTE

Abele was contacted by Supervisor Huber’s Office regarding permits for park activities.

Dennert spoke to the skateboarding community, he wants to be clear he did not mean to take credit for any work done before he was a Board Member. He also communicated with youth softball leagues about possibly running some sports camps.

11. REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Vice Chair Dennert reported the Rim of the Valley Legislation is in the process of approving a massive Bill for funding Parks, he would like to look into the possibility of sending a letter regarding this. Paranick will have this added to a future Agenda. Dennert would like to add the sand volleyball proposal to an upcoming Agenda. He is excited for the Skate Plaza opening. He strongly suggests a pre-opening celebration for the youth who spoke in favor of this project. It would send a message to thank them for participating in the process.

Director Freeman would like to have a letter to Congress drafted and brought back on a future Agenda regarding the Coronavirus relief funding for Special Districts. Freeman provided information to her fellow Board Members regarding the CSDA Legislature Committee Meeting. Freeman suggested the District invite Todd Huber to the Skate Plaza opening. Dennert added Huber has offered to fix and provide tune-ups to skateboards for free, possibly during the opening. Paranick added he and Tracy Engel had planned a large event for the Skate Plaza Opening prior to the Pandemic. He suggested a soft opening and then a larger event down the road when things open up more. Freeman provided an overview of the History of the Arroyo Greenway Project in the event Dennert was not aware. Dennert added he enjoys the Greenway with his family, it is beautiful.

Director O’Brien attended the protest march here in Simi Valley. The event was very peaceful. She had CSDA Fiscal Committee Meeting, they are already close to 100% of dues collected for 2020 which is great. The CSDA Conference for 2020 has been cancelled and they are planning for 2021 now. She also attended Community Action of Ventura County; they have received a lot of donations this year. She walked at the Rancho Santa Susanna Community Center last night, there was a group outside doing line dancing, she was happy to see the Community finding ways to use the parks.

Director Johnson reported the CARPD Virtual Conference was attended by 170 participants. This was a great turnout and they actually made money this year.

Chair Abele attended two Ventura County COVID-19 phone briefings.
12. REPORT BY DISTRICT MANAGER – Comments were provided by Dan Paranick. Great news, the District Audit for 2019-20 came back with no recommendations (for improving procedures) for the 2nd consecutive year. Kudos to Theresa Pennington and her staff, great work. The City Council decided not to move forward with 4th of July fireworks this year. He is looking to plan a Community Event once we are past COVID restrictions. He and Engel are actively working with the Simi Valley School District to add additional After School Club locations. The Beach Volleyball organization has some ambitious plans, this will be on an upcoming Meeting Agenda. The Skate Plaza opening is on track, staff is hoping to have an event planned. Staff is currently working on Phase 3 plans for the Activity Center.

Upcoming Events: there is a Rally for Juneteenth happening tomorrow in Simi Valley.

Future Agenda Items: addition of the 3 After-School Club locations, presentation from the Sand Beach Volleyball organization.

Committee Activity: July 9th the Oak Park Committee Meeting is scheduled via teleconference. However, several Members are wanting to cancel, Paranick will keep the Board apprised.

13. CLOSED SESSION – Chair Abele announced the Meeting to Closed Session at 8:54pm.

Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.95
Claimant: Ben Tavakkoli
Agency Claimed Against: Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District

Chair Abele called the Meeting back to Open Session at 9:01pm and announced the Claim was denied with a 4 to 1 Board vote, Dennert was the dissenting vote.

14. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Abele adjourned the meeting at 9:03pm in honor of former Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District General Manager, Jerry Gladden.