

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: November 5, 2013

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 3C

STAFF: Roger Moellendorf, Parks and Recreation Director

REQUEST: To make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on activities to recognize volunteers and their work.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

At the August 19, 2013 meeting, the Open Space Advisory Committee recommended approval of a plan to recognize volunteers. It was agreed that a program to recognize volunteers is a vital and necessary component of a successful volunteer program.

On October 10, 2013 staff participated in a meeting hosted by the Human Resources Department in order to review a Draft Volunteer/Intern Manual for Supervisors and Coordinators. The City Manager had requested the development of this manual for the review and approval of the Board of Supervisors. The manual is to provide direction to all departments that utilize volunteers. Based on this draft document, staff has prepared the attached plan (Exhibit A).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Move to recommend to the Board of Supervisors activities to recognize volunteers and their work.

Volunteer Recognition Plan - October 21, 2013

The Parks and Recreation Department recognizes that volunteers are an integral part of our programs and operations. It is important to provide for budget and alternatives suited to the recognition of volunteers. The recognition should be tailored to the mission, purpose of the volunteers work, for example use of open space photos to thank open space volunteers is desirable. Similarly the use of a park photo to celebrate park volunteers is also appropriate.

The decision manager in consultation with the Director shall provide for recognition in a manner that does not resemble compensation, through the use of awards, events and/or rewards. These three types of recognition of efforts are described below.

1. Awards

“Awards” are tokens of recognition provided periodically to volunteers/interns, both in a group and one-to-one. Any awards that you are considering must be approved in your department / division / program budget. Coordinators and supervisors must consult with the department head before promising or offering any type of award to a volunteer/intern. This category may include items such as:

- Certificates
- Pins
- Group photographs
- Items of clothing, such as t-shirts, caps, etc.
- Small Gifts
- Personal thank you cards
- Hand-signed birthday cards
- Plaques
- Letter to the volunteer’s family

2. Events

Events are particularly useful in generating a sense of group involvement among volunteers who do not often have opportunity to gather together. This category includes activities such as:

- Lunches, dinners and picnics
- Parties and celebrations
- Field trips
- National Volunteer Week/Month celebration invitation to receive recognition at a meeting of the Open Space Advisory Committee or Board of Supervisors

3. Rewards

“Rewards” are the most intangible day-to-day activities of recognition and motivation that are given to volunteers/interns. It is found that rewards tend to be more effective long-run motivators of volunteers/interns. They include:

- Saying “thank you”
- Giving respect to volunteers/interns
- Involving volunteers/interns in staff meetings.
- Maintaining a professional, personal interest in the volunteer/intern
- Spending time and effort in supervision.
- Giving the volunteer/intern more responsibility where appropriate.