

CARSON CITY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the June 15, 2004 Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Parks and Recreation Commission was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 15, 2004 in the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Chairperson Tom Keeton
Vice Chairperson Donna DePauw
Donna Curtis
John Felesina
Charlene Herst
Pete Livermore
Thomas Patton

STAFF: Scott Fahrenbruch, Acting Parks and Recreation Director
Barbara Singer, Recreation Superintendent
Mitch Ames, Supervisor of Theater Operations
Steve Wolkomir, Internal Auditor
Steve Albertson, Undersheriff
Kathleen King, Recording Secretary

NOTE: A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office and is available for review during regular business hours.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL (1-0007) - Chairperson Keeton called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll was called; a quorum was present. Commissioners Hoffman and McKenna were absent.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (1-0016) - None.

1. ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES - May 18, 2004 (1-0022) - None.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA (1-0032) - None.

3. AGENDA ITEMS:

3-A. TOUR OF THEATER BACKSTAGE (1-0033) - Ms. Singer reviewed the staff report. Chairperson Keeton recessed the meeting at 5:35 p.m. at which time Mr. Ames conducted a tour of the theater. Chairperson Keeton reconvened the meeting at 6:09 p.m.

3-B. UPDATE ONLY ON COMMUNITY CENTER AND THEATER PROJECTS (1-0074) - Mr. Ames responded to questions regarding funding sources for the projects listed in the staff report, and the total amount of funding needed to complete the lighting project, to purchase the orchestra pit cover, and to complete the rigging and curtains project. In response to a further question, Ms. Singer advised that approximately \$187,000 has been spent on the rigging and curtains project to date. Mr. Ames anticipates that the project will be finished under budget. He acknowledged that \$138,000 is available for the orchestra pit cover. He responded to additional questions regarding the lighting project design and cost estimate. In response to a further question, he advised that there is no additional Question #18 funding presently committed to the theater projects. He advised that \$15,000 has been spent to date to fund the lighting

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project preliminary design study. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that a fiscal breakdown would be provided at the next meeting. Commissioner Livermore encouraged staff to consider Convention and Visitors Bureau and other sources of funding. Ms. Singer advised that theater staff has requested a grant writer through the budget process over the past several years, but funding has never been provided. Commissioner Herst offered to provide contact information to staff with regard to grant writing sources. Discussion took place with regard to the sample theater seats, and Chairperson Keeton thanked Mr. Ames for the theater tour.

In response to a question, Ms. Singer distributed historic information on theater improvement projects and their funding sources over the past six years. Mr. Ames responded to additional questions regarding Americans with Disabilities Act compliance in the theater. In response to a question regarding approaching the School District as a possible funding source, Mr. Ames discussed the existing balanced trade arrangement between the Recreation Division and the School District. In response to a question, Ms. Singer advised that the theater is rented to user groups for a fee which is allocated to the City's general fund. Ticket prices are established and collected by the user groups. Mr. Ames responded to additional questions regarding accommodations for disabled or handicapped performers. In response to a further question, he discussed the balcony which was included in the original plans for the theater.

3-C. UPDATE ONLY ON INTERNAL AUDIT OF PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (1-0404) - Mr. Fahrenbruch introduced Mr. Wolkomir, and reviewed the staff report. Commissioner Livermore provided background information on Board of Supervisors direction with regard to this item. Mr. Wolkomir provided an overview of his annual audit plan, and the boards, commissions, and committees ("BCC") audit process, including specific objectives. In response to a question, Mr. Wolkomir advised that he plans to brief the chair of each BCC after the audit process is complete. He clarified that there may be instances where speaking with the chair during the audit process will be necessary. He explained that involving the chair of each BCC in the process would be unmanageable due to the number of BCCs included in the audit. Vice Chairperson DePauw expressed opposition to not including the chair of each BCC in the audit process. Following discussion, she requested Mr. Fahrenbruch to convey her concerns to City Manager Linda Ritter.

In response to a question, Mr. Wolkomir reviewed the anticipated time table of the audit process. He explained that the audit will not be made public until it is completely finalized. He acknowledged that recommendations will most likely be published by the fall of 2004. Commissioner Herst expressed the opinion that the Commissioners should have input into the process, as needed. Mr. Wolkomir advised that the Commissioners will have the opportunity to provide input once the audit report is drafted. He emphasized that he never finalizes audit reports "until everything is agreed to by consensus." Commissioner Livermore provided additional background information on this item, and discussed the Board of Supervisors' plan to evaluate the audit results to ensure the effectiveness of advisory BCCs in the City. Mr. Fahrenbruch acknowledged Vice Chairperson DePauw's concerns, but pointed out that Mr. Wolkomir's audit is "internal." He discussed the importance of consistency in the audit process. He referred to a recent audit of the Parks and Recreation Department Facilities Division, and advised that Mr. Wolkomir will most likely have recommendations over which staff and the BCC chairs will disagree. Ms. Ritter will review all the comments submitted. Mr. Fahrenbruch reiterated that the Commission will have an opportunity to review the audit report before it is published.

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Vice Chairperson DePauw expressed the opinion that the audit time table should be extended in order to accommodate interviews with the chair of each BCC. Mr. Wolkomir discussed his experience as an auditor over the past thirty years, and expressed understanding that there are always two sides to every audit. He assured the Commissioners that both sides will be presented by involving the BCC chairs in reviewing the draft audit report. In response to a question, he explained that he had established, based on research, questions which will be applied to all 21 BCCs. Commissioner Curtis suggested that the Commissioners could review the questions and provide answers, and Mr. Wolkomir agreed. Chairperson Keeton requested Mr. Wolkomir to e-mail the questions to him. Commissioner Livermore expressed confidence in Mr. Wolkomir's ability to conduct the audit fairly. Chairperson Keeton thanked Mr. Wolkomir for his presentation.

3-D. DISCUSSION AND UPDATE ONLY ON THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT'S PARK RANGER PROGRAM (1-1033) - Mr. Fahrenbruch reviewed the staff report and accompanying information included in the agenda materials. He explained one of his main concerns with regard to qualifications that the park ranger be able to protect himself/herself. He provided an overview of the City of Mesa Park Ranger Program, and distributed copies of its Park Ranger Manual to the Commissioners and staff. He commented that the City of Mesa Park Ranger Program is very progressive for non-Peace Officers Standards and Training ("POST") certified rangers.

Mr. Fahrenbruch provided an overview of discussions regarding the possibility of entering into a Memorandum of Understanding between the Parks and Recreation Department and the Sheriff's Office. He reviewed the responsibilities of the park ranger, such as opening/closing gates, meeting with people regarding reservations, overseeing parking issues at special events, etc., and advised that these responsibilities make an MOU impractical. He advised that the Sheriff has agreed to provide back up for a non-POST-certified park ranger, and of his suggestion that a non-POST-certified ranger would have a better rapport with young people.

Mr. Fahrenbruch provided historic information on the origin of the park ranger program. He reviewed funding available for the program, and advised that it is sufficient to hire two non-POST-certified rangers. He discussed a meeting held last Friday, June 11th with City Manager Linda Ritter and Commissioner Livermore, wherein liability concerns were discussed in conjunction with the park ranger responsibilities. Following the meeting, both Mr. Fahrenbruch and Commissioner Livermore were supportive of the non-POST-certified position. He solicited input from the Commissioners with regard to changing the park ranger qualifications to non-POST-certified.

In response to a question, Commissioner Livermore reviewed historic information on the park ranger program, including a study conducted in 1989 which resulted in a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to initially fund a POST-certified park ranger position for a period of six months. He advised of the subsequent ordinance which provides for a POST-certified park ranger position. He expressed the opinion that, because of the commitments made by Sheriff Furlong, a non-POST-certified park ranger would be as effective. He advised that arrests made during the tenure of the former park ranger were in cooperation with the Sheriff's Office. He responded to questions regarding the purpose for funding a POST-certified position at the inception of the park ranger program.

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Commissioner Felesina noted that the park ranger position had been vacant for a period of three months. In response to a question, Undersheriff Albertson advised that Sheriff's deputies have continued to patrol the parks and respond to any calls from citizens or Parks Department staff. Mr. Fahrenbruch commented that the Sheriff's Office has done "a great job" patrolling the parks and the Lone Mountain Cemetery since the former park ranger's retirement. He advised that the only areas not covered are those which would be the responsibility of a non-POST-certified park ranger.

Vice Chairperson DePauw discussed concerns regarding safety issues in City parks and recreation facilities which a non-POST-certified park ranger would be unable to directly address. Commissioner Livermore advised that the Board of Supervisors is not considering a change to the ordinance. He reiterated that Sheriff Furlong has pledged to provide support for the park ranger program. He advised that the program will be monitored and changes made, if necessary. In response to a question regarding reasons Sheriff Furlong was unwilling to supervise a POST-certified park ranger, Undersheriff Albertson listed contractual and training issues. Commissioner Patton expressed a concern that criminal activity will increase at some of the remote parks and recreation facilities if non-POST-certified rangers are hired. Undersheriff Albertson responded to questions regarding protocol for various situations in which the park ranger would be required to make contact with citizens. He acknowledged that the protocol will not change for the non-POST-certified park ranger position.

Vice Chairperson DePauw expressed an additional concern with regard to giving up the funding necessary for a POST-certified position if changes to the program become necessary in the future. Mr. Fahrenbruch provided an overview of the research conducted into the POST/non-POST certified park ranger issue, which included a survey of more than 27 agencies. He reviewed the survey results, and advised that there were no agencies which employ POST-certified officers who report to non-POST-certified personnel. Several agencies had park police who report to the parks and recreation director, but there was always a park police chief, lieutenant, etc. He discussed the liability issues associated with employing a POST-certified park ranger required to report to a non-POST-certified supervisor.

Commissioner Patton expressed the opinion that there is no real benefit to having an armed officer without a compelling need. "More is not necessarily better when it comes to equipping people with deadly force because there is always the potential for misjudgment and liability issues and tragedy." He expressed confidence in the assurances made by Undersheriff Albertson that back up will be available when necessary, and support for moving forward with the non-POST-certified position. [Commissioner Patton left the meeting at 7:45 p.m. A quorum was still present.]

(1-1721) David Morgan expressed confidence in the ability of the Sheriff's deputies to provide back up, and advised that the Sheriff's Office is fully staffed to provide the necessary coverage. He expressed support for hiring two park rangers with the same amount of funding. He discussed the intelligence opportunities provided by the park ranger to Sheriff's Office personnel.

Undersheriff Albertson expressed the opinion that both the Parks Department and the Sheriff's Office will benefit by having two park rangers instead of one. He advised that the Sheriff's deputies patrol the parks during all three shifts, and are present at special events. Commissioner Curtis discussed her experience working at the Sonoma County Administrator's Office. She expressed a concern regarding coverage for the remote canyon areas. Undersheriff Albertson responded to questions regarding the protocol for addressing remote areas. In response to a further question, Undersheriff Albertson advised that arrests at

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parks and recreation facilities have been made by Sheriff's Office personnel. He acknowledged that personal protection would be the main reason to arm a park ranger. Vice Chairperson DePauw reiterated her concerns regarding the park ranger being able to protect himself and citizens in park facilities. Mr. Fahrenbruch acknowledged that there is sufficient funding to hire two park rangers if the POST certification requirement is eliminated. He explained that the park rangers will be responsible for code enforcement, parks and recreation regulations enforcement, and basically the "eyes and ears" in parks and recreation facilities. In response to a question, Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that this matter is an operational issue which will not be reagendaized for action by the Commission. He further advised that he will keep the Commission apprised of the progress of the program.

In response to a question, Undersheriff Albertson advised that the Sheriff's Office reserve program partners with the park ranger program for special events, etc. He reviewed the coverage provided by Sheriff's deputies for parks and recreation facilities. Chairperson Keeton complimented the Sheriff's Office on its general operations and its reserve and volunteer programs. He thanked Undersheriff Albertson for his attendance and participation.

4. NON-ACTION ITEMS:

STATUS REPORT ON QUESTION #18, RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION TAX, AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (1-2140) - None.

STATUS REPORT ON UPDATE OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT TO THE MASTER PLAN (1-2142) - Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that the scope of work will be presented for review and approval by the Board of Supervisors at their June 17th meeting. The consultants will be present at the meeting.

STATUS REPORT ON STATEWIDE BALLOT QUESTION #1 PROGRAM, GRANT APPLICATIONS, AND PROJECTS (1-2152) - None.

STATUS REPORTS AND COMMENTS FROM STAFF (1-2154) - Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that Mr. Krahn will be on vacation until June 29th. He reported that over 100 applications were received for the Parks and Recreation Director position. Human Resources Department staff has advised that most of the applicants are highly qualified. The application period closed June 4th.

STATUS REPORTS AND COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS (1-2172) - Commissioner Herst provided a status report on the "Steps to a Healthier U.S." grant application process. She offered to provide contact information to any Commissioner who wished to submit a letter of support. Commissioner Curtis read into the record a letter published in the June 13th newspaper, and thanked its 11-year-old author for submitting it. She suggested considering the recommendation contained in the letter with regard to naming the bike path. Commissioner Livermore provided a status report on the Youth Sports Association strategic planning process, wherein a code of conduct for all youth sports programs is being developed. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that the code of conduct will be presented to the Commission for review and adoption at the appropriate time.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS (1-2272) - None.

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5. ACTION ON ADJOURNMENT (1-2280) - Commissioner Livermore moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Vice Chairperson DePauw seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0.

The Minutes of the June 15, 2004 meeting of the Carson City Parks and Recreation Commission are so approved this 20th day of July, 2004.

THOMAS N. KEETON, Chair