



SAN BENITO COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Don Kelley Chair District 1	Jim West District 2	Daniel Dungy District 3	Ray Pierce Vice-Chair District 4	Estevan Guzman District 5	Janie Lausten Historical Society	Fred Pagaran Vet's Park	Talia Gonzalez Youth Rep. San Benito HS	Kyle Vallejo Youth Rep San Benito HS
-----------------------------------	------------------------	----------------------------	--	------------------------------	--	----------------------------	---	--

San Benito County Board Chamber – 481 4th Street, Hollister, CA 95023

REGULAR MEETING ACTION MINUTES January 20, 2009

1. Call To Order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Don Kelley

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Don Kelley.

1.2 Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Don Kelley, Ray Pierce, Jim West, Janie Lausten, Daniel Dungy, Fred Pagaran, Talia Gonzalez, and Estevan Guzman (arrived at 5:35).

Commissioners Absent: Kyle Vallejo.

Staff Present: Janelle Cox, Acting Public Works Administrator; Loretta Smith, Staff Analyst; Ken Nattell, Facilities & Grounds Manager; and Kathy McShane, Secretary I.

1.3 Acknowledge Certificate of Posting

The agenda was posted on January 15, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. at the San Benito County Free Library, San Benito County Courthouse, and San Benito County Administration Building.

2. Public Comment

Jim Ingram, San Benito County Fish and Game Commission, thanked Chairman Kelley for attending the last Fish & Game meeting and briefing them on the activities and projects the Parks and Recreation Commission is working on. He also stated that he hoped to establish a good working relationship between the two Commissions. He gave a brief history of the Fish & Game Commission, stating they give written recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, and that he looked forward to working with the Parks and Rec Commission.

Lisette Knight, Associate Planner for San Benito County, said she would be attending future Parks and Rec Commission meetings. The Commissioners has requested that the Planning staff forward projects that have parks or recreation elements in them to the Parks and Recreation Commission for their review and approval.

Commissioner Pagaran brought up the Hernandez Dam issue, and asked if anyone had researched it. Chairman Kelley said he had spoken to a contact at the Department of the Interior about this, and he would be getting a more formal response back soon on the public access at Hernandez Dam. Chairman Kelley said that if this was to be included in the Master Plan, we should have a full understanding of the original agreement.

3. Staff Announcements

3.1 Form 700, Statement of Economic Interest

Loretta Smith, Staff Analyst, has spoken with the County Counsel about whether this Commission was required to complete this form. Staff's conclusion was that, because this Commission is an advisory body, this form is not required. The concern is that it could discourage someone from wanting to serve on the Commission at a future date. A discussion followed as to the purpose for disclosure. Several Commissioners preferred full disclosure so as to appear financially "transparent" and above board. With the majority of Commissioners in favor of completing Form 700, Chairman Kelley called for a motion requesting a Resolution from the Board of Supervisors that this form be required of the Parks and Rec Commissioners.

Commissioner West made a motion to request a Resolution from the Board of Supervisors that the Parks and Recreation Commission complete the Statement of Economic Interest, Form 700, on an annual basis. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pierce. The motion carried with a vote of seven in favor and one opposed, Commissioner Guzman.

4. Commission Announcements

Chairman Kelley welcomed Estevan Guzman and Jim West back to the Commission for another four years. He extended his appreciation for everyone in attendance and their dedication. Commissioner West also welcomed Don Kelley back to the Commission for another four years.

5. Consent Items

Approve minutes of December 16, 2008 meeting

Commissioner Pierce made a motion to approve the minutes of December 18, 2008. The motion was seconded by Commissioner West, and passed unanimously.

6. Discussion Items

6.1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Commissioner Pierce said, because this was a new Commission, he would like it noted on the record that a new Chair and Vice Chair be voted in January each year. Commissioner West felt February would be a better month in case there were new Supervisors appointed who might not appoint their new Commissioners until January. It was agreed by consensus that new officers would be elected in February each year.

Chairman Kelley opened the floor to nominations for Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Pierce nominated Don Kelley as Chair for another year. Chairman Kelley asked for a consensus on the nomination, in case anyone else was interested in serving; no one expressed interest.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner West, and passed unanimously.

Commissioner West nominated Commissioner Pierce as Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dungy, and passed unanimously.

Janelle Cox asked whether the Commission wished to rotate the Vice Chair into the Chair's position each year as the Supervisors do. Commissioner Pierce preferred to keep the choices open so anyone could be the elected Chair; the other Commissioners agreed.

6.2 Discussion and Recommendation on Regional Park Project

Janelle Cox reported that two Commissioners have been working with the community to investigate the potential for a regional park closer to town than has been discussed in the past. In order to proceed, staff needs the support of this Commission, and will forward the item to the Board of Supervisors. With Board approval and identified funding, the project would then be added to the Capital Improvement Program budget. As no funding exists for this project, it requires further discussion for the budget. Janelle distributed maps of the proposed park to the Commissioners. The Commissioners gathered around the table to better view the maps.

Chairman Kelley led the discussion explaining how the project would play an integral part of the River Parkway project. The response from the involved property owners regarding the 'open space' has been well received according to Commissioners Kelley and Pierce. Commissioner Pierce described the project in greater detail and how the landowners are affected by the proposed project. Land acquired for this project would be through land donations or acquisition. Eminent domain proceedings are not a part of the proposal for the Regional Park. Janelle said there was \$1.5 million available for the River Parkway project that could be used to purchase property.

There was a discussion on Westside Boulevard as it relates to this proposed park. Lissette Knight spoke about Westside Boulevard and its inclusion in the Hollister General Plan.

Chair Kelley said if the Commission was in favor of the concept for this project, a motion in support was necessary for this to go forward to the Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Pierce made a motion to approve the Regional Park Project in concept, and to forward it to the Board of Supervisors for their review and approval. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Guzman, and unanimously approved.

6.3 Discussion and recommendation on Parks Project Review Procedures

At the September 2008 Parks and Rec Commission meeting, staff was directed to send a letter to the Planning Commission requesting that this Commission be permitted to review park projects. The letter was sent, but no response has been received at this time.

Staff has now written an initial procedure to have the two Commissions meet to develop the policies and procedures for reviewing projects.

A sub-committee of the Parks and Rec Commission should be formed and begin the development of this policy with the Planning Department. The policy will then come back to this Commission for adoption.

Don Kelley, Janelle Cox, Loretta Smith, Lissette Knight, and the Planning Director, Art Henriques, met and developed criteria for this procedure. Janelle reviewed the elements of the initial five procedures. The next step is to contact to County Counsel about the Parks and Recreation Commissions' level of authority, and how formal recommendations would be brought forward to the Board of Supervisors.

Chairman Kelley gave a brief history of how this item came about. He then asked for volunteers for the sub-committee. The sub-committee will consist of Ray Pierce, Jim West, Daniel Dungy, and Don Kelley. Commissioner Pierce asked Lissette Knight to bring an example of a park project that had not been well received to the sub-committee meeting; she agreed.

6.4 Per Capita Grant Funding

Loretta Smith stated that the funding for all Proposition 40 related projects has been suspended by the State of California, and we have no indication as to when the money will be restored. Janelle said the letter attached to the staff report was about hardships that would be caused by this suspension of funds. Staff sent a letter to the State about the Spring Grove School project, and that we had already committed \$450,000 to fund this. Staff has not yet gotten a response from the State, but will keep the Commission apprised of the decision.

6.5 County Counsel Legal Opinion regarding Park Impact Fees and Land Donation

Janelle Cox referred to a report that summarized the question asked of County Counsel on Park Impact Fees, along with the Resolution establishing the fees and a list of projects supported by the fee. She reviewed the questions asked of County Counsel and their reply. There is about \$2.8 million in the Park Impact Fee fund right now, and the Commission should review the projects they would like to complete.

Commissioner Dungy asked if the County would have to own the land for these projects; Janelle said yes, unless the ordinance was changed. Chairman Kelley asked if money not used could be re-allocated to another project. Janelle said she did not think so, and in fact, unused funds might have to be returned. However, since most projects go over their budgeted amount, that would probably not be an issue. There is an adequate fund balance at this time to go ahead with the Regional Park project if the Commission so desires.

7. Parks and Recreation Master Plan Task Force

7.1 Master Plan Update

Elke Ikea, the Consultant for Bellinger Foster Steinmetz, distributed individual copies of the revised map and displayed a larger map for everyone to follow. The Commissioners

surrounded the table to better view the map. Elke said the main change from the last version was the arrows, which now pointed to starting and ending points only. She explained the areas on the map, which also showed existing trails and proposed projects.

Commissioner Pierce objected to projects designated as “proposed” on the Master Plan Map because it appeared to validate or show approval of the project by this Commission. Commissioner Guzman disagreed, stating it clearly showed the projects were proposed, and that was the purpose of the legend on the map. A lengthy discussion followed with suggestions on both points of view.

The Commissioners resumed their seats on the dias. Elke reviewed the **Findings**. The Commissioners asked that named organizations be removed from the plan so as not to preclude any group. The Commission also asked that no specific ethnic group be cited in the plan as it might offend those not included. Elke said she would take out specific references and keep the plan broader in its scope.

The ownership/control of Vet’s Park was discussed. Lisette Knight said Veterans Memorial Park was owned by the County, but its use was shared with the City and several athletic leagues. It cannot be sold or given to the City, or the ownership would revert back to the original owners.

(Commissioner Talia Gonzalez left the meeting at 7:48 p.m.)

Elke addressed the **Capital Recommendations and Costs**. She reviewed the short-term project costs, such as existing park improvements and walking trails. She also reviewed the long-term project costs, such as the San Benito River Parkway and camping facilities. The Commissioners made several suggested changes to the proposed projects and the funding for each. The Commissioners questioned some of the costs associated with the projects, and Elke explained the justification for the costs.

There was a discussion about the future of Veterans Memorial Park, and the long range plan for it. Elke said the Master Plan for Veteran’s Park does not resemble its current state. Chairman Kelley requested that the Veteran’s Park Commission be invited to attend the Focus Group meeting in order to provide input as to what they envision for Vet’s Park 20 years from now.

The Historical Park was also discussed, including the existing improvements and those planned for the future. Drinkable water is a big issue at the park and addressing this would open up a whole list of projects that could be implemented. Money is allocated in the Master Plan for improvements at Historical Park.

7.2 Focus Group Questionnaire

Elke reviewed the two questionnaires that will be distributed at the Focus Group meeting. One set of questions was designed for schools, and the other for sports and aquatic groups. The questions will help guide the preparation of the Master Plan as it applies to facility usage in the County. The deadline for submitting the surveys is February 6, 2009,

either by e-mail or mail to Janelle Cox, or depositing them in the collection box the night of the Focus Group meeting.

7.3 Focus Group Meeting on Tuesday, January 27 at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Chambers

The meeting's intent is to gain feedback from the community about existing conditions and shortfalls in County facilities so the feedback can be incorporated into the Master Plan.

8. Adjournment:

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner West, seconded by Commissioner Pierce, and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on February 17, 2009.