

# PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

June 8, 2018

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## MINUTES

1. Call to Order – 8:36 am
2. OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK
  - None
3. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS ON ANY ITEM NOT ON TODAY'S AGENDA
  - Committee Member Hutsel announced that the SDRPF closed on another 40-acre acquisition. The Foundation now owns little more than 2,200 acres of land.
  - Committee Member Spaeth mentioned that the two eagles at Bandy Canyon have successfully fledged.
  - Committee Member Groenewold announced that the Gas & Steam Engine Museum is completing renovations on two buildings. The Museum will hold an auction on July 29<sup>th</sup>; Groenewold will bring flyers to the next PAC meeting.
  - Chairman Goad read in the U-T that San Diego came in third in an international biodiversity competition. Committee Member McCoy and Committee Member Hutsel discussed how the competition holds little merit as it was based on naturalists submitting nature observations online. McCoy claimed that San Diego is easily the most diverse area in the country because of its many environmental zones.
  - Committee Member McCoy discussed further on the balance of protecting land and increased land development. He would like an agenda item for the next PAC meeting to discuss the MSCP and understand how it works on local, state, and federal levels. DPR Assistant Director Hilton mentioned that in April, an annual MSCP report was released, which includes detailed information on preservation and habitat. The report is available on DPR's website. Hilton also mentioned that every year, DPR and partners provide a MSCP workshop, and that will be coming up this summer. DPR will be sure to notify PAC members in advance.
4. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 11, 2018 MINUTES  
MOTION TO APPROVE THE MAY 11, 2018 MINUTES WITH COMMENTS AND REVIEW –  
Chairman Doug
  - Committee Member Spaeth requested clarification of the term “sunset spending”. Committee Member Hutsel clarified that the term refers to how the PLDO funds are required to be spent within a specific time period.
  - Committee Member Long motioned to approve; Committee Member Hutsel seconded.ALL IN FAVOR – 6 – 0 – 0
5. PLDO & CSA FUND BALANCE REPORTS
  - Assistant Director Hilton answered a question from the minutes regarding SYNC's \$1.5M budget increase. She explained that the cost proposals came in higher than expected, but DPR was able to secure enough funding to award the project. DPR also received a grant for \$275K from State Parks to enhance outdoor educational exhibits.

- Committee Member Spaeth expressed his concern further for the 79 highway block of the Coast-to-Crest trail connecting Santa Ysabel East and West. Hilton commented that a connection has been identified as a future project on DPR's one-time funding list and capital needs assessment. It is projected for the FY20-21 budget.

## 6. DEPARTMENT REPORT – Assistant Director, Renee Hilton

- Assistant Director Hilton commented on upcoming summer events, which is DPR's busiest season. Summer events include hikes, kayak tours, star parties, wild life events, and outdoor cooking classes all across the County. Hilton encouraged PAC members to stay updated with DPR's subscriber-based e-blast.
- Summer Movies in the Park kicked off May 19<sup>th</sup> and will host movies through October.
- DPR completed and closed all grants for the TJRV Mesa Trails & Restoration Project. The grants totaled more than \$2M.
- Upcoming Board Hearings
  - June 20 – Bike Skills Park at Sweetwater Regional
  - June 27 – Comprehensive PLDO Update
  - July 11 – Sweetwater Community Garden
  - End of July – two acquisitions
- Committee Member Spaeth asked about the process for submitting property to be considered for land acquisition. Hilton advised to contact Mary Niez if desiring DPR to review a property. Emails to Director Albright or Hilton are welcome, to ensure that the property was indeed looked at, keeping in mind that there are many different factors to analyzing and considering land for acquisition.
- Committee Member Hutsel expressed a desire to fill the D1 vacancy as he resides in that district now. He will speak directly with Supervisor Cox.
- Committee Member McCoy inquired about the status of the Land and Water Conservancy funding for TJRV. Hilton said the LWCF is still an active program as they have accepted applications from DPR; however she is unsure of whether the LWCF has granted any funds in last few months

## 7. FISCAL YEAR 18-19 BUDGET OVERVIEW – Theresa Vargas

- Assistant Director Hilton introduced Theresa Vargas, DPR's Budget Manager. Budget hearings will occur June 11-20. The Budget presentation will be on June 13<sup>th</sup> at 9am; the Budget Deliberation and Adoption will be on June 26<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. All proposed budget info is available online.
- During her presentation, Vargas explained that DPR is recommending a FY18-19 budget increase by 14% (\$5.5M). The increase will mostly cover salary and benefits from labor negotiations, as well as expanded and new park facilities and programs.
- Revenue is expected to increase due to increased park use. Fees are not set to increase at this time
- Vargas reviewed one-time funded projects, as well as 21 new capital projects. Hilton commented that this was a very good budget year for DPR, especially in receiving funds for one-time funded projects; now DPR can look forward to executing the projects.
- Chairman Goad asked, since DPR will not be raising fees, is there a concern about inflation or increased mortgage rates. Hilton explained that DPR does an annual review to make sure fees received is meeting cost recovery. DPR made the decision not to increase fees because they are expecting greater visitation and want to ensure fees stay affordable to all.

- Committee Member Hutsel asked if there is a “wish list” of projects that the PAC can consider or advocate for. Hilton mentioned that DPR has been very fortunate with the ability to expand programs and increase staff. She feels that DPR has been fairly funded. The PAC members wondered if it would be helpful to take a position on the budget proposal; Hilton answered that it is always beneficial to show support from the PAC.
- MOTION TO ENDORSE AND APPROVE DPR FY18-19 BUDGET  
Committee Member Groenewold motioned; Committee Member Hutsel seconded.  
ALL IN FAVOR 6 – 0 – 0
- Hilton also mentioned that the County produced an Op-Plan video, and DPR was featured, showcasing volunteers and recreational programs. She encouraged the PAC members to view it.
- Committee Member Spaeth inquired about the process for starting a project without a pledge for full funding. For example, can someone provide seed money for DPR to look into a project, such as a trail or fencing improvement, to see if it would be successful? Hilton mentioned that DPR does use staff and volunteers to do some trail improvements, but for significant projects, it must go through the process.

## 8. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Committee Member Groenewold mentioned that there is progress on the Rail Trail, and it is now up to Vista. The trail will eventually end up right by the Gas & Steam Engine Museum. Groenewold asked if there are plans to connect to the San Luis Rey Trail. DPR will provide updates on San Luis Rey, River Park, and the trails within as a future agenda item.

ADJOURNMENT – 9:38 A.M.

### ATTENDEES:

Doug Goad, Chair District 3

Ed Spaeth, District 2

Rod Groenewold, District 5

Bert Long, District 3

Rob Hutsel, District 4

Mike McCoy, District 1

Renee Hilton, County of San Diego Parks and Recreation

Theresa Vargas, County of San Diego Parks and Recreation

Joanne Emerick, County of San Diego Parks and Recreation