

Recreation and Parks Department
Board of Community Services
October 22, 2008 – Minutes

1. Call to Order
Chairperson Lawson called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. at the Finley Community Center in Santa Rosa, California.
2. Roll Call
Present: Brown, Costa, Lawson, Martell, Regalia, Schwinn
Absent: Bañuelos
3. Public Comments – None
4. Approval of Minutes
Motion made by Martell, seconded by Regalia, to approve the minutes of September 24, 2008, as written. Motion passed unanimously.
5. Approval of Agenda
Richardson asked to add an item regarding a November 6, 2008, public meeting when the Taylor Mountain Interim Public Access Permit Program will be discussed. Motion made by Regalia, seconded by Costa to accept the agenda modified to include the Taylor Mountain public meeting under Item 6.2. Motion passed unanimously.
6. Scheduled Items
 - 6.1 Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force Status Report
Richardson introduced a team of city staff, community members and nonprofit organization members who are delivering programs on behalf of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force, including Teen Council, California Youth Outreach and Hope Works. He then introduced Lt. Ernesto Olivares, current coordinator of the City's Gang Prevention/Intervention program. Olivares gave background to Santa Rosa's plan, pointing out it is one of the few such integrated and comprehensive plans in the state and is now being used as a model by the National League of Cities. He commented that elements of the plan were instrumental in Santa Rosa being named an All America City. His report included details on the following facets of the plan:
 - Emphasis on building capacity to enable local agencies and nonprofits to better address gang issues through maximizing best use of funding, identifying current needs and making the best matches between needs and resources
 - Current move to expand programs to where the youth live, asking providers to be willing to go into schools to provide services
 - Incorporating health issues for youth into programs wherever possible
 - The Mayor's Gang Task Force, which includes over 40 members, is beginning to be duplicated in neighborhood cities
 - Continued work to improve the public education portion and input
 - Interest from service clubs, like the local Rotary club who recently donated funds and also expressed the desire to be involved in youth programs

- The Operation Team's commitment to develop action plans for short term action

Olivares then introduced Ellen Bailey, Recreation Supervisor, who distributed and reviewed the Santa Rosa CHOICE Evaluation Report for the first reporting cycle (Dec. 1, 2006 to June 30, 2008).

Participants spoke on behalf of programs such as MAYi and California Youth Outreach and how it has impacted their lives, specifically in areas like developing friendships and improving study habits. Steve Velasquez introduced a recent parolee who is receiving assistance to get back on the right track. He described a new partnership with a conservation corp which hires at risk young people and helps them toward earning their GED.

Olivares then introduced Georgia Pedgrift, the City's graffiti expert who presented an educational PowerPoint on graffiti. The main points were 1) Tagger graffiti; 2) Tag bangers; 3) Gang graffiti trends; and 4) What can we do.

Boardmember Brown asked about use of surveillance equipment for recurring problem spots. Pedgrift replied the high quality equipment that is available is very expensive. Grants are being explored for possible purchase. She felt it could be an important tool in identifying taggers.

The Board inquired regarding repercussions for offenders. Pedgrift explained that is a real problem in that legal repercussions are often not enforced or with minimal results. It is her hope that the City will begin a program where convicted offenders are required to do clean up.

Olivares then introduced Erica Bosque, advisor, and two members of the Teen Council who described the Teen Council's restructuring to include an emphasis on gang prevention/intervention. They are raising funds to travel to Santa Rosa's sister city in Mexico to perform volunteer work projects and gang education. Also planned is an event called the Battle of the Bands.

Olivares closed by talking about shared accountability among the many groups involved and the importance of keeping the community engaged as it is going to take ongoing education, commitment and cooperation to resolve gang issues.

6.2 Staff Reports

Proposed General Plan Amendment. Richardson reported that on September 30, 2008, the Council deliberated on the proposed Recreation and Parks General Plan amendment. The Council expressed concerns regarding park classifications, focusing specifically on Public Gathering Areas, maintenance and acquisition. He stated they were struggling with many of the same issues this Board has worked through regarding the policy of creating public gathering areas, and whether they should be "encouraged" or "required." Council continued discussion to November 18th.

Taylor Mountain Public Meeting. Richardson outlined that on November 6, 2008, the Sonoma County Agriculture and Open Space District (SCAPOS) will conduct a public meeting on the Taylor Mountain Interim Public Access Plan. The meeting will be held at Sonoma Academy at the end of Kawana Springs Road. The Interim Plan will focus on how the SCAPOS, Sonoma County Regional Parks Department (Regional parks), City of Santa Rosa Recreation and Parks Department (City Parks), and LandPaths are collaborating to provide interim public access to Taylor Mountain. This proposed project involves development of a permit program, including orientation, certification, and stewardship, that would be implemented by LandPaths. The Sonoma County Regional Parks Department would provide ranger patrols for the project area, and City Parks would allow construction of an interim parking area on a portion of the future Kawana Community Park site, near the trailhead for Taylor Mountain. The permit program would allow access to Taylor Mountain, while Regional Parks develops a long-term master plan for the site (to be completed over the next two years).

The draft Taylor Mountain Interim Access Plan will be presented to the Board of Community Services at their December 10, 2008, meeting. Options for construction of an interim parking area at the future Kawana Community Park site will be presented for the Board's review.

7. Chairperson's and Boardmembers' Reports

7.1 Date for November/December Meeting

Because of the holidays, Board members agreed to combine the November and December meetings into one meeting on Wednesday, December 10, 4 p.m. in the Manzanita Room at Finley Community Center.

7.2 Committee Reports

Art in Public Places Committee. Richardson reported the Arts District Master Plan Council item has been continued until sometime in late November.

Santa Rosa Waterways Advisory Committee. No meeting was held. Brown commented that several months ago the Committee walked the Prince Greenway with police officers who stated their greatest frustration was the difficulty of apprehending people committing major crime. They end up citing for misdemeanors which require a lot of staff time and often result in few, if any, repercussions. Brown encouraged Board members to talk with their respective Council members to use their influence toward more forceful legal responses.

Church of One Tree. The platform is being constructed at this time.

A Place to Play Task Force. Costa reported the October 3rd meeting was held at the site.

The pump station should be complete in about six weeks. Work continues on three fields and installing irrigation. If financially feasible sod will be installed.

The next phase is planned to be parking lots and lake landscaping.

Merit Awards Committee. Martell announced the event will be held on November 10th at 7 pm. at Council Chambers.

Play Equipment Committee. Richardson reported the Steele Lane Park equipment is under construction.

Senior Center. No report at this time.

Report on Mayor's Luncheon. Lawson reported discussions focused on the City's budget issues.

Other Reports

Lawson referenced the field dedication event for Mike Martini, scheduled on October 30th, 4:30 p.m., at A Place to Play.

Lawson reported he attended the Westend Neighborhood's recent Full Moon walking tour and enjoyed it very much. It was well planned and entertaining, with over 100 participants.

Schwinn reported the Santa Rosa Mother's Club publication included information on the City's proposed budget cuts and asked members to encourage Council to include public safety participation in sharing the financial burden.

8. Future Agenda Items

- 8.1 Impacts of revised North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board permit process
- 8.2 Budget Reduction Proposals and Impacts
- 8.3 Roseland Community Park
- 8.4 Bennett Valley Golf course

9. Written Communications

- 9.1 Impacts of Draft Storm Water Permit, memo and Executive Summary
This will be a scheduled report item at the December 10th meeting.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10, 2008, at 4 p.m. in the Manzanita Room at the Finley Community Center. This is a combined November/December meeting.

Craig Lawson, Chairperson

Meredith Strom, Recording Secretary