

Sonoma County  
Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission

DATE: Monday, November 17, 2008      PLACE: PRMD Conference Room  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, California

1.    **Call to Order**

Commissioner Bill Trowbridge called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

2.    **Pledge of Allegiance**

Commissioner Karen Collins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.    **Roll Call**

Commissioners Present: Bill Trowbridge, John Mills, Karen Collins and Bill Wheeler  
Commissioners Absent: Yancey Forest-Knowles

4.    **Acceptance of Minutes**

5.    **Comments from the Public**

Chris Melville, organizer of the FANWAR games and Jo Bentz, parent of Jeffrey Herr, thanked the Commissioners and Jim McCray, Park Operations Manager, for their efforts in supporting the FANWAR games. They presented a photo of the happy group of players to the Commissioners. This year will be a great season and they really appreciate the use of our Parks.

Commissioner Trowbridge asked if there were any accidents or complaints received from the public.

Mr. Melville said no.

6.    **Comments from Commissioners**

Commissioner Mills said that the Tolay Fall Festival gets better every year. It was well organized and received great exit survey results. The Foundation Board hosted a luncheon during the last Sunday to show appreciation for their donors.

Commissioner Mills said that the Landpaths docent program is so well organized that Parks should try to model their docent training after it.

Commissioner Collins asked whether any Kenwood Gazebo fundraising is taking place.

Ms. Burns said not at this time. The department is waiting to get its Deputy Director in place.

It was noted that applications to join the Regional Parks Foundation Board are located on the website.

Commissioner Trowbridge commended Mary Clemens, Environmental Discovery Center Coordinator, on the great job she does organizing education programs at the Tolay Fall Festival.

**7. Director's Report**

Ms. Burns shared that story of two young girls attending the festival who were not having the best time until they learned how to make a candle to light and help bring their dad home from Iraq.

Ms. Burns said that the Deputy Director selection' process will soon be completed and a new deputy announced.

The Planning Division has a new face. Roana Tirado has joined the department as a Park Planning Technician and will work on design.

The new Board of Supervisors should soon be announced and the transition will soon begin.

Tolay Update: The Tolay Cannon Lane issue will go to the Board of Supervisors tomorrow. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document goes to the Board on December 9.

**8. Action Items**

None.

**9. Reports and Division Updates**

- Environmental Discovery Center Report

Mary Clemens, Environmental Discovery Center (EDC) Coordinator, stated that she has the "best job in the world". The center is launching its new program "Rockin & Recycling". The program is at capacity.

In keeping up with economic trends toward higher gas prices and bus costs, the EDC created a new program called "Science to Go", which started in September. The concept is to bring a trained naturalist to school campuses (Roseland, Lincoln and Kawana schools) for an afternoon program based on one of the existing 11 programs. The Regional Parks Foundation Board pays for students to attend through scholarships.

A Regional Parks' goal is to expand outreach programs in schools. Ms. Delos and Ms. Clemens have been working on writing grants to pay for scholarships.

The November 12th edition of the North Bay Bohemian wrote a really inspiring article about the Environmental Discovery Center that deserves reading. (The article was written by Patricia Dines after an interview with the center's "Indio Coffelt".)

- Tolay Update

Ms. Clemens updated the Commission on October's Fall Festival at Tolay. "The third time is the charm" said Ms. Clemens. The creation of a passport book for children that was stamped and then redeemed at the end of the day's visit was a huge success and helped create some organization.

Events included:

Building of Tule Boat with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria

A snake wrestling grandma

A creepy cockroach petting zoo

It was estimated that at least 15,000 attended the festival. John Ryan, our Volunteer Coordinator, did a spectacular job training all 150 volunteers.

- Aquatics Update

David Robinson, Aquatics Specialist, said that he too loves his job at Parks. He receives excellent support. "Vamos a Nadar" was delivered to almost 273 Hispanic children and their parents.

The first Jr. Lifeguard camp was held at Spring Lake. It was created to educate children on water safety and was a joint project by Parks and the City of Santa Rosa Recreation, Redwood Coast Lifesaving Association and the American Red Cross. 30 attended the first camp and it was sold out in 2 weeks.

Ms. Robinson and his group of lifeguards won a major lifeguard competition again.

Spring Lake lifeguards made 11 rescues and 1,000 contacts.

- Disc Golf Update

Jim McCray, Park Operations Manager, said the Board adopted the Master Plan for Crane Creek Regional Park in 1992 and approved the layout for a disc golf course. A meeting was held in 2006 to review the proposed project. United Flyers of Sonoma is a non-profit organization that will construct, operate and maintain the course. This project is going forward and will be brought to the Board of Supervisors tomorrow. Parks will work to resolve and minimize any conflicts with other user groups, i.e. equestrians, environmental groups, etc.

- Taylor Mountain Update

Todd Holmes, Park Planning Manager, said that the Open Space District is moving forward with the interim access program for Taylor Mountain. Currently, a volunteer patrol walks the site. The interim access plan will allow the public to walk the land. The plan was rolled out at a meeting with about 80 in attendance. Concern was expressed at the meeting by equestrians and bicyclists. They would like to model the process that was used during the Tolay interim plan and have stake-holder meetings held with user groups.

More information will be brought to the Commission at a later date. Lots of compliments were received about the Regional Parks department and the trust and credibility that they have built with the community during the Tolay planning process.

Commissioner Mills said that consideration should be given to working with the Landpaths organization.

Commissioner Trowbridge asked if Taylor Mountain was purchased.

The purchase price was \$18 million dollars.

**10. Adjournment**

Adjourned at 6:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Laura Cordes, Executive Secretary