

CARSON CITY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the July 18, 2000 Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Parks and Recreation Commission was held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 18, 2000 in the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Vice Chairperson Glen Martel

Jim Dunn

Ken Elverum

Larry Osborne

Jon Plank

Stacie Wilke

Charles Wright

STAFF: Steve Kastens, Parks and Recreation Director

Scott Fahrenbruch, Parks Superintendent

Molly Sinnott, Contract Urban Forester

Kathleen King, Recording Secretary

(PRC 07/18/00; Tape 1-0001)

NOTE: Unless indicated otherwise, each item was introduced by Vice Chairperson Martel. A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office and is available for review and inspection during regular business hours.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL (1-0001) - Vice Chairperson Martel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll call was taken; a quorum was present. Chairperson Simms and Commissioner Cabrera were absent.

ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES (1-0005) - None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (1-0015) - None.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. ANNUAL CARSON CITY RAILROAD ASSOCIATION MILLS PARK TRAIN REPORT (1-0021) - As representatives of the Carson City Railroad Association were not yet present at the meeting, Mr. Kastens recommended addressing this item later in the evening. (1-1112) Mr. Kastens advised that this item would be reagendaized for the August meeting.

2. ACTION ON REQUEST TO ALLOW DOGS AT MAYOR'S PARK (1-0024) - Mr. Kastens reviewed the staff report. Victoria Williams distributed photographs of the "park user" (her dog). She discussed amenities added to the park once the City assumed its management, explained the park's dual use as a retention basin, and described the use of the park by area residents. She advised of support for her proposal from area neighbors, including Robert Holt, who has used the park for four years, and provided examples of cooperation among the users. She expressed the opinion that major use of the park seems to be right before and after regular business hours, and discussed how use of the park changed once the "No

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Dogs' signs were posted. She displayed a pooper scooper sample and a photograph of the stand from Fuji Park, and proposed that two stands be installed at Mayor's Park. She expressed appreciation for Mr. Kastens' recommendation to allow use of the park by dog owners for a one-year trial basis, and suggested allowing specific time periods for dogs to be off their leash.

Commissioner Osborne expressed support for the proposal with the specific condition that dogs remain on their leashes at all times. Commissioner Plank suggested allowing dogs to be off their leashes at certain times of the day. He pointed out that the neighborhood lots are not large enough to support appropriate exercise for large dogs. He supported the proposal as long as no conflict with scheduled youth sports activities exists, and as long as unleashed dogs would not be allowed to disturb other people or other dogs in the area. He suggested that the park users should enforce the rules, and commented that a dog owner should be more liable than the City in case of a problem. Mr. Kastens advised that he had not specifically discussed the matter with Risk Management; however, the City does have a leash law. He commented that the arrangement at the Fairgrounds has worked out well with very few problems. He attributes this to the large turf area. The problems experienced at Riverview Park seem to stem from the fact that people are mostly confined to the trails system. He agreed with Commissioner Plank that dog feces and biting are owner issues. Unfortunately, the City is obligated to have rules and regulations which generally apply only to a small percentage of park users. Staff always hopes that the users will be responsible; however, the City is required to be responsible if the users are not. He commented that a specific time period to allow dogs off their leashes may be a better solution than asking people to put their dog on a leash when other people are around.

Ms. Williams advised that people who walk their dogs at Mayor's Park are very responsible toward one another and toward each other's dogs. She suggested that allowing dogs off their leashes could be done on a trial basis as well. In response to a question, Ms. Williams advised that she and her husband use the park to exercise their dogs. If dogs are not allowed off the leash, they would have to take their dogs somewhere else. Commissioner Plank expressed support for a trial period of allowing dogs off their leashes during specified times. He suggested that violators and abusers could be banned from the park. Mr. Kastens indicated that the leash requirement will be difficult for the park ranger to enforce, and stated that the park users will also need to be involved in enforcement. He advised that the hours of 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. are typically scheduled for youth sports activities. Ms. Williams advised that many people walk their dogs before work. Commissioner Elverum discussed his use of Riverview Park to exercise his dogs. He pointed out that requiring a leash at all times is no different than walking a dog on the sidewalk. He expressed support for allowing dogs to be off their leashes for a trial period.

(1-0511) Mayor Masayko expressed agreement with the compromise proposed by Commissioner Plank, and urged the Commission to support the request. He suggested that this issue will come up again once the Shenandoah Detention Basin is sodded. (1-0577) Terry Carlson discussed the need for dogs to be able to exercise. She pointed out the senior citizens perspective as related to her by an elderly aunt.

In response to a question, Mr. Kastens advised that the off leash hours at the Fairgrounds consist of a couple hours in the afternoon and a couple hours in the evening. The Fairgrounds don't have the organized users that Mayor's Park does. He agreed with Ms. Williams' suggestion to allow dogs to be off their

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leashes during the early morning hours. Commissioner Wright suggested two two-hour time frames - 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Commissioner Dunn expressed concern over setting a precedent for other neighborhood parks. He suggested scheduling another meeting to allow additional public input. Commissioner Plank suggested that Mayor's Park is unique in that it is smaller, rectangular in shape, used principally by the neighbors in the area, and therefore easier to police. He expressed understanding for Commissioner Dunn's concerns, but commented that since Mayor's Park is used by the neighbors in the general area, the rules could be better enforced. In response to a question, Mr. Kastens acknowledged that Mayor's Park is one of the few neighborhood parks which does not have playground equipment. This is part of the reason staff supported the request on a trial basis because, without the playground equipment, the park doesn't attract as many children. He suggested that the trial basis may be a good way to develop a history for similar future requests. Commissioner Osborne suggested that specific hours would be easier to enforce, and requested that Mr. Kastens provide quarterly status reports if the proposal is approved. Mr. Kastens acknowledged that set hours would be easier for staff to enforce. It will also provide notice to other park users that there will be certain times when dogs will be off their leashes. Commissioner Dunn read CCMC 1302.090(2) into the record and inquired as to whether or not the Commission's recommendation would require Board of Supervisors approval. Mr. Kastens acknowledged that he will submit the recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for review.

Commissioner Plank moved to allow a one-year trial period, with quarterly reports to the Parks and Recreation Commission and a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for this one year, that staff work with the neighbors and other users of Mayor's Park to establish hours that dogs could be loose in the park and leash times that are required, and that pooper scoopers be provided at the site with the restriction that they must be used and ask that there be neighborhood policing on this issue, the same folks who establish the hours, and that nothing else be done in any other parks until this one-year trial period is over with to see how it works out. Commissioner Osborne expressed a concern over precluding anyone else from bringing a similar request for a different park. **Commissioner Wright seconded the motion with the amendment suggested by Commissioner Osborne. Commissioner Plank rescinded the condition precluding any similar requests. Commissioner Wright continued his second. Motion carried 6-1-2-0.**

3. ACTION ON PROPOSAL BY STAFF AND THE SHADE TREE COUNCIL FOR ARBORETUM CONCEPT FOR MILLS PARK (1-0811) - Mr. Kastens advised that Parks Planner Vern Krahn and Urban Forester Consultant Molly Sinnott had developed the proposal. He reviewed the staff report and discussed the proposal. Mr. Fahrenbruch explained that the trees planned for the arboretum would have been planted anyway as they were funded through residential construction tax. The Shade Tree Council was presented with a request to approve the concept of an arboretum. He explained the general concept of an arboretum, and discussed possible ways to tour the park and identify the trees. He mentioned that Ms. Sinnott deserves most of the credit for the proposal because it was her original idea. Mr. Krahn and Ms. Sinnott developed the idea and presented it to the Shade Tree Council, which supported the concept unanimously. Mr. Fahrenbruch introduced Sally Zola, Chairperson of the Shade Tree Council, who was present to answer questions.

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Commissioner Plank expressed support for the idea as the cottonwood trees are diminishing and becoming more dangerous. He commented that this is an opportunity to do something a little different than “just stick trees in the park,” and that the educational aspect would extend to residents who are interested in learning about what to do at home. Mr. Kastens explained that there had previously been no plan for the funding. Parks staff has been replacing trees throughout Mills Park on a random basis; however, replacing the cottonwood canopy in this way would be preferred. Commissioner Plank inquired as to any possibility of replacing some of the cottonwood trees with cottonwood trees to keep a small population in the park. Mr. Kastens acknowledged that the southeast end of the park would be included in the plan. Commissioner Plank requested that Roy Trenowith be included in the task force, and Mr. Kastens agreed with the suggestion.

Commissioner Elverum inquired as to whether the arboretum would be limited to only trees. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised of the dictionary definition of arboretum. He indicated that, at this point in time since funding for trees is available, the plan is to strategically plant trees to provide an educational benefit at the same time Mills Park is reforested. Commissioner Plank inquired as to the under story tree canopy referenced in the June 21st memorandum included in the agenda materials. Mr. Kastens explained that the “over story” consists of the existing cottonwoods, some of which are 60-70’ tall. The under story would be created by the new trees. Mr. Fahrenbruch explained that 74 trees have been removed in the last five years. The proposal is to systematically remove the cottonwoods which are “on borrowed time” and create an under layer of trees to replace the cottonwoods. Commissioner Plank reiterated his earlier request that consideration be given to replacing some of the cottonwoods with cottonwoods or something similar. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that City Parks staff, Public Works staff, and the Shade Tree Council members have recommended that cottonwoods not be planted in Carson City. He discussed the numerous problems inherent with cottonwood trees.

Commissioner Osborne expressed appreciation for the proposal to develop a task force to determine the types of trees for the arboretum. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that staff is requesting two Commissioners to participate in the task force. **Commissioner Osborne moved to approve the use of previously allocated residential construction tax funds and budgeted quality of life funds for the landscaping improvements at the east end of Mills Park and to develop a final tree planting scheme for the continuation of the visual character of Mills Park and to create a community arboretum within the entire boundary of Mills Park, and to establish a task force which would include those members as outlined in the [June 21st] memorandum as well as at least two members of the Parks and Recreation Commission and one member of the public. Member Plank seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0.** Mr. Kastens requested volunteers, and Commissioners Dunn and Plank volunteered to serve on the task force.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS (1-1119) - None.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS (1-1120) - Commissioner Wilke inquired as to whether the Sunset Park merry-go-round will be replaced. Mr.

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Fahrenbruch explained the reasons for removing the merry-go-round, and advised that a replacement is being considered.

Vice Chairperson Martel inquired as to staff's interaction with Kevin Law regarding his proposal for a BMX track. Mr. Kastens advised that he had spoken with Mr. Law, who was leaving town for the summer and indicated that his father would be in contact with Mr. Kastens. Mr. Kastens will follow up on this matter.

STATUS REPORTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS (1-1148) - None.

COMMENTS AND STATUS REPORTS FROM STAFF (1-1150) - Mr. Fahrenbruch reported that the City and the Brewery Arts Center ("BAC") Council applied for a project grant through the Nevada Arts Council to do a mural. The application was denied; however, a smaller mural project will be done in conjunction with the JOIN program. A theme and a site are being considered. The Parks Department has provided operating funding with the stipulation that once a theme is decided upon, the site be located in a neighborhood park. BAC Executive Director Joe McCarthy and JOIN representatives are working together with kids involved in BAC programs and a professional artist hired by the BAC. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that one of the sites being considered is Ross Gold Park. Consensus of the Commission was to schedule a special meeting to allow for public input prior to beginning the project.

STATUS REPORT ON QUESTION #18, RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION TAX, AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT (1-1219) - Mr. Kastens reported that the Wungnema House project is progressing well. The graffiti on the exterior and interior of the house has been successfully removed. He commented on the unique stone work of the fireplace.

With regard to the aquatic facility, Mr. Kastens advised that mediation was concluded with recommendations for concessions by the City and by the contractor. As Mr. Kastens had not yet received any official notice from the contractor, he met with the district attorney to request his involvement in the matter. Mr. Kastens advised that an eight-page report, outlining the deficiencies associated with the water slide, was submitted following an inspection by the company's representatives. The water slide company's representatives were in agreement with Mr. Kastens' position to not allow the slide to be opened. He will continue to work with the district attorney's staff to pursue a conclusion to the entire matter.

ADJOURNMENT (1-1271) - Commissioner Osborne moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m. Commissioner Elverum seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0.

The Minutes of the July 18, 2000 meeting of the Carson City Parks and Recreation Commission are so approved this _____ day of August, 2000.

JOHN SIMMS, Chairperson