

# **CARSON CITY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

## **Minutes of the July 1, 2008 Meeting**

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Parks and Recreation Commission was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 1, 2008 in the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Donna Curtis  
Vice Chairperson Pete Livermore  
Tom Keeton  
Steve Lasco  
John McKenna  
Kathryn Shabi

**STAFF:** Roger Moellendorf, Parks and Recreation Department Director  
Scott Fahrenbruch, Parks and Recreation Director of Operations  
Juan Guzman, Open Space / Property Manager  
Kathleen King, Recording Secretary

**NOTE:** A recording of these proceedings, the commission's agenda materials, and any written comments or documentation provided to the recording secretary during the meeting are public record, on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office. These materials are available for review during regular business hours.

**CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (5:35:13)** - Chairperson Curtis called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Roll was called; a quorum was present. Commissioners Adams, Smolenski, and Westergard were absent.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (5:35:44)** - None.

**1. ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES - March 4, 2008 and June 3, 2008 (5:35:52)** - Commissioner Keeton moved to accept the minutes, as presented. Commissioner McKenna seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

**2. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA (5:36:19)** - None.

**3. STAFF UPDATES:**

**3-A. C-SCAPE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN RENOVATION PROJECT (5:36:41)** - Mr. Fahrenbruch provided a status report on the renovation project which he described as "well underway." Western Environments was hired as the contractor and University of Nevada Cooperative Extension staff are serving as project partners. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that the first phase of the project, including grading, irrigation installation, and planting various trees and shrubs, is estimated to cost \$25,000. Funding will be sought for the second phase of the project. Mr. Fahrenbruch reviewed the first phase project time line, and anticipates it will be completed by July 11<sup>th</sup>. He expressed the hope that the Shade Tree Council will consider the site for next year's Arbor Day Ceremony. In response to a question, he advised that the contractor is well qualified and that Contract Arborist Molly Sinnott is supervising the project. In response to a further question, he discussed the project design. In response to a further question, he advised that residential construction tax, the capital improvements program, and the Quality of Life program are options for funding phase 2 of the project.

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**3-B. ADDITIONAL STAFF UPDATES (5:40:50)** - Mr. Moellendorf distributed to the commissioners a *Hello Carson City* announcement, advertising the Downtown Farmers Market at the Curry Street Promenade. He advised of having attended the first event last Saturday, and described it as a “smashing success.”

Mr. Moellendorf referred to photocopies of an article from *Athletic Business Magazine*, included as “FYI” items in the agenda materials, featuring photographs of recreation centers designed by Architect Brent Tippetts of Valentiner Crane. He noted that the recreation center designed by Mr. Tippetts and constructed in Bountiful, Utah was featured on the front cover of the magazine. He commended Mr. Tippetts on the national recognition “for the fine work he does in designing recreation centers.”

Mr. Moellendorf announced Recreation Superintendent Barbara Singer’s retirement, effective July 17<sup>th</sup>. He advised that Ms. Singer has worked in the Recreation Division for many years. He speculated that even Ms. Singer wouldn’t know or understand the extent of the “impact she’s had on the City and how she’s touched the lives of a lot of people in our community through the development and administration of programs ...” He noted, as an example, the Latch Key program, which has “become one of our basic, bedrock programs and provides a lot of great services for a lot of families in our community.” He commended Ms. Singer, congratulated her on her service to the City, and wished her well in retirement. He encouraged the commissioners and staff to congratulate her as well. Chairperson Curtis expressed the opinion that Ms. Singer will leave “a rather large hole, not only just with parks and recreation, but she’s been involved in the Wellness Coalition and also the WE CAN.” Chairperson Curtis thanked Mr. Moellendorf and Mr. Fahrenbruch for their reports.

#### **4. NON-ACTION ITEMS:**

**4-A. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING DESIGNATING SMOKE FREE AREAS AROUND PLAYGROUNDS IN CITY PARKS (5:44:59)** - Chairperson Curtis introduced this item. Commissioner Shabi distributed to the commissioners and staff a list of discussion points, and copies of articles she had compiled with regard to this item. She provided background information on her interest in implementing a policy, and reviewed the discussion points.

Mr. Fahrenbruch reviewed the staff report, and advised that the city park rangers are encouraged to issue littering citations to any person leaving cigarette butts on the ground in a park facility. He referred to Carson City Municipal Code Title 13, which prohibits littering in park facilities. He advised there are no ordinances against smoking, and that an amendment to Title 13 would be required. He discussed the issue of enforcement in light of recent staff reductions. He advised that the possibility of banning smoking at Governor’s Field and the Edmonds Sports Complex was presented to the Youth Sports Association a few years ago. The issue “died a slow death” because of the inability of staff to enforce such a ban. He suggested the possibility of installing signage requesting smokers to refrain from smoking within twenty feet of any playground area. In reference to some of the points discussed by Commissioner Shabi, he noted the difficulty associated with “legislating bad parents.” He referred to the September 6, 2005 commission minutes, included in the agenda materials as Exhibit A. He reiterated that the “litter aspect” of the smoking issue is enforced. He advised that smoking areas have been created at certain City park facilities, and noted the area designated just east of the Wungnema House, as an example. Appropriate receptacles are provided for designated smoking areas.

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(5:55:55) Nevada State Health Division Chronic Disease Section Manager Charlene Herst read a prepared summary statement into the record, and reviewed corresponding statistical information.

Chairperson Curtis reviewed results of a *Nevada Appeal* poll with regard to banning smoking at park playgrounds. She noted that the poll had the third highest number of responses for the last twelve polls conducted by the *Nevada Appeal*. She suggested this would indicate community support for implementation of a policy. Vice Chairperson Livermore commended Commissioner Shabi on bringing the proposal for discussion. He provided additional information with regard to the Youth Sports Association's consideration of the issue, and discussed various aspects of enforcement.

In response to a question, Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that alcohol is allowed in certain parks, except in glass containers. Alcohol is prohibited at Governor's Field. Mr. Fahrenbruch discussed enforcement priorities, including littering, alcohol, glass containers, dogs in parks, etc. He advised that smoking could be prohibited in City parks, but reiterated "it's just one more thing that staff and the park rangers have to deal with." He questioned the availability of staff time and resources. Mr. Moellendorf advised that beer is sold as a concession at Centennial Park. Cigarettes are not sold, however. Mr. Moellendorf agreed that the proposal is commendable in the spirit of promoting health, safety, and park cleanliness. He shared the enforcement concern, and agreed with the suggestion to consider a voluntary measure as a first step.

(6:07:55) Ms. Herst expressed the opinion that the voluntary approach based on signage "will be self-enforced." She advised that the issue had been discussed earlier in the day at a Wellness Coalition meeting, and offered their assistance.

Chairperson Curtis verified that the Wellness Coalition had offered funding for signage. She displayed conceptual signage and reviewed the verbiage. Mr. Fahrenbruch described the conceptual signage as "entirely appropriate," and expressed the opinion that no ordinance would be required to enforce it. The park rangers and staff could request compliance, and Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that the park rangers can remove a person from a park for any reason. With the commission's approval, he suggested installing signage at one or all City park playgrounds on a trial basis.

Commissioner Lasco commended the proposal, and agreed with concerns over enforcement. He expressed agreement with approaching the issue from a voluntary perspective, including the installation of signage. He anticipated that most people would respect the signage, and offered proposed language. In response to a question, Mr. Fahrenbruch advised of never having received a smoking complaint associated with a City park facility. Commissioner McKenna expressed concern over infringing on personal rights. He advised that the *Nevada Appeal* poll "has no basis in fact" and that participants can cast as many votes as they like. He expressed the opinion that existing laws are adequate and enforceable. He expressed no opposition to the proposed signage in cooperation with a citizens group, as an unenforceable, health-related issue. He expressed reticence over "creating more rules that cannot be enforced which lead people to have more confusion as to what are the purpose of laws." Chairperson Curtis advised of having spoken with Commissioner Smolenski, who agreed with the voluntary approach as a first step. She discussed the societal assumption over the personal right to smoke, and noted that society is just beginning to realize personal rights "not to have to deal with it." She noted a consensus to go forward with the volunteer approach based on signage, and offered to accept the Wellness Coalition's assistance. Mr. Fahrenbruch requested Chairperson Curtis to submit proposed signage for review. Discussion took place regarding the purpose of this item, and the history of the issue as pertinent to this commission.

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In reference to a previous comment regarding the September 6, 2005 minutes (Exhibit A), Mr. Fahrenbruch clarified that the commission chair had requested the District Attorney's representative to research the possibility of creating a voluntary policy for smoke-free parks. He further clarified that the discussion at this meeting was indicative of giving consideration to installing signage encouraging people to refrain from smoking within a certain distance of City park playgrounds. Commissioner Shabi noted "clearly defined lines" around most playground areas in the form of some kind of border. She advised of originally having considered prohibiting smoking within a certain distance of a playground, but suggested a good start would be "in the playground itself." She expressed understanding for the need to avoid infringing on individual rights, but the belief that "it's our responsibility as both the parks commission and as parents to ... give our kids a chance." She discussed the "Children's Lungs At Play" campaign as part of her research. Vice Chairperson Livermore reviewed comments from an article he provided Commissioner Shabi. He noted the well-placed article in the *Nevada Appeal* which "generated the volume of response whether scientific or not. People took the time to do something with it." He advised of not having received much positive feedback "that this is really a ... crucial need right now." He suggested that the impetus should be promotion of community wellness and the benefits of not smoking.

Mr. Moellendorf noted that the subject item had been agendized for discussion only, and cautioned the commissioners against deliberating toward a decision. He expressed appreciation for the interesting discussion, and advised that staff would consider alternatives. He expressed support for considering a volunteer approach using signage. Commissioner Lasco offered to design proposed signage, and Mr. Moellendorf referred him to Mr. Fahrenbruch. Chairperson Curtis thanked Ms. Herst.

**4-B. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING THE FEASIBILITY OF PLACING RECYCLING RECEPTACLES IN CITY PARKS (6:27:10)** - Chairperson Curtis introduced this item, and expressed appreciation for Commissioner Shabi requesting to agendize this and the previous item. Commissioner Shabi provided background information, and Mr. Fahrenbruch reviewed the staff report. In response to a question, he advised that neither the City of Reno nor the City of Sparks had a recycling program in the parks. Commissioner McKenna discussed the solid waste diversion legislation passed in California several years ago. Mr. Moellendorf advised that, outside of similar legislation enacted in Nevada, recycling bins would not be placed in City parks. The Parks Department does not have sufficient staff. Commissioner Shabi thanked staff for considering the possibility.

**4-C. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE SILVER SADDLE RANCH AND RIVER CORRIDOR PROPERTIES DESIGN CHARRETTE (6:33:32)** - Chairperson Curtis introduced this item. Mr. Guzman reviewed the staff report and attachments, in conjunction with displayed maps. Chairperson Curtis discussed her involvement in the charrette process, and expressed appreciation for the format and the accomplishments. Mr. Guzman advised that participants in the charrette process were representative of the entire community. He discussed his participation in the charrette process. Vice Chairperson Livermore advised that the Carson Water Subconservancy District recently presented the regional floodplain management plan to the Board of Supervisors. He discussed the importance of maintaining the floodplain. He discussed concerns over comments from the charrette and workshop indicating opposition to commercial activity and large events in the area, in light of the growing population. Discussion followed, and Commissioner McKenna suggested clarifying between Edmonds and Fairview Drives in the report. He expressed concern over comments indicating rehabilitation of trails at the lower crest of Prison Hill. He expressed support for improving trails to City standards where "City people are going to be walking." He advised that Prison Hill has undeveloped trails which "is like being

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in a wilderness area in the middle of town.” He expressed support for maintaining as many opportunities for physical recreation as possible, and “as we get to the flatter areas maybe get to civilized standards. As we get to the harder-to-reach ... distance area, ... less civilized standards for trails; don’t pave them, don’t make them 40-foot wide ...” He advised of the Tahoe Rim Trail standard for “babies and strollers” within a mile of the kiosk. Beyond that is a single-track, 12 to 18-inch wide trail with rocks, designed for more wilderness experience. Commissioner McKenna suggested considering natural resource protection to accommodate burning once every twenty years, especially on the west side of Prison Hill. He further suggested that trail planning should consider natural fire breaks on the higher west side. He advised this will dramatically reduce the cost of fire fighting and provide for maintenance of a wilderness experience for future generations.

Chairperson Curtis called for public comment. (6:51:10) Jim Alexander, of the Northern Nevada Gated Horse Club, advised of having been involved with the Silver Saddle Ranch and of having participated in the charrette process. He discussed community support in the form of volunteer groups willing to help maintain the area.

Chairperson Curtis thanked Mr. Guzman for his presentation. Mr. Guzman advised that the charrette report will be presented to the commission once it is finalized. He thanked all the charrette participants; the community residents as well as the professionals.

#### 5. ACTION ITEMS:

**5-A. ACTION TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVAL OF NEW FEES AND CHARGES FOR THE CARSON CITY FAIRGROUNDS (7:02:29)** - Chairperson Curtis introduced this item. Mr. Moellendorf reviewed the staff report and the attached exhibits. In response to a question, he explained the statutory authority and the mechanism of the business impact statement. He advised of plans to schedule the business impact public hearing on the first Tuesday in August. Chairperson Curtis inquired as to the possibility of scheduling the business impact public hearing as part of a regular commission meeting. Mr. Moellendorf expressed concern over the statutory requirements for the business impact public hearing. He acknowledged the commissioners could attend the public hearing, and offered to post a notice of possible quorum. Vice Chairperson Livermore provided historic information on the business impact statement legislation, and discussed the importance of holding separate public hearings for the business impact statement and the commission’s discussion of fees and charges. Mr. Moellendorf agreed, and advised that fees would be presented to the commission in addition to scheduling a public hearing to “gauge the business impact.” He expressed understanding for Chairperson Curtis’ suggestion, and offered to check with the District Attorney’s office. Chairperson Curtis suggested scheduling the business impact public hearing prior to the commission meeting at which fees will be presented.

In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf explained the difference between day and event rates. He expressed the belief that event rates have not been covering direct costs. Converting to day rates will be easier to monitor and ensure that direct costs are more adequately covered. Commissioner McKenna suggested rounding the proposed fees up to the nearest five or ten dollar figure. In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf described various types of private events which have closed park facilities to the public. He reviewed the language of paragraph 5 of the Resolution Changing Existing or Adding New Fee Policies, included in the agenda materials as Exhibit B. He reviewed the Proposed Fees for the Carson City

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Fairgrounds - 2008, included in the agenda materials as Exhibit A. Vice Chairperson Livermore commended Mr. Moellendorf on the “hard work” invested in development of the proposed fees. He suggested designating a standard fee and allowing for discounts “depending upon the criteria.” He discussed a previous arrangement to provide credit to users who volunteered at the Fairgrounds facility, and suggested considering continuation of this arrangement.

(7:18:45) With regard to the proposed day rate, Mr. Alexander inquired as to whether any consideration had been given to a half-day minimum rate. He responded to questions of clarification. Mr. Moellendorf advised that a half-day rate had been considered, and acknowledged the benefit of setting up the afternoon before an event. He advised that setting up in the arena would likely preclude anyone else from the using the facility for a full day. Mr. Alexander described a past practice of setting up for an event in consultation with Reservation Coordinator Gail Schroeder in order to avoid conflict with another event. Mr. Moellendorf emphasized that this item was pertinent to fairgrounds arena fees only. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised that one reason for eliminating the half-day minimum rate was “it would take staff to determine whether it was a half day or full day.” The initial discussion was up to four hours would be charged as a half day; past four hours would be charged as a full day. It was determined, however, that staff would be required to monitor the amount of time. Mr. Fahrenbruch noted the expectation of the new fairgrounds to generate revenue. The half-day minimum option would require the City to forego the possibility of renting the facility for a full day. Mr. Fahrenbruch reviewed the requirement to reserve City park facilities thirty days prior to a special event. If a facility wasn’t reserved thirty days prior, City staff would work with the event coordinator, who would not be charged as long as no staff time is expended. Mr. Moellendorf discussed the impacts of half-day events on parks maintenance staff. He noted that the fairgrounds arena is “completely different ... than what we’ve had in the past.” He anticipates the fairgrounds arena will be more in demand than ever before. In reference to earlier comments, he advised that the proposed fee schedule is “much simplified and pared down” than before and much simpler to administer. Vice Chairperson Livermore circulated among the commissioners an invoice for a recent theater event, and reviewed the same. In response to a comment, Mr. Moellendorf advised that staff will be available for events, but the actual costs will be charged to the event coordinator.

(7:30:36) Mr. Alexander discussed the differences between having and not having a resident caretaker, and differences in access to the arena facility based on the new design. He discussed the practice of booking facilities annually in advance. He expressed no opposition to the proposed fees, and commended Parks and Recreation Department staff on “trying to hold down the cost to the users.” In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf advised that resident status is determined based on the physical address of the organization. Extensive discussion ensued. In response to a further question, Mr. Moellendorf described the future location of the small barn. He advised that, by prior agreement, the fairgrounds facility will be available to the Carson City School District and the 4-H Clubs without charge. In response to a question, he described the Parks staff maintenance responsibilities. Mr. Alexander suggested requiring the users to clean out the stalls and pile the debris at the end of the barn to reduce staff’s maintenance responsibility.

Chairperson Curtis thanked Mr. Alexander for his attendance and participation. She expressed the hope that the transition to the new fairgrounds will be beneficial to all the users. In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf reviewed the cancellation policy. Chairperson Curtis called for additional questions or comments and, when none were forthcoming, entertained a motion. **Commissioner McKenna moved to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of new fees and charges for the Carson City Fairgrounds. Commissioner Keeton seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.**

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**6. COMMISSIONERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION**

(6:54:57) - In response to a question regarding a letter to the editor of the *Nevada Appeal*, Mr. Moellendorf advised that Mr. Fahrenbruch had inspected Ross Gold Park and found trash in the pond and an unsightly appearance in places. He advised that the condition of the park wasn't as bad as Mr. Fahrenbruch had been led to believe after reading the letter. He further advised that the condition of the park was a direct result of reductions in maintenance staff. He anticipates additional complaints in the future, and commented on the embarrassment that Parks staff experienced after having read the letter. In light of budget and staff reductions, he advised that the main focus will be safety followed by aesthetics. Mr. Fahrenbruch advised of having contacted Ms. Bishop, the author of the letter, explaining what he had observed. He expressed concern over Ms. Bishop's experience at the park, but echoed Mr. Moellendorf's comments that staff and budget reductions will have an impact. He assured the commissioners, and advised that he had assured Ms. Bishop, that Ross Gold Park pond cleanings will be regularly scheduled. He further advised that Parks staff will meet with Public Works Department staff to consider rectification of water quality issues. He explained that the Ross Gold Park pond is stagnant, and that the electric aerators installed several years ago are relatively ineffective at maintaining water quality. Chairperson Curtis advised of an offer, by former commissioner Charlene Herst, to form a volunteer group of area residents to help maintain the park. Vice Chairperson Livermore advised of having recently visited the park, and noted there is no way to limit the number of waterfowl in the park. He advised of occasions when geese have been trapped and relocated. He further noted there is no way to limit the number of people that feed the ducks and geese. He discussed various attempts to improve the water quality of the pond over the years. He acknowledged the need for resources to be allocated to the park, and expressed the hope that funding will become available. Chairperson Curtis suggested considering the park in light of the parks and recreation master plan element implementation strategies.

(7:46:27) Chairperson Curtis announced the next dog park meeting, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Monday, July 7<sup>th</sup> in the Community Center Bonanza Room. Vice Chairperson Livermore advised that a recent protest at the Nevada State Legislature had nothing to do with the Carson City Youth Sports Association. Commissioner McKenna advised that the Carson High School track and field facility is nearly complete. He anticipates it will be the best artificial turf facility in northern Nevada. In response to a question, he advised that the first football game is scheduled for August 29<sup>th</sup>.

**7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS** (7:48:22) - Chairperson Curtis advised that the next commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>.

**8. ACTION ON ADJOURNMENT** (7:49:50) - Vice Chairperson Livermore moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. Commissioner Lasco seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

The Minutes of the July 1, 2008 Carson City Parks and Recreation Commission meeting are so approved this 19<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2008.

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DONNA J. CURTIS, Chair