

**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 26, 2009
SAN LUIS OBISPO VETERANS HALL
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA**

Commissioners Present: Rick Mathews, Paul Teixeira (Chair), Deanne Gonzales and Bruce Hilton

Commissioners Absent: Pandora Nash-Karner

Staff Present: Pete Jenny and Jan Di Leo

Other Staff: None

Call to Order: 6:00 p.m.

OPENING

1. Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comment. Kathy Longacre noted: (a) Vineyard Dog Park opened on February 14, 2009; (b) there are new draft maps of Santa Margarita Lake Regional Park; (c) Central Coast Mountain Bikers will be hosting a training course on March 13, 2009; (d) Friends of Lopez paid \$6,000 recently to have trout planted at Lopez Lake; and (e) SLOPOST is in favor of allocating \$500,000 for the Wild Cherry Canyon project.

3. Commissioner Comments. Commissioner Mathews indicated he was glad to see everyone at the Commissioner Workshop on February 21st. He also noted he had with him this evening a booklet with pictures of the Veteran's Memorial in Atascadero if anyone would like to take a look. He mentioned the SLO Botanic Garden is attempting to obtain a grant for a fire safe demonstration garden. **Commissioner Hilton** noted he was enjoying getting out and looking at parks and trails. He has been talking to some of the people on the Santa Margarita Advisory Committee about the proposed trail on Santa Margarita Ranch (located north of the community). He enjoyed the Commissioner's Workshop and lighthouse tour. He attended AVAC in February. **Commissioner Gonzales** indicated she has an interest in finding funds for park maintenance. She plans to go out and see some of the trails. She noted there is some talk about forming a conservation district in the County. The district would purchase agricultural land and could also address maintenance and development of parks. She is interested in following this and seeing where it goes. She also enjoyed the Commissioner's workshop. **Commissioner Teixeira** thanked Pete Jenny and Nick Franco for putting the Commissioner's Workshop together. He noted restoration and preservation work at the lighthouse was very impressive. He recently met with Dana Adobe members. The Adobe's educational grant program has a commitment for roughly 800 kids. He noted that Ken Klis had received recognition at the Board for a

cost saving idea. He went to the SLO Botanical Garden on Valentine's Day. He was impressed with the work the garden has accomplished and encouraged people to go out there.

- 4. Approve minutes of December 10 and January 22 meetings.** Motion to approve December 10th and January 22nd, 2009 minutes was made by **Commissioner Mathews**, seconded by **Commissioner Gonzales**. Motion approved 4-0.

STAFF REPORTS

- 5. Trails Committee Report.** Kathy Longacre reported: (a) the Harmony Headlind Trail is now open; (b) the gate has been repaired at the Hi Ridge Trail connection at Lopez Lake; (c) the Trails Committee once again has a representative from Nipomo; and (d) Ride Nipomo's trail maintenance seems to be going well on the Knollwood and Calender Grove trails.
- 6. Deputy Director-Parks' Report.** Jenny reported: (a) an update on the Park's budget; (b) there are currently 4 ranger vacancies and Parks has approval to fill one vacancy; (c) he will be retiring soon, and is developing a "need to do list" for items where his background knowledge would be helpful; (d) the proposed name change for Avila Park was not supported by AVAC and the proposal has been withdrawn; (e) Parks completed a seismic retrofit of the Rios Caledonia Adobe this month – the Friends of the Adobe have now moved back in; (f) approximately 800 trees have been planted at Morro Bay Golf Course with grant funds; (g) County Parks is working on two projects that will require an EIR, i.e., the Nipomo Park Master Plan and the Morro Bay to Cayucos Connector Project – the EIR prices are coming in largely between \$150,000 and \$200,000; (h) rangers at Lopez Lake will be recognized at the Board of Supervisors for saving a camp host's life.

BUSINESS ITEMS

- 7. Consideration of funding recommendation to Board of Supervisor toward acquisition of property in Wild Cherry Canyon for addition to Montaña de Oro State Park.** Jenny provided an introduction to the item and then introduced Kara Blakeslee from the American Land Conservancy (ALC). Blakeslee furnished background on the project and the financial support to date. She noted ALC is very close to the \$24 million necessary to buy the property. Currently there is a \$3 million gap. After Blakeslee's comments, **Commissioner Teixeira** opened the item for public comment. The following people provided comments in favor of spending \$500,000 in Public Facility Fees (PFF) for the purchase of Wild Cherry Canyon: (a) Steven Marks, Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, (b) Nick Franco, California State Parks, (c) Susan Devine, Legislative Assistant to Adam Hill, (d) Greg Bettencourt, a member of the Cayucos Advisory Council, the County's Trails Committee, and Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers, (e) Chris Barret, from Arroyo Grande, (f) Steve McGrath, Harbor Manager – Port SLO, speaking for the Harbor Board. The following people spoke against the County providing \$500,000 in PFF for the acquisition of Wild Cherry

Canyon: (a) Jim Harrison, from Nipomo, (b) Mike Eisner, from Nipomo, (c) Harry Walls, from Nipomo.

The Commission asked Blakeslee questions and then a discussion occurred regarding Commission concerns and recommendations. **Motion: Commissioner Hilton** moved to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the County contribute \$500,000 of PFF funds toward the acquisition of Wild Cherry Canyon. The motion was seconded by **Commissioner Mathews**, and carried by a 3 to 1 vote, with **Commissioner Gonzales** voting no.

8. **Discussion of Annual Report to Board of Supervisors.** Jenny recommended continuing this item since **Commission Nash-Karner** has been coordinating the report but was not present. There was Commission consensus to table this item to the Commission's March 2009 meeting.
9. **Discussion of Trails Committee mission and makeup.** Jenny handed out to the Commission information on the Trails Committee. He noted that when trail plans were being prepared, the Committee played an important advisory role in where trails we desired. Today their work is largely assisting with helping staff maintain what we have. Maybe the goal is to give them fresh marching orders. **Jenny** recommended that this item be continued to next month because **Kathy Longacre** had to leave tonight's meeting early. There was Commission consensus to table this item to the Commission's March 2009 meeting.
10. **Scheduling of Commission's annual retreat and spring field trip.** Jenny noted the Commission's retreat usually occurs in March or April. After some discussion, the Commission decided they would go north and visit the Rios Caledonia Adobe, Chalk Mountain Golf Course, and Santa Margarita Lake Regional Park. Possible dates for the retreat are April 10th (first pick), April 4th, or April 25th. There was Commission consensus to table this item to the Commission's March 2009 meeting when **Commissioner Nash-Karner** would be available to provide input.
11. **Approve letters of donation.** There was Commission consensus to table this item to the Commission's March 2009 meeting.
12. **Adjourn meeting.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.