

**TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY
PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES**

TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2011

CALL TO ORDER by Chair Evans at 4:02

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by Commissioner Harman

ROLL CALL Commissioners present: Commissioner Evans, Commissioner Collins, Commissioner Silver, Commissioner Harman, Vice Chair Kraemer arrived a few minutes late.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Action Motion: **Move to approve the agenda of the August 9, 2011
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Commission meeting.**

Move: Harman 2nd: Collins Vote: 4-0-0-1

CONSENT AGENDA

**2. MINUTES OF PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING
JUNE 14, 2011**

Recommendation: **Approve minutes as presented.**

3. MUSEUM REPORT

Recommendation: **Move to receive and file the Museum report for
June and July 2011**

4. RECREATION REPORT

Recommendation: **Move to receive and file the Recreation report for
June and July 2011**

All items listed on the consent calendar are considered to be routine or non-controversial matters. The items listed on the consent calendar may be enacted by one motion and a second. There will be no separate discussion of the consent calendar items unless a member of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Commission or Town Staff requests discussion on specific consent calendar items at the beginning of the meeting.

Action Motion: **Move to approve Consent Agenda items 2-4**

Move: Collins 2nd: Silver Vote: 5-0-0-0

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

STAFF REPORTS

5. FEE WAIVER REQUEST- MORONGO BASIN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Director Schooler reported on a request from Morongo Basin Amateur Radio Club. The group is requesting a waiver of fees for the use of a small meeting room once a month. Under Council direction the Commission has authority to review waiver request and interpret the guidelines. Because of the assistance the group provides to the Town in emergency situations, this request seems to fall under provision #3: service provided that replaces the need for the Town to provide such services.

John Campbell spoke on behalf of the group. Mr. Campbell stated that the club services the community when there is a need or an emergency. They also provide their services for local parades like Veterans' Day and the Grubstake Day, along with helping the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Hi Desert Medical Center and the Marine Base Emergency Center.

Action

Motion: **Move to waive the facility use fees for a small room once a month for the meetings of the Morongo Basin Amateur Radio Club.**

Move: Kraemer

2nd Harman

Vote: 5-0-0-0

6. SKATE PLAZA PRESENTATION

Director Schooler reported about an issue brought to staff's attention by a local skateboard advocate regarding a program that provides funding and development of skate plaza facilities. Staff met with Shayn Kearns and Jaysen Niesen along with several others in June regarding the condition of the Community Center Skate Park and the need for upgraded facilities.

Shayn Kearns stated that he is from this area, has had a tough life, and that music and skating have helped him cope. Mr. Kearns has been in contact with the Rob Dyrdek Foundation about some opportunities to improve or replace the skate park in Yucca Valley. According to Mr. Kearns, the foundation has the resources and expertise to design and construct a new skate plaza in Yucca Valley at no cost to the Town. To initiate a formal conversation between the community and the Dyrdek Foundation, Mr. Kearns has requested that the town provide a letter indicating an interest in exploring this opportunity further.

Director Schooler clarified that the foundation is looking for a letter of interest, not a letter of intent at this time.

Action

Motion: **Commissioner Harman moved to recommend that the Town provide a letter of interest regarding a program that would finance a skate plaza in Yucca Valley.**

Move: Harman

2nd Kraemer

Vote 5-0-0-0

8. Machris Park Scheduled Uses

Director Schooler reported on the increasing activity of people exercising their dogs at the Machris Park softball field. Dogs are let off the leash to exercise with other dogs inside the softball field fences. The situation is now occurring at the Community Center ball field as well.. The recreation staff and the public works staff have reported ongoing problems with this use of the fields. Waste from the dogs is left behind which staff has had to clean up before an activity can happen. The parks maintenance crew has to deal with the problem when mowing the grass. There have been complaints from other patrons that the presence of the dogs and owners interferes with their planned recreational activities.

The Town Municipal Code requires that dogs be kept on a leash at all times while in a public park.

On July 18, several staff members visited the Machris Park softball field to discuss the situation with the dog owners who frequent that facility. Understanding that their activity was in conflict with local laws, the group acknowledged some of the problems but also expressed frustration that no legitimate dog park exists in Yucca Valley.

The group proposed a compromise by which the Town would suspend enforcement of the leash law at the Machris Park softball field from sunrise to 10am, so they could continue to exercise their dogs and still be within compliance of the Town's laws. Those present offered to take increased responsibility for making sure that waste was cleaned up by the owners.

The Park Master Plan calls for the development of three dog parks in various locations in Yucca Valley: the South Side Park site, the property immediately west of the BMX track and a location on the Mesa.

The South Side Park site plan, which includes a dog park, was developed in conjunction with a proposition 84 grant application in 2010. The effort was not successful so the park project has been on hold until development funding is identified.

Due to the recent issues at Machris Park, staff has revisited the South Side Park site plan to determine if that project could move forward in phases, with a dog park included in the first phase. Some federal funding (approximately \$470,000) is available for that project and can not be reallocated to any other use. Staff is drafting scenarios that might include a dog park in Phase 1 development of the park.

Jeff Owen spoke on behalf of the group that has been exercising their dogs at Machris Park. He stated they have been at Machris Park for four or five years, and would like to comply with the rules to be able to stay at Machris Park. He mentioned that having a dog park will help the tax revenue in Yucca Valley, it will make the Town a more valuable place to live. Chair Evans inquired about how many dog owners are regularly at Machris Park. Mr. Owen stated it varies, anywhere from four to five up to forty on the weekends. Commissioners Kraemer asked Mr. Owens if there have been any issues between the dogs and runners or joggers at the park. Mr. Owens was not aware of any. Mr. Owens suggested a rule that all the dogs that come to the park should be spayed or neutered, licensed and current on their shots and females should not be in heat.

Commissioners Collins asked for clarification, stating she understands that the request is to be able to have the dogs run off leash at Machris Park between sunrise and 10am. Director Schooler confirmed the request and added the Town would be temporarily suspending enforcement of the leash law, not designating Machris Park as a dog park. Dog owners would not have exclusive or priority use of the softball field at any time.

Julia Salstrum spoke on behalf of the activity and appreciates the socialization opportunity for the owners as well as their dogs.

Action Motion: **Move to recommend a temporary suspension of enforcement of the Town's leash law at the Machris Park softball field from sunrise to 10:00am when animal related activities do not interfere with other recreational uses of the facility**

Move: Harman

2nd Kraemer

Vote 5-0-0-0

STAFF INFORMATION ITEMS

Director Schooler mentioned that Melanie Crider is in the audience. The animal control staff has been very busy with three major bite incidents in Paradise Valley, at the Community Center playground and on Monday in a local neighborhood.

The aquatics staff has had their hands full with teenagers climbing fences and using the pool after hours. The pool staff is working closely with the sheriff's department to solve the problem. The staff stayed late one evening in the guard trailer and called the sheriff's department when the intruders were in the pool. The kids were cited and returned to their parents.

Recreation Coordinator Sue Earnest went to Hershey, Pennsylvania with local kids that had progressed from the state level Hershey's Track and Field event to the national level. Councilmember Dawn Rowe's daughter Caitlin was one the participants she took third in her division.

Staff is wrapping up summer activities. Day camp is over and swim lessons are in the last week. The final summer concert this week will be the Marine Corps Band. Last week was Cash Up Front which had approximately 1500 in attendance.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND COMMENTS

1. Commissioner Collins: Commissioner Collins attended her first concert, which won't be her last. She mentioned it was great to see Candy running around.

2. Commissioner Silver: Commissioner Silver inquired on the funds for the Water Park at the Community Center.

3. Vice Chair Kraemer: Vice Chair Kraemer had nothing to report.

4. Commissioner Evans: Commissioner Evans thanked the community for sharing their concerns with us.

5. Commissioner Harman: Commissioner Harman thanked the dog owners for coming. He reported that the Yucca Valley Lobos will be having a Bingo Night at the Yucca Valley Senior Center this Saturday at 6:30pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Commission will be on Tuesday, September 13th, at 4:00 pm in the Joshua Tree Room of the Yucca Valley Community Center.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Evans adjourned the meeting at 5:02pm

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen S. Randall, PRCC Secretary
Community Services Department