Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
Board of Directors Meeting
M I N U T E S

Wednesday, October 15, 2024, 6:30pm

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District • Activity Room 2 and 3
4201 Guardian Street, Simi Valley, CA 93063 • (805) 584-4400

A video recording of tonight's meeting is available on
the District Website at www.RSRPD.org.

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chair Freeman called the Meeting to Order at 6:30pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Josh Gray.

2. ROLL CALL – Directors Dennert, Gray, O'Brien, Vice Chair Abele, and Chair Freeman were in attendance. Staff in attendance included: Laura Ballantoni, Nikki Collier, Ara Deirmendjian, Douglas Duran, Zen Flores, Danielle June, Richard Lemmo, Lee Martin, Zach Miller, Shana Moore, Wayne Nakaoka, Dan Paranick, Theresa Pennington, Erin Pierik, Jonathan Schwartz, Alex Stumfall, Gina Viecco, Grace White, Jennifer White, Brittany Wilson, and District Counsel Ryan Guiboa.

   Guests attended tonight's meeting in-person and via Zoom. Those who made public comments are listed under the appropriate Item below.

3. AGENDA REVIEW – Chair Freeman called a recess at 6:32pm. The Board exited the room to hear Closed Session Item 13.a. at this time. Chair Freeman called the meeting back to order at 6:46pm; there was no reportable action taken by the Board.

4. PUBLIC STATEMENTS (ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA)

   Susan Del Vaggio lives in the Knolls neighborhood and is concerned about the new playground installation. There is a large Heritage Oak tree, and the digging seems to be going deep. She requested Staff to keep an eye on the project for safety and tree preservation.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

   a. Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Board of Directors Meeting - Sept 18, 2024 – Motion: Director Dennert moved to approve the Minutes as written. Director Gray seconded. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

      Ayes: Abele, Dennert, Freeman, Gray, O'Brien
      Noes:
      Absent:
      Abstain:

6. CONSENT AGENDA (Matters under the Consent Agenda are considered routine and shall be acted upon without discussion by one motion approving the Consent Agenda. If discussion is desired, the item may be removed from the Consent Agenda upon a Director's request.)

a. Approval of 9/30/24 Accounts Payable Check Register & 9/6/24 and 9/20/24 Payroll Check Registers – Staff responded to questions from the Board.

Motion: Director O'Brien moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Director Gray Seconded. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Abele, Dennert, Freeman, Gray, O'Brien
Noes:
Absent:
Abstain:

7. PRESENTATIONS, SCHEDULED ITEMS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Presentation of the Full-Time Employee of the Month for September 2024 to Shana Moore, Recreation Coordinator – Staff Report was provided by Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration. Shana thanked everyone for the award, especially her co-workers as it is a team effort. She loves her job, adding she has wanted to work in recreation since she was a child. Zach Miller congratulated Shana, adding there are so many good things to say about Shana. She has a bright future with the District. Richard Lemmo added Shana is special and one of a kind. She works not only hard but smart as well, she is a real all-star.

The Board thanked Shana for the excellent work, she has had a great impact on the District and changed some lives.

b. Presentation of the Part-Time Employee of the Month for September 2024 to Grace White, Assistant Pool Manager – Staff Report was provided by Theresa Pennington, Director of Administration. Grace thanked everyone for the award. She has been coming to the pool with her Mom since birth and she loves it. Erin Pierik added Grace is kind, caring, and compassionate. She is a ray of light, and everybody loves her. Zach Miller congratulated Grace, adding she is providing kids a lifetime of safety and fun.

The Board commended Grace for her attitude and thanked her for all the hard work.

8. CONTINUED BUSINESS – NONE

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review Status and Provide Direction Regarding the Proposed BMX Track Project – Staff Report was provided by Dan Paranick, District Manager. As of October 2024, the City of Simi Valley is continuing to explore alternative uses for the property that was identified for the BMX Track. The Board can take public comment and provide staff direction on how to move forward with the BMX Track Project.

Abele asked if there is any downside to keeping the City property option open and evaluate the property near Sinaloa Golf Course, and if the environmental reports have an expiration. Paranick replied there is no issue with that plan. Nakaoka added it is about 8 to 12 months to clear a report with any environmental issues (if possible.) He recalls that the wetlands and lighting were an issue at the Sinaloa site.

Dennert added the track has been included in the Budget, the funds are there, finding a location is the issue. He asked if there was a contract with the City or was it a verbal agreement. Paranick replied there was a contract in the beginning, which has expired, then a verbal agreement.

O'Brien asked if Waste Management has any extra property. Paranick replied, they do, but previously they did not have a feasible option for BMX. This option can be revisited now.

Freeman suggested the lights near Sinaloa would not be an issue at this time as there are new commercial developments in that area now. She suggested everyone take the time to read the Staff Report, the District has made many efforts to get the track going.

Chair Freeman opened Public Comments at 7:34pm.

The Fuller family are residents of Simi Valley. Dad rode the Simi track growing up and his kids now ride. They are not interested in a pump track; they are wanting a sanctioned track back in Simi. The Sycamore track was a better track, longer and more technical than Camarillo.

Chris DeSantis has been coming to meetings for 7 years to discuss the track. It needs to be a higher priority for the District. There is absolutely a need to explore locations other than the City for the track. A pump track will not fill the need, they were promised a sanctioned track.

Bill Meneray stated the Sycamore track was closed 7 years ago and still there is no replacement. The lighting and parking issue seem like an excuse. He likes the Waste Management idea as they have a lot of property. He wants to cut through the red tape and get this track done.

Cade Shimp suggested a location at Wood Ranch park that is currently an empty field of wood chips for BMX. The people want what they were promised, not a pump track.

Chris Gadbois doesn't feel the District has been proactive enough. The Sycamore BMX Board is still committed to getting a track running in Simi. He suggests the Board give the District Manager a timeline to get the project done.

Judith McMahon is a local Grandma and a board member for the Simi Valley Women's Club. It is taking too long to get the project going, this is not acceptable. If something is taken from the children, then something should be given back.

Rich Rungaitis raced at Sycamore BMX in the late 70's. His daughter, Taylor, raced there as well and continues to race. It sounds like the Board has tried to get a track back in Simi, but the kids are still without a track.

Laura Edwards has two kids that have stopped racing due to the track closing in Simi. It's just a dog and pony show coming to these meetings.

Chris Quinn has lived in Simi since 1982 and rode in the last race at Sycamore BMX. His kids never got to see the Sycamore track. They ride at Camarillo but it's not a world class track. The BMX group are willing to work and do whatever is needed to get a BMX track going.

Chair Freeman closed public comments at 8:10pm and read the Public Comment Cards into the record, all were in favor of bringing a BMX Track back to Simi.

Dennert stated he and his fellow Board members have been proactive with the City in pursuing the property. He had suggested the pump track, as opposed to no track at all. He would like to explore the options at Sinaloa Golf Course, the land behind the Equestrian center, and the suggested Wood Ranch location.

Abele feels the BMX group got a bad deal, they were told they would have a track and still are without one. He wishes he had been more aggressive with the City property. City Council told the District they had land for a track and that they would have an answer in 3 months. That date passed and the District has never been given a new timeline. He would like staff to start looking into other options right away. Waste Management is a good community partner, and he would like staff to investigate that option. He is not a fan of the Equestrian location.

Gray agrees with the previous comments. He has no faith the City will come through with the property. He suggests looking at Sinaloa and Wood Ranch as alternate locations.

O'Brien feels strongly about walking away from the City property and pursuing alternate locations.

Freeman thanked everyone for coming out and giving their input. She would rather pursue land the District owns and is partial to Sinaloa as plans had already been approved by the City at the site, but the project was not done. She lives in Wood Ranch, and it had not occurred to her to use the empty lot, if that works, it would be great.

Board Direction: Staff to meet with Waste Management and discuss possible properties, conduct a preliminary analysis of Sinaloa Golf Course and the Wood Ranch empty lot and report back to the Board in 1-2 months.

Chair Freeman called a Recess at 8:40pm. Chair Freeman called the meeting back to order at 8:53pm.

b. Approval of Agreement between Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD) and Marco 101, LLC for the Operation of the Food and Beverage Concession at Simi Hills Golf Course (SHGC) – Staff Report was provided by Zach Miller, Director of Recreation. Marco 101, LLC will now be using Simi Hills Grub, LLC for their business name. They will be changing the name of the Birdie Bar to Grill on the Green. Miller provided menus displaying the new offerings by this concessionaire.

Dennert asked if the restaurant will be open to the general public as well as golfers. Miller replied, yes, that will be a big part of their business plan.

Director Gray thanked staff for their great work. This concessionaire has a location in Thousand Oaks, and they have been a great community partner there, he's looking forward to seeing what they do here in Simi Valley.

Motion: Director O'Brien moved to approve the agreement between RSRPD and Simi Hills Grub, LLC. Director Dennert seconded. The motion carried with the following Rol Call Vote:

Ayes: Abele, Dennert, Freeman, Gray, O'Brien
Noes:
Absent:
Abstain:

c. Approval of Third Amendment to Consulting Service Agreement between the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD) and Heney Dong and Associates, Inc. for the Activity Center Recreation Area (Phase 3) Construction Project – Staff Report was provided by Wayne Nakaoka, Director of Planning and Maintenance. The amendment provides for Board directed changes to the design of the Activity Center. Heney Dong and Associates is requesting additional funds of $172,500 be included with the project.

Motion: Director Gray moved to approve Board actions 1 through 3 as presented in staff's report. Director O'Brien seconded. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Abele, Dennert, Freeman, Gray, O'Brien
Noes:
Absent:
Abstain:

d. Approval of Resolution No. 2086 Adopting Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2024/25 – Staff Report was provided by Dan Paranick, District Manager. Paranick outlined some adjustments to the Final Budget due to cost adjustments to the Activity Center Phase III and adjustments for the end of the Fiscal Year.

Freeman asked if the Budget includes the local property taxes. Paranick replied, the projected local property tax is included as an estimate in the budget.

Dennert will be voting "no" on the adoption of the Budget because he is concerned that not enough is being done to address the long-term financial stability of the Oak Park area of the budget. He wants to see the deficit in Oak Park addressed. It is better to handle it now rather than having to make a big adjustment later.

Motion: Director Gray moved to approve Resolution No. 2086 and adopt the Final Budget as amended to include an additional $172,500 for the Activity Center Phase III project. Director O'Brien seconded. The motion carried with the following Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Abele, Freeman, Gray, O'Brien
Noes: Dennert
Absent:
Abstain:

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS OF NOTE

a. Correspondence Received Regarding a Claim – Paranick shared the correspondence with the Board.

11. REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Vice Chair Abele thanked Danielle June and Richard Lemmo for the social media posts for Mental Health Awareness Month. This is a good time to move forward with the plan, along with other local entities. September was Mental Health Month and October is Depression Awareness Month, if you are struggling, try reaching out and making connections. Ty Hansen from Simi Youth Baseball contacted Abele, they were mentioned in previous public comments and their position is not as represented during those comments. He attended Octoberfest, the event was great. He also appeared on The Ranch Radio with Richard Lemmo and Jeannie Liss; it went great. He provided a list of upcoming special events. Abele wished new Board member Kimberly Cofield good luck as she is currently competing in an off-road event.

Director Dennert and Abele have discussed the District's mission statement, they would like Mental Health listed along with Physical Health. Dennert appreciated Abele's letter in the Acorn regarding mental health.

Director Gray thanked staff and Nakaoka for working on the statue at the Veteran's Memorial Plaza. He thanked Dennert for inviting him to speak at the Brown Bag Lunch program at the High School, it was great. Go Dodgers, who are competing in the World Series.

Director O'Brien reported the Peace Walk was a great success. The Apricot Festival at Strathearn was great and very busy for a first-time event. She attended VCSD, they need Officers for all positions if anyone would be interested. The Leadership day held at the Activity Center was awesome. She wished Barbara Meinel, the Planning and Maintenance Secretary, a happy retirement after 20 years with the District, she will be missed. A Pancake Breakfast will be held this Saturday starting at 8:00am. O'Brien asked if the grant writer the District uses could work with Strathearn. Paranick indicated that they can.

Chair Freeman attended the Apricot Festival at Strathearn, it was a great event and very crowded for the first year. Strathearn currently has 150 volunteers, and they clocked over 10,000 hours in 2023. She attended the Simi Leadership day held at the District; it is such a great program, and she looks forward to the event each year.

12. REPORT BY DISTRICT MANAGER – Comments were provided by Dan Paranick. Staff has transitioned over to the new Investment process, thanks to Theresa Pennington and Kris Barrella for their work, staff will report back to the Board in 6 months. Staff also reviewed the August financials, and everything looks good. The efforts at Frontier Park have been well received and the neighborhood is appreciative. The Leadership Class was awesome, many participants reported the Park District as the best day. He and Richard Lemmo met with Brian Valencia who is now working with Assembly Member Jacqui Irwin. The Guardian building hosted the Youth Summit, staff did an excellent job with this event. Paranick will have staff reach out to the earlier public speaker regarding the Knolls project, it is being hand dug with the tree in mind. Oak Park has received an additional $750,000 grant for fire mediation. The recently contracted Golf Consultants will be holding meetings with Board members this Thursday at the Activity Center. There will be a hearing on November 21st for the permits at Rancho Santa Susana Community Park, the Chair will be attending, and staff will be reaching out to the community. The Chair and staff will be meeting with Oak Park Unified School

District to discuss a Joint Use Agreement. The next Oak Park Outreach will be held November 14th, staff will introduce their new District Board member at this meeting. Barbara Meinel, Executive Secretary for the Planning and Maintenance Department has retired after 20 years with the District, she will be missed.

Upcoming events: Heritage Halloween at Strathearn on October 19, Junk in the Trunk October 19, Classics at Corriganville on October 26, Dia de los Muertos at Strathearn on October 27, SV and OP Halloween Carnivals on October 31, Annual Historical Society meeting on November 1, Snowfest on November 3, and Veteran's Day on November 11.

Future Agenda Items: Joint Use agreement with Oak Park Unified School District, resolution for the pool grant, security cameras, possible developer fee waiver, baseball/softball field use policy, water conservation and turf removal, installation ceremony for new Board members, recognition of The Birdie Bar for the years of service, facility fees, and committee list review for 2025.

Committee Activity: The Historical Society Committee meets the first Monday of the Month.

13. CLOSED SESSION – Chair Freeman announced Closed Session at 9:53pm. Closed Session Item 13.a was heard during an earlier Closed Session at 6:32pm.

    a. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8:
    CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS

Property:	Assessor's Parcel Numbers (City of Simi Valley): 500-0-291-125, 500-0-370-145, 500-0-370-425, 500-0-370-415, 579-0-050-125
Agency Negotiator:	District Manager
Negotiating Parties:	City Manager, City of Simi Valley
Under Negotiation:	Price, Terms and Conditions Regarding Potential Purchase, Exchange or Lease of Real Property

    b. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6
    CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR

Agency Negotiators:	District Manager and Director of Administration
Employee Organization:	Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District - Middle Management Association

    c. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6
    CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR

Agency Negotiators:	District Manager and Director of Administration
Employee Organization:	Rancho Simi Employee's Association

    d. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6
    CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR

Agency Negotiator:	District Manager & Director of Administration
Employee Organization:	Maintenance & Grounds Association

e. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6
CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR
Agency Negotiator: District Manager
Employee Organization: Unrepresented Employees – Director of Administration, Director of Recreation, Director of Planning and Maintenance, Human Resources Coordinator, Accountant

f. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957:
PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
Public Employee Title: District Manager

g. Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6:
CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS
Agency Designated Representative: District Counsel
Unrepresented Employee: District Manager

14. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Freeman adjourned the meeting at 11:30pm from Closed Session. Items 13 b., c., d., and e. were continued to a future Board Meeting. There was no reportable action taken by the Board during Closed Session.

Dan Paranick, District Manager/Clerk