



PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Monday, September 18, 2023, 6:30 P.M.
Public Comment in Person/Telephone
Art Pick Council Chambers – City Hall
3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522

Commissioners Present: Chair, Daniel Jester, Ward 1
Victoria Brodie, Citywide-Ward 1
Blake Faris, Ward 3
Vice Chair, Matt Friedlander, Ward 4
Joseph Feola, Citywide-Ward 4
Mohammad Noor, Ward 5
Thomas Miller, Ward 6
Rakel Engles, Ward 7

Absent: None

Department Staff Present: Pamela Galera, Director
Randy McDaniel, Deputy Director
Noemi Lopez, Deputy Director
Alisa Sramala, Principal Project Manager
Ron Profeta, Transit Manager
Sandra Campbell, Senior Administrative Assistant

Chair Jester called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Romo (Ward 1) – Reid Park Little League. Looking for end results of bathroom repair, field holes, and parking lot conditions at Reid park. Concerned due to Triple Crown coming in November.

PRESENTATION(S)

RIVERS & LAND CONSERVANCY

Director Pamela Galera introduced Co-Executive Director of Rivers and Lands Conservancy Nancy Padron who presented an overview of the Rivers & Lands Conservancy.

CIP PROJECTS UPDATE

Director Pamela Galera introduced Principal Project Manager Alisa Sramala who presented an update on all CIP Projects.

Vice Chair Friedlander asked if natural grass or artificial field turf will be used in the Patterson Park new soccer fields and other grass fields.

Principal Project Manager Sramala stated natural grass.

Commissioner Noor asked if the lighting improvements at Fairmount Park Golf Course have

resulted in an expansion in the hours.

Principal Project Manager Sramala deferred the question. Director Galera stated that the hours are currently the same, but usability is expected to expand, and night play is expected.

Commissioner Noor asked what some considerations are of going with Splash Pads over wading pool.

Principal Project Manager Sramala stated it depends on the community input. Sramala introduced Deputy Director Lopez to give input on the aquatics program who stated that a splash pad serves more people. With regard to safety as well with the lifeguard shortage, a splash pad can supplement programming.

Commissioner Brodie asked if there will be a Pickleball Courts Grand Opening and stated all Commissioner would be there.

Principal Project Manager Sramala stated that a party can be planned to celebrate.

Deputy Director McDaniel stated that questions regarding Reid Park can be asked under this CIP update.

Chair Jester asked why does Reid Park continue to have problems with getting their bathrooms fixed.

Deputy Director McDaniel stated that the project isn't funded, but we will try to fund it for the next CIP cycle. The long-term solution is to replace that restroom, and we are looking for funding.

Director Galera updated the Commission that a grinder has been installed, and stated there are two other restrooms for a total of 3 restrooms at that park site.

Commissioner Brodie asked if Reid Park restroom is considered a safety issue could funding come from a different area.

Director Galera stated that staff goes by quite often for restroom inspections and if there is any health issue, the restrooms are closed.

Chair Jester stated that closing restrooms will create a new issue.

CONSENT CALENDAR

It was motioned by Commissioner Feola and seconded by Commissioner Friedlander to approve the Consent Calendar as presented affirming the actions appropriate to item. The motion was carried with Commissioner Brodie abstaining.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on August 21, 2023, were approved as presented.

DISCUSSION

SPECIAL TRANSIT PROPOSED FARE INCREASE

Manager Ron Profeta presented the Special Transit Proposed Fare Increase.

Commissioner Engle asked how many rides are taken by the average customer.

Manager Profeta stated currently there are approximately over 200 customers registered in our system.

Commissioner Engle asked if the increase would have a financial impact on most riders.

Manager Profeta stated they have been hosting open forums. The predominate comment is that increase is supported. No negative comments have been received.

Commissioner Engles asked if the two-year increase includes an annual increase.

Manager Profeta stated it will be an annual increase over two years to match the current RTA rate of \$3.50.

Chair Jester asked how often that rate would change if we are allowed to charge double the standard federal transportation rate. If maxed out at \$3.50, when will the next increase be able to take place.

Manager Profeta stated it would depend on whether RTA raises their fare. If they raise their fair, it does not mean we will, but we can.

Commissioner Brodie asked if there has been any research asking people why they have shifted to not riding.

Manager Profeta stated the survey process just finished this year, staff is currently gathering all the data and compiling it into a report. Open forums gives riders opportunities to talk about any issues of why they are not using or services. Initial indication is the unique clientele are qualified at age 60 and up. Unfortunately, some clientele move on in many ways, while a new set of people becoming eligible. A concerted effort has been made partnering with the Recreation Division to utilize new ways to market.

Vice Chair Friedlander asked what are the hours of operation.

Manager Profeta said 8:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., 7 days a week, 363 days a year, only closed on Christmas, Thanksgiving and New Years.

Commissioner Miller asked what kind of impact did the large dip in reduction in ridership have on the number of drivers. Were there employment issues and a reduction in force.

Profeta stated that thankfully Cares Act funds were allocated to the transit agency. We used these funds to safeguard positions.

Chair Jester asked if at the last Commission meeting, we recognized one of the Riverside Connect drivers that was involved in an accident on the freeway recently and was there to help get community members safely off the vehicle.

Manager Profeta said that is correct. Our driver made sure everyone was ok and calmly got everyone out, and thankfully no one was hurt.

Commissioner Noor asked if this was door to door.

Manager Profeta stated it is the origin to destination. It doesn't matter where, just has to be within the City of Riverside.

Commissioner Noor asked if the thought had been considered to expand the area to other neighboring cities to widen the footprint.

Manager Profeta stated because of the agreement with the RTA, it's relegated strictly to the city of Riverside.

Commissioner Noor asked if there was a Riverside resident that had an appointment in another city, does calling into this service coordinate between the different transportation.

Manager Profeta stated that callers are transferred to RTA where they will finish up the reservation process. The Dial-A-Ride program will complete that ride.

Commissioner Noor asked for someone that may not be tech savvy is this all done through a single phone call.

Manager Profeta stated yes, it is required to have multiple methods of making reservations and the primary one is a telephone call.

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Engles and seconded by Commissioner Brodie to support the Riverside Connect proposed fare increase. The motion carried unanimously.

ABSENCE OF COMMISSIONER BRODIE

Following the discussion, it was motioned by Commissioner Friedlander and seconded by Commissioner Feola to excuse the absence of Commissioner Brodie from the August 21, 2023, meeting. The motioned carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, MEETING DATES, AND COMMISSION REQUEST

Director Galera reminded the Commission that World Rivers Day will be held on Saturday, September 23, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Martha McClain Park.

The next Park and Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 16, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Chair Jester adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



SANDRA D. CAMPBELL
Sr. Administrative Assistant