

MINUTES
RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, September 1, 2021, at 9:00 A.M.
UWCD Headquarters, Board Room
1701 N. Lombard Street, Oxnard, CA 93030

(In addition to its public Recreation Committee Meeting, the public could also choose to participate virtually using the Webex video conferencing application.)

Committee Members Present:

Chair Sheldon G. Berger
Mohammed A. Hasan

Directors absent

Edwin T. McFadden III

Staff Present:

Maryam Bral, chief Engineer
Anthony Emmert, assistant general manager
Eva Ibarra, administrative assistant
Joseph Jereb, chief financial officer
Josh Perez, human resources manager
Zachary Plummer, IT administrator
Daryl Smith, controller
Clayton Strahan, chief park ranger

Public Present:

No attendees

OPEN SESSION 9:00 a.m.

Chair Berger called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Committee Roll Call

Clerk called the roll. Director Berger and Director Hasan participated in person. Director McFadden was absent.

1. Public Comment

Chair Berger asked if there were any public comments, none were offered.

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the Committee Minutes from May 5, 2021, Director Hasan; Second, Director Berger. Two ayes (Hasan, Berger); none opposed, one absent (Director McFadden). Motion carried 2/0/1.



3. Concessions Update

Chief Strahan provided an update on concession activities, and stated staff issued requests for proposals several times over the past nine months and did not receive much interest. He also stated he has not received any interest in the store operation. Staff did, however, receive a proposal for boat services and have been in contact with the vendor. Staff believes the vendor would be a good partner for the District and will be presenting an agreement for the Board's consideration in the coming months, after the General Manager's approval. Chief Strahan also mentioned the vendors overall business model is to buy new boats every year, replacing used vessels with new, higher quality vessels and equipment.

General Manager Mauricio E. Guardado stated Chief Strahan has taken the phase approach suggested by the committee and is not bringing in all services all at once, in hopes of bringing in better quality services and products.

Chair Berger asked what the backup plan is if staff does not receive any interests from concessionaires. Chief Strahan stated he does not feel they have any concerns on the boating side as the vendor for boating services has been eager to work with UWCD, but due to Covid issues, the boat suppliers were not able to supply enough boats needed to fulfill the services for the lake. Chief Strahan also mentioned he does not anticipate the store will be a major issue if a concessionaire is not contracted, as it can also be serviced by United staff. Mr. Guardado mentioned one of the other options would be to staff the store with seasonal workers for the concession stand or it can be converted into a cabin to be rented, as an alternative. Chair Berger asked if fishing licenses were sold at the lake? Mr. Strahan stated no, although that is something being explored. Director Hasan stated public agencies need to remember, not everything needs to be profitable, we need to provide a service, and he stated that he is not in favor of United staffing the concessions, as these services should be contracted out. Chair Berger requested Chief Strahan keep them posted on the progress on concessionaires.

4. Economic Update

The Committee received and reviewed the monthly economic report from Chief Strahan. Chief Strahan presented visitation and revenue figures associated with the Recreation Area via MySites numbers (the online reservation service), comparing 2021 and 2019 revenue (presentation attached).

Chair Berger asked Chief Strahan why camping revenue is down in comparison to day use revenue? Chief Strahan stated he has a 15-year spreadsheet he uses for comparison and noticed an increase in cancellations likely due to heatwaves and mentioned the pandemic has played a factor in the decrease due to the COVID-19 public health restrictions.

Director Hasan asked if the District has mist sprayers in the Recreation Area, as it could be a remedy for hot weather. Chief Strahan said he had never thought of providing spray mist as an amenity but would surely investigate the idea. Director Hasan also asked Chief Strahan if he could guesstimate what the number of visitors may be for the entire year for 2021? Chief Strahan stated he felt it may be in the fifty-five thousand range, but that would be a good guess.

General Manager Mauricio Guardado mentioned another factor that played into the decrease in revenue for the lake was due to the two months that the lake was unable to open to the public due to Covid restrictions.



5. Monthly Operational Update

Information Item

The Committee received and reviewed the monthly operational report. Additionally, the Committee received an oral report and presentation from staff which included ongoing maintenance and improvement tasks and activities at the Lake Piru Recreation Area for the months of May through August 2021 (see slides).

Chair Berger asked Chief Strahan to provide an update on the quagga mussels. Chief Strahan explained the process boaters coming in and leaving the lake must complete to control the spreading of the mussels and explained what is being done in the lake to help control the growth. Chair Berger asked if the population of the mussels is being monitored? Chief Strahan stated yes, the District has Environmental Scientists come in every two weeks and conduct monitoring on quagga population assessments.

Director Hasan asked how many years forward does the master plan go? Chief Strahan asked Dr. Maryam Bral to respond. Dr. Bral stated it will vary depending on the project. Mr. Guardado said there is not a set number of years, as not all items have been added to the plan to provide a complete timeline, and once that is done, staff can develop a timeline to support the master plan. Director Hasan asked if on October 4, the master plan will then have a timeline available? Dr. Bral stated yes, the draft of the master plan – Phase I would have a timeline by October 4. Chair Berger suggested the master plan be sent out to the Board prior to the meeting for their review to allow them to ask questions before the meeting. Dr. Bral stated she will ensure it goes to the Board prior to the meeting, for their review.

6. Proposed New Trail Emanating from the Pothole Trailhead Parking Lot

Information Item

The Committee received an oral report and presentation from Dr. Maryam Bral on the proposed new hiking trail extending from the Pothole Trailhead parking area.

Chair Berger asked what the distance of the proposed trail will be? Dr. Bral said between two to three miles, per Google Earth.

Director Hasan asked if this is already there, and it's just being improved, or is staff adding to the existing trail? Dr. Bral explained the diagram from the presentation of the trail to Director Hasan, including a statement that staff is hoping to tap into a grant program for the cost of constructing the new trail. Director Hasan mentioned he is concerned about the environmental aspects of the trail and all the things that need to be factored in and would like to hear more on this idea.

Chair Berger suggested that the next time an update on the new trail is provided, he would like to request a side-by-side photo or overlay of the trail. Chief Strahan stated that he can provide that comparison.

7. Future Agenda Items

Chair Berger polled the Committee as to any future agenda items. None were offered.


ADJOURNMENT 9:50 A.M.

Meeting was adjourned by Chair Berger at 9:50 A.M.



I certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the UWCD Recreation Committee meeting of September 1, 2021.

ATTEST:



Chair Sheldon G. Berger