



**Sonoma County
Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission
DRAFT Minutes of the January 24, 2022 Meeting**

DATE: Monday, January 24, 2022

PLACE: Virtual Zoom Meeting

1. Welcome & Land Acknowledgement Statement

The meeting started at 5:04 pm.

Sonoma Regional Parks Director Bert Whitaker read the Land Acknowledgement Statement:

“The County of Sonoma recognizes that we are on the ancestral lands of the Coast Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo who are the original caretakers of this area. We respectfully acknowledge the Indigenous peoples who have been stewarding and maintaining relationship on this land as knowledge keepers for millennia. The County of Sonoma is dedicated to understanding and educating the public about historical and ongoing connections between land conservation and social inequities. This includes the histories of genocide, forced removal and displacement, and broken promises with Indigenous peoples as a part of American history. Indigenous people are not just in our histories. We strive to optimize Indigenous voices to share their own history, as to not perpetuate another form of being silenced. While recognizing the past, we honor the resiliency of Native people still in their ancestral territories in relationship with their land and culture.

This acknowledgement does not take the place of authentic relationships with Indigenous communities, but serves as a gesture in respect to the land we are on.”

2. Call to Order

Commissioners Present: Karen Collins, Spencer Jones, Brian Marvin, Arsel Perez, and Beth Steffy.

Commissioners Absent: Herman Hernandez

Regional Parks Executive Leadership: Director Bert Whitaker and Deputy Director Melanie Parker.

Chairman Brian Marvin called the meeting to order and read the mission of the Commission: to act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors in promoting and encouraging public recreation; to act in an advisory capacity to the Director of Regional Parks in the maintenance, development, and operation of recreational areas and facilities serving the residents of the county; and finally, to establish procedures to carry out the purpose of the Advisory Commission.

DRAFT

3. Approval of the minutes of the November 15, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

Chairman Marvin requested a motion to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission.

VOTED to approve the minutes of November 15, 2021 as follows:

MOTION:	Commissioner Collins	AYES: 5	ABSTAIN: 0
SECOND:	Commissioner Steffy	ABSENT: 1	VACANT: 1

4. Comments from the Public – Public may address the Commission on matters that are not on the agenda.

Members of the public wishing to suggest an item for a future Commission agenda may do so during this public comment period. The Ralph M. Brown Act (the State local agency open meeting law) prohibits the Commission from acting on any matter that is not on the agenda. Speakers are limited to three minutes each, however, the Commission Chair may adjust the time limit in light of the number of anticipated speakers.

No comments were made.

5. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Brian Marvin introduced himself and informed the Commission that, due to a family move out of state, he would be resigning from the Commission. He stated that he had communicated with both Supervisor David Rabbit and Regional Parks Director Bert Whitaker regarding this transition.

Commissioner Steffy stated that she had enjoyed visiting parks she had not been to previously and, as a new Commissioner, had made it a goal to visit all of the Regional Parks.

Commissioner Jones stated he has frequently visited numerous parks and was excited to see so many visitors.

Commissioner Steffy asked the Commission what Commissioners should take note of, upon visiting parks. Chair Marvin notes that he observes infrastructure and changes since his last visit. He stated that he frequently speaks with other visitors and asks them about how often they visit and what they think of the parks. Commissioner Collins stated that she observes who is in the parks and how visited the park may be, as well as improvements, changes and any issues that strike her. Commissioner Collins offered to accompany Commissioner Steffy on a park outing.

DRAFT

6. Director's Report – Sonoma Regional Parks Director Bert Whitaker

Director Whitaker said the Department is turning the corner into a new year with hopes for moving on from the pandemic. He offered the following highlights about the Department's recent actions:

- Regional Parks recently closed acquisition of the Cougar Landing addition to Hood Mountain. This is a 120-acre land addition made possible because of the Parks Foundation, the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation, the Bill & Dave Hikes Legacy Fund and Parks for All Measure M.
- In December, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors renewed an operating agreement for one of the Regional Parks, Hudeman Slough. This operating agreement is with California Fish and Wildlife.
- The County Civil Service Commission approved a proposal by Sonoma Regional Parks to create new Park Maintenance Worker positions. The new positions are a senior Maintenance Worker classification and a Supervisor classification.
- In addition, there are a number of seasonal recruitments launching for the summer season. These include Park Aides, Park Ranger Assistants, Park Maintenance Workers, and Lifeguards.
- Bethany Facendini, Community Engagement Manager for Sonoma Regional Parks, has transitioned out of her role. Regional Parks is now beginning recruitment for her replacement.
- Regional Parks is looking forward to planning a celebration of the new developments at Helen Putnam Regional Parks. This is tentatively planned for Saturday, April 2nd and commissioners will be invited.
- Regional Parks staff at all levels responded to the recent Tsunami alert, closing beaches and day use areas, alerting campers, communicating with media, and providing all around monitoring. Most of the team responded immediately.
- Big thank you to Brian Marvin for nearly three years of service on this Commission. Throughout Brian's tenure, this Commission has covered
 - Pandemic park operations, including a virtual engagement strategy
 - Fun topics such as dog hours at Ragle Ranch, E-Bikes, new volleyball courts, wildlife monitoring program, vegetation management, and community engagement.
 - Fire response, including the Glass Fire, Kincade Fire and Climate Durable Parks Strategy
 - Park planning including 3-year strategic priorities, and Measure M – Year 1 Workplan

Director Whitaker concluded by presenting Chair Marvin with a commemorative plaque, thanking him for his service.

DRAFT

7. **Update/Presentation of the Parks for All Measure M 2020-2021 Annual Report – Melanie Parker, Regional Parks Deputy Director**

Deputy Director Melanie Parker presented the 2020-2021 Parks for All Measure M Annual Report to the Commission. She highlighted revenues and expenditures and noted that largest expenditures were for staff-related expenses, followed by capital projects, and trail and road management. Major sources of revenue were city parks, followed by resources focused on recreation, maintenance, and safety. She then highlighted county regional parks data in this regard, followed by cities within the county.

Chair Marvin asked for questions and public comment.

Rebecca Casciani asked for more specific revenue data for each park. Deputy Director Parker responded that she would retrieve that information and provide it to Rebecca Casciani directly.

8. **Approval of the Draft 2022 Meeting Schedule of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission – Commission Chair**

Director Whitaker requested a motion to approve Arsel Perez as Youth Commissioner.

VOTED to approve the Draft 2022 Meeting Schedule of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, as follows:

MOTION:	Commissioner Steffy	AYES: 5	ABSTAIN: 0
SECOND:	Commissioner Jones	ABSENT: 1	VACANT: 1

9. **Election of Officers – Commission Chair**

Arsel Perez was nominated for the position of Chair, and Beth Steffy was nominated for the position of Vice-Chair.

VOTED to approve the nomination of Arsel Perez as Chair, and Beth Steffy as Vice-Chair, as follows:

MOTION:	Commissioner Collins	AYES: 5	ABSTAIN: 0
SECOND:	Commissioner Jones	ABSENT: 1	VACANT: 1

10. **Adjournment – Commission Chair**

Meeting adjourned at 6:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kathleen Culhane, Executive Assistant