



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD/TTY: call 711

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA

Monday, February 12th, 2024
6:00pm – 7:00pm
Regular Meeting

Alternate Meeting Location:
Aptos Village Park Clubhouse
100 Aptos Creek Road
Aptos, California 95003

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

II. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Any person may address the Commission during its Oral Communication period. Speakers must not exceed three (3) minutes in length, or the time limit established by the Chair, and individuals may speak only once during Oral Communications. All Oral Communication must be directed to an item listed on today's Consent Agenda, Closed Session Agenda, yet to be heard on Regular Agenda, or a topic not on the agenda that is within the jurisdiction of the Commission. Commission members will not take actions or respond immediately to any Oral communication presented regarding topics not on the agenda but may choose to follow up later, either individually, or on a subsequent Commission Agenda. Oral communications will normally be received by the Commission for a period not to exceed thirty (30) minutes. If, at the end of this period, additional persons wish to address the Commission, the Oral Communication period may be continued to the last item on the agenda.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approve minutes from December 11th, 2023.....page 2 – 3
- b. Consider Reports:
 - i. Aquatics Section Report.....page 4
 - ii. Maintenance Section Report.....page 5
 - iii. Planning Section Report..... page 6 – 7
 - iv. Recreation Section Report.....page 8 – 9
 - v. Reservations Section Report.....page 10
 - vi. Volunteer Section Report..... page 11 – 14

V. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

VII. REGULAR AGENDA: ACTION ITEMS

- a. None.

VIII. REGULAR AGENDA: INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. Update on 2024 Recreation Programs - Sarah Shea, Parks Superintendent

IX. NEXT MEETING: Monday, May 13th, 2024, 5:00 p.m. Location to be announced in public notice.

X. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE LISTING

XI. ADJOURNMENT



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PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes of December 11th, 2023, 5:00 p.m. Regular Meeting
Aptos Village Park Clubhouse, 100 Aptos Creek Rd., Aptos CA 95003

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

- a. **Present:** Tricia Wiltshire (District 2), Jeremy Sanford (District 3), Martha Victoria Vega (District 4), Monica Martinez (District 5)
- b. **Absent:** Katherine Lee (District 1)
- c. **Staff:** Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha, Frankie Farr, Rebecca Hurley, Jeff Gaffney

II. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

- a. **Item VIII.B** was moved to follow the consent agenda, but before the commissioner reports.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

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- a. Comments on Felton Covered Bridge Pump Track by two Felton residents.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approve minutes from August 14th, 2023.....page 2 - 4
- b. Consider Reports:
 - i. Aquatics Section Report.....page 5
 - ii. Maintenance Section Report.....page 6
 - iii. Planning Section Report.....page 7 - 9
 - iv. Recreation Section Report.....page 10 - 11
 - v. Reservations Section Report.....page 12
 - vi. Volunteer Section Report.....page 13 – 15

Agenda Mod: VIII.B “Results Count” presentation by County Park Friends (CPF)

- Commissioners offered suggestions for networking, biometric measurements, and program additions.

V. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- o **District 1:** Absent.
- o **District 2:** Cabrillo Host Lions Club redid some of the benches in honor of local veterans. Attended the Willowbrook Playground Ribbon Cutting and talked with the public, lovely to see everyone playing and excited to have it open.
- o **District 3:** Received correspondence from residents, expressing concern about North Coast region. Primary concerns related to traffic, garbage, lack of bathroom facilities,

camping, human waste, etc. Strong concern about increased usage and safety. Residents are interested in learning about how County Parks plan to address these concerns.

- **District 4:** Constituents have been loving Pinto Lake County Park for the soccer fields. Noted the successful volunteer event at Pinto Lake County Park where the community gathered to paint the bathrooms. They are looking forward to the next volunteer event to paint the gazebo. Asked about the potential to add stripping for a football field at Mesa Village Park, as youth are using the field for football already. She would also like to see a solution for an equal opportunity for youth to use the half basketball court.
- **District 5:** Acknowledged the small and vocal group that shares concerns and a larger group that is excited for the changes to come with the Felton Covered Bridge Pump Track. Noted another successful Holiday Market hosted by SLV Chamber of Commerce on the bridge at Felton Covered Bridge Park.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Parks held a successful Splash with Santa and Holiday Market event at the beginning of December.
- Addressed the Felton Covered Bridge Pump Track Item that was being presented to the Board of Supervisors on December 12th, 2023.
- The playground renovations at Willowbrook County Park were completed and a ribbon cutting was held in November. The entire project should be completed by March.
- County Parks Updates: The new pilot program for non-profit surf schools was awarded to Black Surf Santa Cruz. There are two new park hosts at Quail Hollow. The renovation projects at Floral Park are moving forward in the coming year. An artist and project were approved for the new Child Crisis Center (5300 Soquel).
- Discussed two possible new taxes on the March ballot that could positively impact Parks.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA: ACTION ITEMS

- a. Review and approve the Parks and Recreation Commission Biennial Report, page 16 – 20
 - Biennial Report is a culmination of information gathered from commission meetings in the last 2 years.
 - Commissioners shared concerns and discussed solutions.
 - Director Gaffney: Addressed concerns regarding the report and acknowledged that there have been new commissioners and staff within the 2-year reporting period. This will be reflected in the attendance report.
 - Motion to designate Chair to review and approve the final Biennial Report
 - **Ayes:** Vega, Sanford, Martinez, Wiltshire | **Not Present:** Lee
- b. Discuss 2024 meeting schedule, page 21
 - **Motion to approve schedule:** Vega, seconded by Wiltshire, all in favor.
- c. Determine workshop retreat date and time, page 21
 - **Motion to discuss and decide on workshop date:**
 - Commissioners agreed to Feb. 9th with modified hours or February 12th, Parks staff would confirm date with Commissioner Lee.

VIII. REGULAR AGENDA: INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. Capital Projects Update
 - a. Comments from commissioners:
 - The Commission used to be more involved in planning.
 - Commissioner Vega: would like the commission updated on South County Parkland Acquisition
 - b. ~~“Results Count” presentation by County Park Friends~~

IX. **NEXT MEETING:** Date and location to be announced in public notice.

X. **WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE LISTING** No written correspondence.

XI. **ADJOURNMENT** Motion to adjourn at 6:59pm: Vega, all in favor.



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Date: February 1st, 2024
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Sarah Shea, Parks Superintendent
Subject: Aquatics Section Report

- Starting in late December our Aquatics Supervisor went out on leave. The Aquatics Team is working hard to continue to provide the same level of services for the community, including the standard of remaining open seven days a week.
- Over the past two months the swim center has faced maintenance issues:
 - Failure of the HVAC unit over the front locker rooms, leaving these rooms unheated until unit is replaced.
 - Minor electrical issues with the heating system for the 50-meter lap pool.
 - The boiler for the warm water pool.The maintenance team has been working hard to repair these as quickly as possible. Currently the major outstanding issue is the replacement of the HVAC unit.
- This winter and spring we are hosting seven lifeguard training courses. Currently 28 individuals are enrolled or have completed. This service continues to be offered free of charge and materials fees are a low cost to those enrolled.
- Under the direction of our Aquatics Coordinator, we continue to hire lifeguards and head guards. We will continue to recruit, offer free training, and work on retention strategies to continue to grow our staffing team.
- Starting on February 11th, we are hosting our first Jr. Guard Clinics aimed to provide swimmers an opportunity to continue their skills outside of summer programs and prepare new swimmers for our Jr. Guard programs for the upcoming summer.
- Winter and spring swim lessons are currently serving 225 individuals in our own program. These are in addition to the partnership learn to swim programs with Live Oak School District and County Park Friends.
- Starting in March we will be hosting the Special Olympics Swim Team practices.



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Date: January 31st, 2024
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jesse Williams, Parks Superintendent
Subject: Maintenance Section Report

North County

- Replacement of potable water main at Highlands Park.
- Athletic field renovations in preparation for spring.
- Brush clearing at Quail Hollow Ranch and the Miller Property.
- Coastal storm damages and repairs at Moran Lake, Opal Cliff, Rockview, 12th & 13th Avenue.

Mid County

- The boiler for the warm water pool at Simpkins Swim Center was replaced.
- A rooftop AC unit replacement ordered for the locker rooms at Simpkins.
- Shade trees were planted at Felt Street Park.
- Winter cleanups are underway at Jose Avenue and Brommer Park.

South County

- Fencing and Gates completed at the new South County Park located on Whiting Road.
- Culvert cleared for winter storms at Merk Road.
- Tree work and a new Park Host location was set up at Pinto Lake.
- The Master Gardeners new garden location is under construction at Pinto Lake.



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Date: January 31st, 2024
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Park Planners - Rob Tidmore, Mariana Uργο, and Mike Pruitt
Subject: Planning Section Report

Coastal Rail Trail

Segments 10 and 11: Certification of the Final EIR is scheduled for the March 26, 2024 Board of Supervisors meeting, along with a decision on the project and approval of a Baseline Agreement with Caltrans.

Segments 8 and 9: The Cooperative Agreement with the RTC and City of Santa Cruz is scheduled to go to the Board for approval on March 26, 2024, along with acceptance of the City's Final EIR for the project.

Floral Playground Renovation

\$400,000 in project funds have been confirmed from a combination of County Park Friends fundraising and District 1 discretionary funding. The money will be used to install new playground equipment and new rubberized safety surfacing. Community input and outreach are finalized and preferred play structure elements were selected. Staff are currently updating the final playground design with the play structure company and working on a contract for its implementation. The project is expected to be completed in Fall 2024.

Hidden Beach

County Parks selected a civil engineer consultant that is currently developing the plans for a permanent, prefabricated, ADA-compliant double-unit restroom. In addition to the restroom itself, the scope includes a building foundation and concrete paving, utility connections, landscaping, and associated irrigation surrounding the restroom. The civil engineer's scope includes analyzing and developing an accessible path of travel to the restroom. The project is expected to be completed in Fall 2024.

Moran Lake

The southwest corner of the lagoon adjacent to East Cliff Drive and the public pedestrian and bicycle

path sustained additional wave damage and erosion during the December 28, 2023 storm event. Portions of the concrete culvert slope protection, pathway, and split rail fence were undermined. Parks has contracted with Pacific Crest Engineering to design an emergency rock revetment protection structure to prevent further erosion of the area and the loss of the pathway and East Cliff Drive. Staff are currently working to permit the emergency work, and installation of the rock revetment will be scheduled as soon as possible.

Moran Lake Restoration and Public Access Plan: Staff are working with the current consultant team and the Coastal Conservancy on modifications to the existing grant that will allow for either ongoing monitoring of the lagoon or some initial modeling work to inform the larger coastal resiliency project. Staff expects to submit an initial grant pre-application to the Coastal Conservancy for the larger coastal resiliency project in Spring 2024.

Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan: The consultant team is still working on completing a public draft of the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan (HMP). This is expected to be ready in February 2024. When the public draft is complete, staff will circulate it for public review and comment and schedule a public meeting.

Procurement of a consultant team for the Phase 2 restoration work noted in the previous report is contingent upon completion of recommendations in the Monarch HMP. Consultant procurement is expected to occur in Spring/Summer 2024.

North Coast Facilities and Management Plan

Public feedback was collected on the draft North Coast Facilities and Management Plan (NCFMP) at the end of 2023 and is being incorporated into the final plan by the project team. The final plan should be complete in Spring 2024 and will go to the Board of Supervisors for acceptance. Other agency members of the Working Group may also take the final plan to their governing body for approval or acceptance.

Pace Property Trails

Project kick-off is scheduled for Spring 2024.

South County Parkland Acquisition

County Parks maintenance is working with a consultant to survey the property and expects to have a map ready mid-February. The survey will be used as a base for future planning and design studies.

Willowbrook

A new contractor has been hired for the Memorial Seating Area, and completion is expected in Spring 2024.



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Date: February 1, 2024
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jaime Jimenez, Recreation Supervisor
Subject: Recreation Section Report

Partnerships with Local Recreation Departments

- The Parks Department is continuing in their partnership with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District to offer after-school programs at Mar Vista Elementary school and Rio Del Mar Elementary this Winter/Spring semester through the Extended Learning Opportunity Program (ELOP). We have also extended our partnership to include the intersession programming with a winter camp at Aptos Village Park and Mar Vista Elementary School.
 - At these sites, Recreation Staff provide various active games, arts and crafts, outdoor nature, and science enrichment activities for stable groups between 40-50 elementary school aged children and 20 pre-school age kids. Programs operate Monday-Thursday from 2pm-6pm and Fridays from 12:30pm-6pm.
 - The intersession programs operate Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm during the winter school break.
- Parks staff continue strong with the County Parks Friends non-profit partnership and assisted with the completion of year one (1) gathering at Simpkins Family Swim Center between the community, County staff and County Parks Friends personnel.
- The recreation team continues assisting with transportation and positive recreational experiences through the partnership, offerings collaboration and ideas to provide programs throughout the county until 2024 with the OEP (Outdoor Equity Program) Grant – titled Young Outdoors Leaders. The next trip is scheduled for February 10, 2024, to the Seymour Marine Discovery Center and Natural Bridges State Beach.

Recreation Programs & Contractual Agreements

- Our active adult programs currently offer the following FREE recreational activities for community members:
 - Mall Walking
 - Stretching Class
 - Bridge Club
 - Tai Chi
- The recreation team continues seeking out potential contractual agreements with groups and individuals in the community to offer positive recreational programs in our county.
- Contracts were approved for an active adult Line Dancing instructor and a Strength Development – 12 Week Challenge with GOAT Santa Cruz.

- We make strides in fostering human development opportunities and providing a safe place for the community to recreate.
- El Palomar Ballroom will continue to, through an extended agreement, offer the Big East Swing classes along with another Salsa Dance Class.
- The extended traveling trips partnership with Collate Tours took a few participants to Tropical Costa Rica. Costa Rica is one of four places in the world that boasts an ecosystem so unique that it produces a cloud forest.

Marketing Efforts

- The Department marketing efforts this month consist of creating a bilingual (Spanish/English) Spring Activity Guide to inform the community of upcoming recreational opportunities, help navigate their interest in our reservations and registrations system, and opportunities on the Web.
- The Department has continued to create marketing flyers in both Spanish/English. As well as social media posts and updates.



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Date: January 31st, 2024
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Garrett Smart, Recreation Supervisor
Subject: Reservations Section Report

Bookings

The wedding season is thriving, with 15 bookings since January 1st. Recently, our team participated in a Watsonville Wedding Fair to boost venue visibility and connect with clients. The event allowed us to showcase our offerings, engage with couples, and strengthen our presence in the community. The positive response has energized us, and we're excited to build on this momentum for increased industry recognition. Below is a photo of our booth from the Wedding Expo.



Staffing

We have moved forward with two candidates for Park Service Officer Positions to keep our staffing numbers adequate for the summer season. We have two more potential candidates with offers to interview.

Special Events

Our team, in conjunction with the Recreation Team, Aquatics, and Maintenance, have begun discussions and planning for all our internally planned events this year and looking 2-4 years in the future as well to continue to expand our offerings and have exciting family friendly and fun events for the communities in North and South County areas as well as continuing our Mid-County efforts as well.

Commemorative Program

We have also been receiving many requests for commemorative features with a few that have moved into next steps showing that the program is thriving. We continue to match people with important reflective locations to commemorate and remember their loved ones or even significant milestones for organizations.



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Date: February 1st, 2024
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Margaret Ingraham, Volunteer Program Coordinator
Subject: Volunteer Section Report

Aldridge Lane Park

Our volunteer at the park drags the arena at least once a month now that he has the footing in good condition. Last year he volunteered 32 hours and community members gave 24 hours of volunteer work at the park.

Anna Jean Cummings Park

Our trail maintenance volunteer at AJ continues to work on the trails helping to keep the trails in good condition. We have 2 volunteers who help with litter pick up and blowing the parking lots every other Monday. Last year the Workability group volunteered 504 hours at the park.

Felt Street

The Young Outdoor Leaders and their parents participated in a tree planting volunteer day at the park. They planted 3 trees which were purchased by a group of community members who call themselves the Shady Lady's. Maintenance staff, Blanca Rocha, and County Parks Friends staff, Aniko Milan, supervised the group. It was a great day, and the trees will provide shade in the summer months to park users. Last year other groups volunteered 75 hours at the park.





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Felton Discovery Park

The Dec. 2 and Jan. 6 community volunteer days were both rained out. Community Volunteer days are the first Saturday of every month from 9-11. The community volunteers logged 148 hours last year. The Earth Stewards spent 1 hour weeding in January before the rain made them stop and head to shelter. Last year they volunteered 114 hours.

Heart of Soquel

65 hours of volunteer work was done by community members.

Highlands

102 hours of volunteer work was done by community members.

Jose Ave. Park

Our volunteer in the community garden area helps with trimming of bushes and trees if they grow into the parking lot or garden area. She also keeps the parking lot bushes trimmed up to help alleviate hiding places for people and debris. Her focus is helping in the garden plot area to keep it clean and organized. Other volunteers help with raking leaves and reporting problems in the park. A total of 178 hours of volunteer work was done last year.

Miller Property

Our Miller property Trail Watch volunteers help to maintain the trails, pull invasive French Broom, and report issues. We are onboarding a new Trail Watch volunteer who will help to maintain trails in a new area at the Miller property. Volunteers logged 86 hours last year.

Polo Grounds Park

45 hours of work was done by community members last year.

Scott Creek Beach

72 hours of work was done by the Tai Kappa Fraternity last year.



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Pinto Lake County Park

On December 2nd we had another very successful volunteer day at the park. High school students and a disc golf member worked together to paint the majority of Picnic Gazebo A.



Disc Golf volunteers regularly spend time doing trail maintenance, disc golf course maintenance, repairs, and improvements. Last year they logged 638 hours.

Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

Volunteers open the Visitor Center on the following days and times:

- Tuesdays 11a – 2p
- Wednesdays 3:30p – 5:30p
- Thursdays 11a – 3p
- Fridays 1p – 4p
- Saturdays 10a – 1p
- Sundays 10a – 3p

The Santa Cruz Astronomy club offers monthly star gazing at Quail and it is free to the public. At the January star gazing we had about 18 visitors and 6 club members. The next Star Gazing is on February 2nd. Last year they volunteered 349 hours at Quail.



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The Trail Crew meets every Tuesday morning from 9a-12p and maintains the trails at Quail and so much more. Last year they logged 507 hours of work on the trails.

The Habitat Restoration group has started back up at Quail pulling French Broom, they volunteered 19 hours in January. Last year they logged 324 hours of volunteer work at Quail.

We have 4 Trail Watch volunteers at Quail who hike the trails, report issues, interact with park users and explain the rules when necessary.

Volunteers from Highlands Community High School volunteered at the park for the 2nd time and helped maintenance with a drainage project. They dug out some areas of a drainage ditch and moved large rocks into place to alleviate erosion and to add to the aesthetics of the ditch.

In addition to the hours listed above, volunteers gave Quail over 1566 hours of their time last year opening the visitor center, gardening, cleaning, etc.

Twin Lakes County Park

The volunteers at the park who installed a Little Free Library had to move the library further back into the park because its first location was prone to vandalism.

Willowbrook

Last year the Workability group volunteered 188 hours at the park.

Park Hosts

We have a new Park Host arriving at **Pinto Lake County Park** at the beginning of February. Look for her bio in the next report. Our current Park Host at **Pinto Lake County Park**, Isabel, has been busy with some park beautification projects, trail, and shrine watch, helping with community volunteer days and preparing for future Community Volunteer Days.

Park Hosts Mel and Zach, at **Quail Hollow Ranch**, have provided Trail Watch which includes educating the public that dogs are not allowed off leash at the park and not allowed on the trails. When the weather permits, they paint fence boards. They have completed a weeding project and have started an invasive plant removal project. They are also getting to know the park visitors and educating them about park hours at closing time. Mel hosts the Visitor Center on Thursdays from 11a-3p. She has also taken on some organizing projects in the house and the maintenance shop, supervised a community service worker on a project, worked with other volunteers to learn the process for freezing the taxidermy animals. Mel also spent time working with a Parks Service Officer during an Open House to gain knowledge of the park as a rental venue.