



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 August 14, 2023
5:00pm – 7:00pm
Regular Meeting

Alternate Meeting Location:
Board of Supervisors Chambers (5th Floor)
701 Ocean St.
Santa Cruz CA, 95062

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 June 12, 2023.....Page 4-5
- b. Consider Reports:
 - 1. Aquatics Section ReportPage 6
 - 2. Maintenance Section Report.....Page 7
 - 3. Planning Section Report.....Page 9-10
 - 3. Recreation Section Report.....Page 11
 - 4. Reservations Section ReportPage 12
 - 5. Volunteer Section Report.....Page 13-18

V. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

VII. REGULAR AGENDA – Action Items-(None)

VIII. REGULAR AGENDA – Information Items

- a. Deputy Director Rebecca Hurley will present the Draft Parks Strategic Plan Update.
- b. Deputy Director Rebecca Hurley will discuss potential pump track at Felton Covered Bridge County Park.
- c. Discuss possible workshop retreat date and times.

IX. NEXT MEETING: December 11, 2023 Location to be announced in public notice.

X. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE LISTING

XI. ADJOURNMENT



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PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION Minutes of June 12, 2023, 5:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Monica Martinez, Tricia Wiltshire, Katherine Lee, Jeremy Sanford
Staff: Jeff Gaffney, Noah Ross, Anissa Childers, Rebecca Hurley

II. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Becky Steinbruner: Spoke on Aptos Village Park and possible improvements with Measure G funds. Also concerned about proposed drainage easement across the park. Also concerned with segment 12 of rail trail park and required tree removals. Spoke on Bert Scott Estate, hopeful for improvements.

Yadira Flores: Spoke on Outdoor Leaders Program. Introduced group and spoke on their program goals within the community and county parks.

Mariah Roberts: Further spoke on Outdoor Leaders Program and its mission.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Approve consent agenda (Lee/Wiltshire 4/0)

V. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Lee: AJC Park has improved because of oak tree plantings. Met with Park Superintendent Jesse Williams to discuss sustainable Park Maintenance techniques. Attended downtown Parks Strategic Plan Community Meeting.

Commissioner Wiltshire: Thanked young leaders in attendance and encouraged public participation. Was involved with fun run and community festival at Pinto Lake. Spoke on upcoming wheelchair basketball event on June 17th.

Commissioner Sanford: First Commission meeting. Getting to know commission and process. Thanked commission and community.

Commissioner Martinez: Wet and challenging season in 5th district. Thanked Parks Department for recovery efforts. Spoke on Felton Deck accident and thanked Parks and Jesse Williams for prompt repair in time for Felton Remembers Parade.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Now having FEMA tours in response to storm damage
- Heart of Soquel Park reopened, still needs some work.
- Parks added two maintenance workers and Recreation Coordinator as a part of 2023-24t budget

Parks and Recreation Commission
Minutes of June 12, 2023

- Spoke on restructuring of Park Impact Fees
- Making progress on South County Park acquisition and floral improvements as a result of the fee restructuring
- Environmental tax not bringing in the income that was expected. Will be reviewed again in the fall.
- July is Parks & Rec month. July 29th is Family Fun Day at Simpkins Family Swim Center.
- August 19th is Parks and Rex at Simpkins Family Swim Center.

VII. REGULAR AGENDA – Action Items

VIII. REGULAR AGENDA – Info Items

- a. Deputy Director Rebecca Hurley gave report on the 5-year update of the Parks Strategic Plan
- b. Commission discussed possible workshop for Parks Commissioners. Could be in the form of an offsite special meeting, possibly in September 2023. Possible opportunity for consultant to assist.

IX. NEXT MEETING: Monday August 14th 5:00-7:00 p.m.

X. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE LISTING

XI. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m. (Sanford/Lee 4/0)



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: July 31st, 2023
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Max Friedmann, Aquatics Supervisor
Subject: Aquatics Section Report

Simpkins Summer Programing

- The Swim Center is currently open 7 days a week, 6am-7:30pm M-F and 9am-4pm on the weekends.
- The Swim Center is offering youth programming such as swim lessons, Junior Guards, and Little Guards.
- The Swim Center offers Low Stimulation hours every Wednesday from 3-5pm. This program is geared for folks with adaptive needs that benefit from a quieter environment while using our pools.
- The Swim Center is collaborating with County Parks Friends to host swim lessons for their Young Outdoor Leaders group through the summer.



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: **August 14, 2023**
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jesse Williams, Parks Superintendent
Subject: Maintenance Section Report

County Wide

- A Park Maintenance Worker III conditional job offer has been made.
- Maintenance staff is staying busy with field prep for soccer season, irrigation repairs, and continuing with high weed mowing.
- Maintenance staff are keeping up with fully booked center rentals and special events every weekend over the summer months.
- Supervisors are in the process of obtaining Applicators licenses to assist with gopher abatement in our sports fields.
- An undeveloped portion of The Farm County Park is being leased to Monterey Peninsula Engineering, for the next approximately 15 months to use for staging of construction equipment and materials for the County's Soquel Drive Buffered Bike Lane and Congestion Mitigation Project. Public Works is the contact for any questions.

South County

- Maintenance staff is scheduling time to make repairs at the CCC house at Pinto Lake County Park.
- Maintenance staff trimmed the ivy along the entrance to Hidden Beach Park.
- Maintenance staff has been repairing damaged and cut irrigation wires at Polo Ground fields.

Mid County

- Construction on the Live Oak Library Annex continues, the concrete plaza is being poured.
- Volunteers worked with maintenance staff to install a new Free Little Library at Twin Lakes Park.
- Maintenance staff repaired irrigation at Twin Lakes Park.

North County

- Staff are mowing Quail Hollow Ranch and Anna Jean Cummings Park for fire prevention.
- Ben Lomond Park is fully open. The new fences along the perimeter of the park were installed.
- A new rentable picnic area is open at Michael Grey field.



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: August 14, 2023
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Planning Section - Rob Tidmore, Mariana Urgo, and Mike Pruitt
Subject: Planning Section Status Report

Anna Jean Cummings Mitigation Plantings

Restoration plantings were completed earlier this year. Due to the rains, the ground has been too saturated to install the fencing. Once the area dries, protective fencing will be installed. Confluence is maintaining and monitoring the plantings for the next 4 years.

Coastal Rail Trail

The North Coast Rail Trail, a 7.5 mile segment of trail from Davenport to Wilder Ranch is being led by the RTC. The project is fully funded and is expected to start construction in the next year. When complete, RTC will contract with County Parks and County Community Development and Infrastructure (CDI) to operate and maintain the trail. Parks staff met with RTC staff in the field in May 2023 to review and provide comments on design plans for the North Coast Rail Trail so that staff can better operate and maintain the trail.

The Santa Cruz City Council certified the Final EIR for Segments 8/9 on March 20, 2023. The RTC, as a responsible agency, accepted the City's EIR on May 4, 2023. A Cooperative Agreement between the City, County, and RTC is currently being negotiated. Once complete, it will go to the Board of Supervisors for approval, along with acceptance of the City's EIR.

Technical studies for CEQA and NEPA are ongoing for Segments 10/11. The draft EIR is scheduled for public review in October 2023, with certification expected in March 2024.

Floral Playground Renovation

County Park Friends has raised \$285,000 for the playground project. Additional funding from District 1 is expected as part of the current budget process and will be complete by the end of June. Once funding is confirmed, the department will put out an RFP for a consultant to complete the design and bid package. Once the consultant is on board, staff will hold another community meeting to seek feedback on final playground design options. The project is expected to be complete in Fall 2024.

Hidden Beach

County Parks accepted ownership of five parcels adjacent to the park from the Coastal Conservancy in May. County Parks will accept a \$590,000 grant from the Coastal Conservancy for a new restroom at the June 13 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Moran Lake

The Mission of the Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services is to provide safe, well designed and maintained parks and a wide variety of recreational and cultural opportunities for our diverse community

County Parks is reviewing the 60% design development plan set, as well as the draft Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan. A meeting with regulatory agencies and Monarch experts to review the draft HMP is planned for June/July. Public circulation and review of the draft HMP will occur later in the summer or early fall.

North Coast Facilities and Management Plan

The Working Group met in January 2023 to review public comments from Fall 2022 engagement and review a draft list of priority capital projects. During that meeting, it was determined that additional info was needed on existing conditions and agency capital improvement plans. The consultant is working to refine the draft project list for further review by the Working Group, expected in July.

Pace Property Trails

County Parks was awarded a \$210,000 grant from CA State Parks for construction of two new trails totaling 2.5 miles on the Pace Property with interpretive signage. The trails will connect to the existing trails at Quail Hollow Ranch, expanding public access to this unique ecosystem. The trails will be laid out to minimize impacts to the sensitive habitat in the area.

South County Parkland Acquisition

County Parks is negotiating with the owner to purchase the property via owner-provided financing.

Willowbrook

The memorial seating area is undergoing modifications to meet site constraints and is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.

The flagpole project was completed at the end of June.

Plans for the playground project are finalized. Award of the installation contract was approved by the Board of Supervisors meeting. Demolition of the existing playground will begin in August. Construction is expected to start this late summer.

Strategic Plan 5-year Update

Deputy Director Hurley will be providing a verbal update on this project.



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: July 31, 2023
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Jaime Jimenez, Recreation Supervisor
Subject: Recreation Section Report

Learning and Enrichment Camps

- Summer Camps were offered at three (3) different County Parks. Highlands Park, Quail Hollow Ranch and Aptos Village Park hosted an array of fun Enrichment Camps over the break. Camps were held from June 12-Aug. 4th. Participants had a fun-filled summer of games, arts and crafts, sports, cooking classes and participated in a wide range of local field trips.

Partnerships with Local Recreation Departments

- Parks staff have embarked in a partnership with the County Parks Friends non-profit. The recreation team is assisting with transportation and positive recreational experiences through the partnership, offerings collaboration and ideas to provide free ParkRx and Outdoor Equity programs throughout the county.
- Parks team secured a contract with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District to offer free summer camps at Mar Vista Elementary School over the summer break. Camp-TOS (Taking on Summer) ran from June 12th -August 4th.
- Parks team now offers a Tae Chi class for active adults. Parks staff attended training regiments through the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). The group meets twice a week at the Heart of Soquel Parkway on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am-12pm
- Parks team continues with the partnership at the Capitola Branch Library for Bridge Club sessions. Groups meet on Mondays from 10:30am-12pm.
- Parks team signed another partnership with the Merlone Geier Partners at the Capitola Mall. Through the agreement, Parks team will be able to continue offering the Mall Walking program. Program meets Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:30am-11am.

Recreation Programs & Contractual Agreements

- The Parks team extended the contract with El Palomar Ballroom to offer the Big East Swing classes along with another Salsa Dance Class for our active adult participants.
- National Academy of Athletics hosted an array of sports camps at Jose Avenue Park and Anna Jean Cummings County Park. Youth ranging between the ages of 4-12 participated in an All Sorts of Sports Camp, Soccer Camp and Basketball Camps.

Marketing Efforts

- The Department is working on its Fall activity guide to highlight the Fall activities hosted by our department. The activity guide will highlight activities between the months of September – January.
- The Department has continued to create marketing flyers in both Spanish/English and social media posts and updates.



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: August 14th, 2023
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Garrett Smart, Recreation Supervisor
Subject: Reservations/Facilities Section Report

Events:

Our main season is in off to a great start and some of our large special events have already passed and gone well. The department and our community partners are looking forward to our largest internally planned event Parks and Rex on August 19th from 11am to 4pm.

Staffing:

The Recreation Supervisor has been filled via a recruitment and an internal candidate prevailed. Recruitment for the now vacant position will be conducted. We have added two more Park Service Officers mid-summer to our growing team.

Fields and Courts:

We have just launched the new pilot program for reservations at pickleball courts with Rec, an app developer. They generously provided the signage to inform the public of this pilot program and educate the community on how reservations can be made. We believe this program will increase equitable access to the courts and new signage brings a fresh look to a well-loved resource.

Picnic Areas:

We have had some water issues arise involving restrooms that service the picnic areas. Portables have been installed and we anticipate resolving the water leaks to have the park bathrooms fully functional ASAP.

Community

In preparation for the launch of the new pickleball court reservation pilot program, an email was sent to the Santa Cruz Pickleball Club, informing them of coming change and soliciting community engagement with coming progressive programs in the parks.



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

Date: August 14, 2023 (June, July)
To: Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Margaret Ingraham, Volunteer Program Coordinator
Subject: Volunteer Program Report

Aldridge Lane Park

We had a very successful Community Volunteer Day on July 8th at the park. Weeds were pulled, and fences were painted. The Corralitos Market donated hot dogs and staff grilled them for the volunteers. It was a productive and friendly volunteer day.



Anna Jean Cummings Park

Our solo volunteer, Bill Garcia continues to work on the trails at AJ. He is manually filling in the crevices that were left by the winter rains to make the trails safer for hikers and runners.



East Cliff Parkway

The Nature Lodge had adopted the East Cliff Parkway and they will be doing volunteer projects throughout the year such as; weeding, cleaning, painting, picking up litter and other beautification projects. On 6.24.23 the group pulled 12 bags of weeds from around the parking lot and picnic area



Felton Discovery Park

We have monthly community volunteer days which help tremendously with weed control, and beautification.

The community volunteer days are the first Saturday of every month from 9-11.

Highlands County Park

Linda Skeff volunteers regularly and organizes volunteers to work on the native plant areas around the senior center. The efforts include planting, weeding and setting up the drip system. Linda is also organizing a fundraiser for the Valley Women's club at the Senior Center on September 17th 7:30 – 4:00 pm at the Senior Center. She will have native plants for sale!

Pinto Lake County Park

Volunteers at Pinto painted the bird blind, and it looks amazing. The fresh coat of paint also covered up the graffiti that was present.

We will be holding a community volunteer day at Pinto on October 21st from 10 – 1 and the focus will be to paint one of the bathroom structures, inside and out! Please spread the word and come join!



Volunteer Beautification Day

Pinto Lake County Park



We will be working to paint and restore the facilities at Pinto Lake County Park!

Wear clothes and shoes that can get paint on them! Paint and supplies will be provided.



October 21st

From 10 am to 1 pm



Pinto Lake County Park

757 Green Valley Rd
Watsonville CA 95076



RSVP

volunteer@scparcs.com
831.566.6529



Our solo volunteer, Kathryn is helping to edit and find content for our volunteer manual, we appreciate her help tremendously!.

The Disc Golf volunteers regularly schedule trail maintenance days and work with our Parks maintenance staff to keep the back trails and disc golf course safe and playable.

Quail Hollow Ranch

We have increased our Visitor Center open hours with the help of our newest volunteers and we have 1 more being trained.

The Nest Box program is ending and the volunteers will be removing some of the nest boxes and doing repairs to some of them.

The Santa Cruz Astronomy club offers monthly star gazing at Quail and is free to the public. On July 7th they had 13 community members and 11 club members at the stargazing event. The next event is schedule for August 11th, arrive before dark and stay until 11 if the sky is clear.

Felt Street Park

A group from the Santa Cruz Assembly of God church volunteered at Felt St. They cleaned up and added mulch to the Labyrinth, a County Parks Friend representative joined the event to give some history on the Labyrinth. The group also painted additional rocks for the labyrinth.



Park Host Program

Our Park Host at Pinto Lake County Park has helped us with some volunteer coordination projects, landscaping projects, Park Watch, graffiti abatement and litter control in the last few months.

We are interviewing for the Park Host position at Quail Hollow Ranch County Park. Send any interested candidates to the website below.

<https://www.conservationjobboard.com/>

Other

Three different Parks volunteer groups were recognized as Outstanding Volunteers by the Board of Supervisors! The Outstanding Volunteer groups are Merge 4 (pictured below), the Friends of Felton Library group, and the Nature Lodge. Merge 4 was honored for initiating and volunteering at the Heart of Soquel Park to clean it up after the winter storms. The Friends of Felton Library were honored for their efforts with the library and their consistent support at the Felton Discovery Park, and the Nature Lodge was honored for their past volunteer efforts at different Park locations and their commitment and adopting of the East Cliff Parkway.

