

## MINUTES

Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission  
November 2, 2021

The Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission met in a scheduled session on Tuesday, November 2, 2021, in the Washoe County Commission Chambers, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada.

The meeting was televised live and replayed on Washoe Channel at: <https://www.washoecounty.us/mgrsoff/Communications/wctv-live.php> also on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/WashoeCountyTV>

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Commissioner Chen called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

### **1. Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Stephanie Chen, Heidi Anderson, Doug Doolittle, Darla Lee, Chris Nenzel, Jennifer Oliver, Greg Shorts

**Staff Present:** Denise Evans, Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Lindsay Liddell, Sophia Kirschenman, Nick Steuer, Celia Walker, Eric Crump, David Solaro

**Absent:**

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### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

The pledge was recited.

### **3. Public Comments**

No public comment.

**4. Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of November 2, 2021.**

Motion by Commissioner Doolittle to approve the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of November 2, 2021. Second by Commissioner Nenzel. Motion carried unanimously.

No public comment.

**5. Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of September 7, 2021.**

Motion by Commissioner Oliver to approve the minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of September 7, 2021. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion carried unanimously.

No public comment.

**6. Acknowledgement and recognition of Park Operations staff for their outstanding service and contributions to Washoe County**

Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent, presented a 20-year certificate to Rob Brown and Mike Furlong and thanked them for their work over the years.

Chair Chen also congratulated and thanked Mike & Rob.

**7. Eagle Scout Presentation**

No items

**8. Presentation, discussion, and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to approve a lease agreement between Washoe County and Our Story, Inc. for the lease of the garage structure at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park for the term of 5 years commencing December 14, 2021, through December 14, 2026. (For Possible Action)**

Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent, said that Kenneth Dalton, President of Our Story, Inc gave a presentation about the desired use of Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park at the August 3<sup>rd</sup> Open Space and Regional

Parks Commission Meeting. At the recommendation of the Board, they have moved forward. Colleen gave an update on the structure and has been working on a lease agreement. Representatives from Our Story, Inc. were available for any questions.

Commissioner Oliver asked if this item was ready after any necessary repairs are made. Colleen said Park Commissioners can make the recommendation today and it will be taken to the Board of County Commissioners on December 14<sup>th</sup>. With Park Commission approval today, they would begin cleaning out supplies.

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Doolittle to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to approve a lease agreement between Washoe County and Our Story, Inc. for the lease of the garage structure at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park for the term of 5 years commencing December 14, 2021, through December 14, 2026. Second by Commissioner Nenzel. Motion carried unanimously.

**9. Presentation, discussion, and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to approve a participating agreement for interpretive services at the Galena Creek Visitors Center between Washoe County, the United States Forest Service, and Great Basin Institute commencing on December 31, 2021, through December 31, 2026. (For Possible Action)**

Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent, provided commissioners with the staff report and agreement, in addition to fiscal information regarding the agreement, and gave a background on the Galena Creek Visitors Center and said that she would like to have the Visitor's Center update Park Commission at a future meeting.

Commissioner Doolittle had no questions but applauded the effort over the years and would also like to see periodic updates from the Visitor's Center.

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Shorts to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to approve a participating agreement for interpretive services at the Galena Creek Visitors Center between Washoe County, the United States Forest Service, and Great Basin Institute commencing on December 31, 2021, through

December 31, 2026. Second by Commissioner Doolittle. Motion carried unanimously.

**10. Presentation, discussion, and possible approval for an off-leash dog pilot program to allow off-leash dogs at various sports fields within Washoe County Parks by Celia Walker, Park Ranger II (For Possible Action).**

Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent, introduced Celia Walker, Park Ranger II. Celia gave a presentation on an off-leash dog pilot program.

Chair Chen thanked Celia for her presentation and thought it was a great proposal. In response to Chair Chen's question if there would be a press release and social media points, Celia said there would be a huge push to let the public know and make sure it's understood that this is an off-leash area, not a dog park.

In response to Commissioner Doolittle's question, if Parks can provide a quarterly update to Park Commission on the pilot program and ensure that leagues are contacted and that Parks have their cooperation, Celia said they would keep Commission updated and ensure leagues are aware and cooperating.

In response to Commissioner Nenzel's question regarding including the pasture area of Betsy Caughlin Donnelly Park, Celia said possibly in the future.

Public comment from Jaime Aranda, Vice President of Galena Country Estates Homeowner's Association near Whites Creek Park. Jaime said that he thought it was a good idea but would like to exclude Whites Creek Park due to its small size, and traffic in the neighborhood.

Public comment from John Grecu, from Galena Country Estates board agreed with Jaime about excluding Whites Creek due to small size, increased traffic, and safety of its residents.

Public comment from Vicki LaRovere, homeowner in Galena Country Estates. Vickie proposed that the program take place in South Valleys only instead of Whites Creek and South Valleys as leagues also use Whites Creek and would have to help maintain and clean up if people were irresponsible and as South Valleys has easy access off a public street rather than in a residential neighborhood.

Commissioner Nenzel agreed with public commenters about excluding Whites Creek as it is small and in a residential area.

In response to Chair Chen's question about sufficient parking in Whites Creek, Celia said that it does have its own parking lot with approximately 30 spaces. Celia said that Whites Creek is fully fenced, and a lot of people already use it as an off-leash area, and a goal of the pilot program is to let other park goers know that during the designated hours, there may be off leash dogs.

The pilot program is only for one year, and if it doesn't work after a year, it can be removed. Celia said that Whites Creek did not have to be included in the Pilot Program but was included to provide another option in that area, as South Valleys may get very busy.

Regarding Commissioner Doolittle's question about staff impact currently, and how much time rangers are spending on off-leash issues and clean up required as a result of off leash use, Celia said she didn't have exact numbers, but the park doesn't currently have a clean-up station or accessible trash cans. The goal would be to make it easy for dog owners to clean up the area.

Regarding Commissioner Doolittle's question that without adding Whites Creek to the Pilot Program with the controls and rules in place with the Pilot Program, would the off-leash and pet waste clean-up problems continue to be in an issue at Whites Creek. Celia said that it would continue to be a problem in her opinion. Commissioner Doolittle stated that he agrees that it might be best to leave Whites Creek out of the Pilot Program.

Colleen Wallace-Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent, suggested that rangers and maintenance staff gather input on off leash issues at Whites Creek to present to Park Commission at a later date. Commissioners Nenzel and Doolittle stated they would like to make a motion to approve to begin the pilot program, excluding Whites Creek Park until the information was gathered from rangers and maintenance staff.

Regarding Commissioner Lee's question if there were other larger parks considered in South Reno, besides Whites Creek, Celia said they did look at other parks, but there were other factors that could interfere with the Pilot Program, such as school letting out, horses, proximity to playgrounds.

In response to Chair Chen's question about utilizing volunteers instead of park staff to collect data on the pilot program once per day, Celia said they would be utilizing volunteers, maintenance staff and rangers. Celia also said that North Valleys does have a car counter that can be used for numbers.

Commissioner Nenzel motion to recommend staff move forward with the off-leash dog pilot program at North Valleys, South Valleys and Lazy 5 Regional Parks utilizing the flat fields as off leash areas during non-league times and evaluate the use after one year as indicated by the PowerPoint presentation. Second by Commissioner Nenzel. Motion carried unanimously.

### **11. Program/Park of the Month – Outdoor Escape Room**

Nicholas Steuer, Park Ranger II, gave a presentation on the Outdoor Escape Room.

Commissioners thanked Nick for his presentation and for putting this event on in the parks.

No public comment.

### **12. Parks Reports**

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent said that the Truckee River Cleanup was complete, multiple sites had weed removal and completed by Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful volunteers and park staff.

Aquatics facilities are closed for the season. Colleen confirmed Commissioners received the May Foundation Report, Commissioner Doolittle thanked Colleen and her staff for the great job they did on the report.

No public comments.

### **13. Director's Report**

Dave Solaro, Assistant County Manager/Community Services Department Director gave an update. The Board of County Commissioners awarded ADA

improvements to South Valleys Regional Park. Parks accepted \$174,000 in donations in September.

The Board of County Commissioners acknowledged and agreed to the abandonment of the termination of rights reverter for the Hunter Creek Project. The Board of County Commissioners also initiated the repeal and proceedings to change Chapter 95. The Board of County Commissioners did two actions within September and October to transfer Wild Creek Golf Course to First Tee of Northern Nevada. The Board of County Commissioners approved a trail easement associated with a development in Spanish Springs. The Board of County Commissioners approved the extension of Washoe County and Cal-Mazz Golf Management at Sierra Sage.

Dave also requested that Park Commissioners send an e-mail relating to park needs in the next few months.

No commissioner comments.

No public comment.

**14. Commissioner's Comments:**

No comments

**15. Public Comments:**

No comments

**16: Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 3:39p.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Penland, Office Assistant III.



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Jennifer Oliver, Chair