

**Draft MINUTES**  
**Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission**  
**February 1, 2022**

**The Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission met in a scheduled session on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 via Zoom teleconference only.**

**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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**Vice Chair Nenzel called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.**

**1. Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Stephanie Chen, Heidi Anderson, Doug Doolittle, Chris Nenzel, Lisa Rode, Nicholas Martin Kearney, Darla Lee

**Staff Present:** Denise Evans, Colleen Wallace Barnum, Lindsay Liddell, Eric Crump, Sophia Kirschenman, Celia Walker, Dave Solaro

**Absent:** Jennifer Oliver, Maxwell DiNatale, Doug Doolittle

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

The pledge was recited.

**3. Public Comments**

Luke Stevenson stated that he and a group of dog owners exercise and take their dogs out once a day, they have been asked to leave Whites Creek as it is not an off-leash area. Mr. Stevenson stated he understands that there is an off-leash area as part of the pilot program at South Valleys, however, that park is bordered with a busy street and is not fenced. Mr. Stevenson feels it is unsafe for motorists and dogs. Mr. Stevenson also stated that the soccer fields are being used by players all weekend and interfering with the off-leash area.

Commissioner Nenzel thanked Mr. Stevenson for his comment.

No additional public comment.

**4. Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of February 1, 2022.**

Motion by Commissioner Lee to approve the agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of February 1, 2022. Second by Commissioner Chen. Motion carried unanimously.

No public comment.

**5. Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 4, 2022.**

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Lee to approve the agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 4, 2022. Second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion carried unanimously.

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

No items.

No public comment.

**7. Presentation and discussion on a parkland easement application submitted by Toll Brothers for proposed temporary construction and permanent slope easements along a portion of the northern boundary of Lazy 5 Regional Park to support the neighboring Stonebrook West housing development.**

Sophia Kirschenman, Park Planner introduced Jeff Borchardt with Toll Brothers. Sophia stated that item 7 is not an action item. The item is being presented for Commissioners to ask questions or address concerns and the item will come back before Park Commission at a later date.

Jeff Borchardt gave a presentation of the Lazy 5 Slope Easement.

No public comment.

Commissioner Nenzel thanked Jeff for his presentation.

**8. Quarterly update of the off-leash dog pilot program, which allows off-leash dogs during certain hours in areas of North Valleys, Lazy 5, and South Valleys parks by Celia Walker, Park Ranger II.**

Celia Walker, Park Ranger II gave a presentation with an update on the off-leash dog pilot program.

In response to Commissioner Rode's question about expanding the program, Celia said the goal, if successful, is to expand to more Washoe County parks and have the program adopted by City of Sparks and City of Reno parks. Celia stated there are also signs at the parks that state the program will end if the rules are not followed.

Commissioner Chen thanked Celia for the presentation. In response to Commissioner Chen's question about hours and signage, Celia stated there are signs posted with the hours. Off leash hours are through park closing until February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and March 1<sup>st</sup>-October 31<sup>st</sup> are 8a-1p due to field reservations.

Vice Chair Nenzel thanked Celia for her presentation and the program. In response to Commissioner Nenzel's question, was there sufficient bags at South Valleys to pick up dog waste, Celia said bags were available and pet owners are to have their own bags and clean up pet waste. In response to Commissioner Nenzel's question about adding more, Celia said they could potentially set up another area.

In response to Commissioner Rode's question, can owners put grocery bags in the pet waste bag dispensers, Celia said owners are encouraged to bring their own bags and can carry grocery bags, but would recommend not putting them in the dispensers as they can be blown around by the wind and cause litter in the park.

Denise Evans read a statement from Commissioner Doolittle. Celia stated she would continue to give quarterly updates to Park Commission.

Public comment by Michelle Salazar. Ms. Salazar stated that she was one of ten people cited in the quarterly review of people using Whites Creek Park daily. Ms. Salazar noted that in November's meeting when the pilot program was approved, the Galena Estate residents objected to the pilot program and Whites Creek was not added but could potentially be added at a later date. Ms. Salazar feels it would be prudent to add Whites Creek to the pilot program, and rangers should interview current park users, who are respectful to the park and hold each other accountable.

Vice Chair Nenzel and Ranger Celia Walker suggested those park users wanting to add Whites Creek to the pilot program attend the upcoming CAB meetings to state their concerns. Celia also gave her e-mail and said the concerns and comments could be sent to her directly to discuss and present in the quarterly updates.

Public comment by James Rasfield. Mr. Rasfield is thankful for the program and said he had the same concerns as Michelle Salazar. He stated that Whites Creek being fully fenced is a benefit and makes it easier to control the dogs. Mr. Rasfield stated the parking lot is never full from dog owners and that any activity at the park is going to increase traffic and parking. Mr. Rasfield stated they are responsible dog owners and hopes that Park Commission will reconsider adding Whites Creek. Vice Chair Nenzel thanked Mr. Rasfield for his comments and again suggested attending the upcoming CAB meeting.

Public comment by Luke Stevenson. Mr. Stevenson reiterated the importance of having a place where dogs can run safely off leash. Whites Creek would work well because it is fenced and not near a busy street. Mr. Stevenson would appreciate reconsideration of Whites Creek.

## **9. Update on Washoe County Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Budget, including, but not limited to, budget priorities for Community Services Department and Capital Projects related to Washoe County Parks and Open Space.**

Director Eric Crump gave a presentation on Fiscal 2022/2023 Budget.

In response to Commissioner Rode questions, what is the typical revenue for May Museum. Eric Crump stated May Museum has several revenue streams, which are the public rentals, exhibits as well as entrance fees. Eric stated that some revenue was lost due to Covid.

In response to Commissioner Martin Kearney's question, would the construction cost of the succulent garden be donated? Director Crump said there is a potential

anonymous funder that has supported the arboretum in the past and they are working on a formal agreement. Director Crump stated that the above base requests for additional maintenance worker are not associated with the cactus and succulent garden and that Washoe County's benchmark against other park agencies and arboretums and is well below the national average.

No public comment.

## **10. Parks Reports**

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent gave park updates. The Wilbur D May Museum currently has an exhibit. The KTMB Christmas tree recycling at Rancho San Rafael and Bartley ranch accepted over 10,000 trees that were mulched to be used by parks and can be picked up by the public.

Attendance for the Come in From the Cold series is lower than previous years due to the increase in Covid cases from the Omicron variant, but hopeful attendance will increase as cases lower.

Four Washoe County parks were used as Covid testing sites, parks did see some traffic issues, but the testing has slowed down significantly.

Ranger walks start in February at North Valleys Regional Park.

In response to Commissioner Rode's comment about seeing several posts on social media about needles in downtown parks, Colleen stated that she hasn't heard those complaints but there is a program with Northern NV HOPES that may have receptacles for used needles, City of Reno would have that information. Washoe County parks do not have receptacles for used needles.

No public comment.

## **11. Director's Reports**

Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro stated the Board of County Commissioners appointed three new park commissioners and welcomed them to the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission.

Board of County Commissioners approved easement for Sugarloaf Peak and awarded a bid for Bowers Pool replastering and splash park.

Dave also stated he had an appointment with the consultant that is doing the boundary line adjustment on February 2, 2022 and will be signing to add 4 acres to park property prior to transfer to First Tee of Northern Nevada. Mr. Solaro is also working with the Bureau of Land Management on a 40-acre addition to the property.

In response to Darla Lee's question about a map of the progress or proposed new design of the Wildcreek progress being available online, County Manager Solaro said he will send the information in an email to the park commissioners.

No public comment.

## **12. Commissioner Requests for future agenda items**

Vice Chair Nenzel welcomed new members of Open Space and Regional Park Commission.

## **13. Public Comments**

No Comments.

## **14. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 4:06p

**Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Penland, Office Assistant III.**