

Draft MINUTES
Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission
March 22, 2023

The Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission met in a scheduled session on Wednesday, March 22, 2023, 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>

Kevin Joell called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Kevin Joell, Nicholas Martin Kearney, Timothy Dake, Lisa Rode, Miles Gertler, Mariluz Garcia

Staff Present: Colleen Wallace Barnum, Jennifer Roebuck, Eric Crump, Brian Harrower, Lindsey Liddell, Jeff Patterson, Brandon Roman, Adriana Albarran, Luke Sorenson

Absent: Stephanie Chen, Maxwell DiNatale, Doug Doolittle, Omer Rains

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Public Comment

Public comment via Zoom from Clifton Young. Mr. Young stated he served 10 years on the Washoe County Open Space & Regional Parks Commission. Mr. Young stated around the time of his father's passing, he approached park staff about a memorial for his father on Windy Hill, and he chose benches with shade, and that he and his family donated around \$20,000. Mr. Young stated he would like to look into memorial plaques that can be cleaned of any graffiti. Mr. Young stated his father's estate is being distributed so if additional funds need to be disbursed for plaques, it needs to be done soon. Mr. Young distributed a copy of the eulogy given by Karen Mullen at his father's memorial, Brandon Roman stated it would be added to the website.

Chair Doolittle thanked Mr. Young & his father for their contribution and will have an item added to a future agenda to look into memorials on Windy Hill.

4. Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of March 22, 2023

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Dake to approve the agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of March 22, 2023. Second by Commissioner Rode. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 25, 2023

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Kearney to approve the minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of January 25, 2023. Second by Commissioner Rode. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent recognized Park Ranger Robert Holland at the North Parks & District Manager Jeff Patterson of the South District Parks & thanked them for their service.

Chair Doolittle stated he's had the pleasure of working with Ranger Bob at Rancho and thanked him for his hard work.

No public comment.

7. Resolution to acknowledge Kevin Callahan for his 19 years of service and contributions as the Washoe County Park Maintenance Supervisor. (For Possible Action)

Chair Doolittle read the resolution for Kevin Callahan.

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent presented Kevin with the signed resolution and certificate. Colleen stated Kevin did an extraordinary job for many years with maintenance in the parks, working with rangers and work crews. Colleen and the commissioners thanked Kevin for his hard work. Colleen and commissioners thanked Kevin for his hard work.

Motion by Chair Joell to approve the resolution to acknowledge Kevin Callahan for his 19 years of service and contributions as the Washoe County Park maintenance supervisor. Second by Commissioner Kearney. Motion carried.

8. Presentation by Mike Mazzaferri, PGA from Sierra Sage Golf Course on the Sierra Sage Golf Course Operations for 2022.

Director Crump introduced Mazz Golf. Mike Mazzaferri gave a presentation on operations.

Mike also wanted to speak to Commission about water. Mike stated that the City of Reno sells their reclaimed water and when he signed the contract to take over Sierra Sage, the contract stated he would pay a certain amount for water until a pipeline was paid off. The pipeline was paid off but in 2020 City of Reno billed Mazza Golf for \$300,000. The agreement stated that Mazz Golf would pay a minimum of half of the potable water, not to exceed 70% but in 2022, Mazz Golf paid \$160,000 in water and is expecting to pay over \$200,000 in 2023.

Mike stated he has spoken to the mayor, city & county staff to resolve the issue but nothing has been done and plans to go public with the issue. Mike also stated that the County does not charge City of Reno for water.

In response to Commissioner Joell's question about the pipeline to American Flats, Mike stated that when water is not used it goes to Swan Lake. The golf course uses about 120 million gallons of water during the irrigating season, and they are now paying around \$160 per 1000 and can use about 800,000 every day. Mike stated they have cut down the watering schedule, but the golf course may not be able to stay open while paying that much for water without raising rates which would lose customers.

Commissioner Dake thanked Mike for his presentation.

9. Presentation, discussion, and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to approve a three-year sponsorship agreement (2023, 2024, and 2025) between Washoe County and Great Reno Balloon Race, Inc.

for the annual event to be held at Washoe County's Rancho San Rafael Regional Park to include waiver of park facility rental and use fees [\$8,825 in waived fees for each event year] in consideration of Washoe County being recognized as a major event sponsor. (For Possible Action)

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent introduced the item & Pete Copeland, Executive Director of the Great Reno Balloon Race. Pete Copeland gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Kearney's question about what's new in 2023, Pete said there will be a lot of new balloons and hopefully more new special shaped balloons.

Chair Doolittle thanked Pete for his presentation and all their events.

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Dake to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to approve a three-year sponsorship agreement (2023, 2024, and 2025) between Washoe County and Great Reno Balloon Race, Inc. for the annual event to be held at Washoe County's Rancho San Rafael Regional Park to include waiver of park facility rental and use fees [\$8,825 in waived fees for each event year] in consideration of Washoe County being recognized as a major event sponsor. Second by Commissioner Kearney. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Presentation, discussion, and possible approval of the proposed May Arboretum and Botanical Garden Donation policy. The program fees have needed to be updated and donations for trees and benches are proposed to increase to industry standards. (For Possible Action)

Collen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations superintendent gave an updated and introduced Horticulturist Luke Sorenson. Luke gave a presentation on the policy.

In response to Commissioner Gertler's question about cheaper options for family members to memorialize their loved ones, Luke stated the arboretum does also have memorial bricks that can be purchased for \$250 with no end limit on them as they are infrastructure.

In response to Chair Joell's question about what areas the policy would apply to and if the program would expand to other areas in the future, Luke stated it would

include just the arboretum. Colleen added that if members of the public would like to donate a tree to other parks, they will allow it without any kind of plaque or memorial due to vandalism.

In response to Chair Joell's question about the number of benches per acre comparable to other arboretums, Luke stated the arboretum has about 11 per acre and comparable arboretums have 4 per acre.

In response to Chair Joell's question about memorials for people who may not be able to afford the new policy and naming facilities, Colleen stated there is a naming policy and fees being waived would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In response to Commissioner Dake's question about the existing benches, Luke said it will be a 10-20 year project, but the removal will be prioritized by age and condition.

In response to Chair Joell's question about the families with benches currently, Luke stated that they can purchase a new bench with a new plaque and there are some organizations that may be willing to step in to assist families that may not be able to pay the new prices. Chair Joell recommended a wall or area for plaques of removed benches, Luke stated that was something they can do.

In response to Commissioner Rode's question on the trees that can be planted, Luke stated that there are roughly 40 areas for trees to be planted and the facility is under development for 2 more acres.

In response to Commissioner Rode's question about other plants to donate, Luke said trees have a longer life and are a better option for families.

In response to Chair Joell's question on tree replacement, Luke stated that 4-5 trees are replaced annually and if something happens to a donated tree, it will be replaced. Luke stated the arboretum currently has 2 tree requests and 17 bench requests.

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Gertler to approve the proposed May Arboretum and Botanical Garden Donation policy. Second by Commissioner Rode. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Parks Reports

Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent gave Parks Reports. Come in From the Cold at Bartley Ranch ended last week and some programs were rescheduled due to weather. The Gardening in Nevada series happens every Tuesday in February and March and will end next Tuesday. Numbers are still solid for Expedition Dinosaur at the May Museum with over \$70,000 in revenue and about 7000 people in attendance.

No public comment.

12. Director's Report

Eric Crump gave the Director's Report. BCC approved 1600 in donations in February. Golf program lives in special revenue fund, and no tax dollars subsidize golf.

In response to Chair Joell's question about golf funds, Mr. Crump stated investments and improvements to the golf course are paid for by the lease, not Washoe County.

No public comment.

Chair Joell thanked park staff for hard work during the harsh winter and extended his gratitude towards roads staff as well.

13. Commissioner Request for future agenda items

Request by Commissioner Dake to add a funding & spending staff report to a future agenda.

Chair Joell will follow up with staff on public comment regarding a memorial at Windy Hill.

Chair Joell asked for an update on the joint meeting with the City of Reno and City of Sparks, Mr. Crump stated it is tentatively scheduled for April 25th from 6p-8p and will keep everyone updated.

Request by Commissioner Rode to have someone follow up and discuss the water charge issue with Sierra Sage Golf Course.

14. Public Comments

Public comment by Mark Newman. Mr. Newman stated that his comment was covered by Commissioner Rode regarding the water issue at Sierra Sage Golf Course. Mr. Newman also wondered why the longest event, the Reno Air Races, has been cancelled.

Public comment by Chair Joell. Chair Joell wanted all commissioners and staff to be aware and encouraged staff and commissioners to attend the International Trails Symposium in April at Hidden Valley Regional Park.

15. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:36pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Roebuck, Office Assistant III.