

**LODI CITY COUNCIL
SHIRTSLEEVE SESSION
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET
TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2019**

A. Roll Call by City Clerk

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, January 8, 2019, commencing at 7:05 a.m.

Present: Council Member Johnson, Council Member Nakanishi, and Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne

Absent: Council Member Mounce, and Mayor Chandler

Also Present: City Manager Schwabauer, City Attorney Magdich, and Deputy City Clerk Farris

NOTE: Council Member Johnson participated in the meeting via teleconference.

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department's Annual Update (PRCS)

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director Jeff Hood provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) Fiscal Year 2017/18 annual update. Specific topics of discussion included accomplishments, financial results, fund balance trend, performance indicators, progress to date, looking ahead, looking beyond 2019, Measure L, Proposition 68, challenges, and summary.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Mr. Hood stated that over the past four years, parks maintenance provided by seasonal workers has been reduced by 50 percent due to increased minimum wage and insurance requirements, the public is starting to notice the inability to keep up with maintenance, and available funds are being used for capital maintenance rather than personnel. City Manager Schwabauer added that the final step to the \$15/per hour minimum wage will take place in 2022, so the impact will continue.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Mr. Hood stated that the City's contact with the State Parks and Recreation Commission, Virginia Madueno, is no longer a commissioner, but he will follow up to see if there is still an interest on the commission in the Lodi Lake aquatic center.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne and Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Hood explained that maintenance crews are focused on high-impact areas, but the Clean Parks/Safe Kids program is a volunteer effort to keep neighborhood parks clean. PRCS Deputy Director Cathi DeGroot added the program is about a month old and is a community outreach effort to clean the parks and to report graffiti and vandalism. While the Adopt-a-Park program is more formalized and involves civic and church groups making long-term commitments, the new program is aimed at individuals or small, informal groups picking up cleaning kits and taking care of their neighborhood park. Both programs will be promoted on the new City website.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Mr. Hood stated PRCS recently held a focus group on aquatics in Lodi and that the response was very positive; aquatics staffing has been increased by moving personnel around within the PRCS department; Hutchins Street Square pool users feel confident the City will not be closing the pool; and the public is happy to see the City investing in aquatics, both at Hutchins Street Square and Blakely Park.

In response to Council Member Johnson's question regarding recreation programs, Mr. Hood responded adult programs are status quo, other than late-night basketball returning; changes in demographics as baby boomers age has affected adult participation levels; and most youth

sports are holding steady, with the exception of basketball which recently experienced a slight decline due to competition from another league. Mr. Hood offered to supply to Council a more detailed recreation program report recently prepared for the Parks and Recreation Commission. Ms. DeGroot added it is the PRCS Department's goal and priority to analyze current programming and develop a five-year strategic plan that is more data driven to address community preferences and needs.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi's question regarding Measure L, Mr. Hood explained that improvements to DeBenedetti Park are funded by impact fees, but improvements to Candy Cane Park are a result of the passage of the measure. He further explained that renovations to Candy Cane Park are extensive because to make it compliant with current safety and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, the entire concrete footprint of the playground will need to be removed, which also impacts irrigation and sidewalks. Mr. Schwabauer added bringing Candy Cane Park up to ADA standards entails extensive concrete work which will impact storm drains; it will probably cost \$100,000 just to prepare the park for the playground equipment, as opposed to Graves Park where new playground equipment could be installed in the existing footprint.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, Mr. Hood responded that Kofu Park has two courts dedicated solely to pickle ball, two courts which can be used for pickle ball or tennis, and three courts dedicated solely to tennis; and there are no plans currently for indoor pickle ball at the Armory.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne's inquiry regarding the Grape Bowl, Mr. Hood stated the current configuration is ADA compliant and meets the City's needs for youth soccer and football, and while renters may want seating on the North side, they would need to assist in the funding. Larger non-sporting rental events would be possible with seating on the North side, but the stairways on that side are in such poor condition, it would cost approximately \$55,000 just to bring them to a safe condition. City Attorney Magdich reiterated that the Grape Bowl is currently ADA compliant for City use. Mr. Schwabauer clarified that it is compliant as there is no seating allowed on the North side.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Hood provided cost estimates for Measure L projects: Candy Cane Park - \$600,000; playground replacements - \$200,000 per park; Lodi Lake South Shore parking lot - \$1 million; climate control for Hutchins Street Square pool - \$300,000; tree maintenance - per Council direction; and replacement of restrooms - \$200,000 to \$250,000 per park.

Mr. Hood stated Legion Park was inadvertently omitted from the list of parks eligible and selected by the Parks & Recreation Commission for consideration for Proposition 68 grant funding application. Van Buskirk Park is eligible but was not chosen by the Commission due to its size and location.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Hood explained the Proposition 68 grant funding is an application process that will involve much public outreach and research, so staff feels it would be best to concentrate on two parks and submit thorough applications. Mr. Schwabauer clarified that it will be extremely competitive with grant applications exceeding available funding. He added that the City will not hire a grant writer, as Mr. Hood will be able to perform that role.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne's question regarding income from Community Facilities Districts (CFD) not covering maintenance costs, Mr. Hood gave the example of Rose Gate subdivision where maintenance costs last year were approximately \$12,000 more than funds received from the CFD. Following discussion regarding raising CFD fees, Mr. Schwabauer explained the CFD is increased 2% annually by index but to increase the fee more, it would need to go to a vote by members of each CFD. Deputy City Manager Andrew Keys further explained that the City receives approximately \$175,000 per year from the CFDs but the use of the funds is broader than just park maintenance; funds are added to the General Fund to cover fire, police, and street costs as well.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi's request for an update on the homeless situation in

the parks, Mr. Hood stated that many homeless have moved from Lawrence Park to other parks; the Softball Complex and Emerson Park have both seen an increase in homeless; Legion Park has a small population of homeless in permanent residence there; and restroom vandalism continues to be a problem.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Mr. Hood stated that there are regular encampments of homeless at Lodi Lake, but due to the cover, they are not as visible as at other parks; it is a problem, particularly at the Nature Area and West Bank.

As Mr. Hood concluded his presentation, he acknowledged PRCS staff who were present and recognized their contributions: Deputy PRCS Director Cathi DeGroot, Recreation Manager Grant Plath, Recreation Manager Jennifer Winn, Park Supervisor Jason Rickard, Park Project Coordinator Steve Virrey, and Aquatics Coordinator Tyler Ashbaugh. He also recognized the contributions of Mr. Dan Arbuckle, with Headwaters Kayak.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Mr. Hood stated that, should the Boys & Girls Club fold, the building would revert to the City, but the club seems to have survived the latest challenges and he is hopeful for its future. Mr. Schwabauer added that the Armory would be in the same position, staff has considered the situations, and he is unsure at this time what the deferred maintenance on those buildings would be.

Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne commented that the Kiwanis Club will be making improvements to the shade structure as investment in Lodi Lake is important to the group; recognized the turnaround in revenue in PRCS; applauded the efforts in obtaining the fourth year without bacterial closures at Lodi Lake; and expressed appreciation on behalf of the Mayor to PRCS.

Myrna Wetzell, member of the public, questioned 1) if a \$300,000 appropriation had been made for Candy Cane Park and 2) why Candy Cane Park is not included on the Proposition 68 list. Mr. Hood replied that 1) \$300,000 is the anticipated cost but no appropriation has been made; and 2) Candy Cane Park is not eligible for the grant as it does not meet median income requirements and its proximity to Lodi Lake makes it ineligible for grants based on population density.

Mike Lusk, member of the public, expressed his concern over the CFD shortfall, the CFD discount, and the appearance that CFD fees are not being spent within the district where they are collected. Mr. Schwabauer explained that the CFD rate was discounted in exchange for an increase in impact fees, not as a discount to developers; CFD fees cover costs of General Fund services, such as fire, police, street, storm drain, and parks maintenance; these costs exceed the amount collected, so CFD payments are not being bled off to other neighborhoods; and the City currently receives about 16 cents of each dollar paid in property tax, which is an extremely low rate in comparison to other communities, but the rate cannot be renegotiated due to Proposition 13 restrictions.

Alex Aliferis, member of the public, expressed his concerns over Lawrence Park and stated Hale Park is still used by many families and he feels that this use contributes to a lessened presence of homeless and drug users. Mr. Hood responded that the City has taken steps at Lawrence Park, including installation of the canine training area, closure of the restrooms, and removal of tables and barbeques; however, concerns remain due to the number of school children who walk past the park who are exposed to the homeless population and drug use each day. He added that Lawrence Park is on the Proposition 68 list; a new master plan is needed to reconstruct the park into something attractive for the neighborhood; used parks are less attractive to homeless; and public engagement is important to the process.

C. Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items

None.

D. Adjournment

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 a.m.

ATTEST:

Pamela M. Farris
Deputy City Clerk