



# COUNTY OF YOLO

Department of General Services  
Parks Division

*Kevin Yarris*  
Director

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## PARKS, RECREATION AND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PRWAC)

### Summary of Minutes

March 12, 2018

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**Members in Attendance:** Andrew Fulks, Karen Sutliff, Bridgette O'Flaherty, Nancy Ullrey, Catherine Portman (Chair), Cliff Feldheim (Vice Chair), Jack Young

**Members Absent:** Anthony Volkar, Trini Campbell

**County Staff in Attendance:** Kevin Yarris, General Services Director; Jeff Anderson, Associate Parks Planner

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#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Portman called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

#### 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as presented.

**Motion: Young. Second: Ullrey. Motion carried.**

#### 3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 8, 2018 meeting were adopted as amended.

**Motion: Young. Second: Ullrey. Motion carried.**

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

#### 5. REGULAR AGENDA

5.1 Advisory Members appointments/reappointments/resignations

None.

5.2 Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair: Cliff Feldheim (District 1); Vice-Chair: Jack Young (District 2)

**Motion: Fulks. Second Ullrey. Motion carried.**

5.3 Ground Squirrels at Grasslands Regional Park (Members from Sacramento Valley Soaring Society will be present to discuss problem and potential solutions)

Director Yarris introduced the item. Jim Ludwigson, Sacramento Valley Soaring Society President, and Bruce Barnett, SVSS club member and biologist, introduced themselves and provided context to the ground squirrel infestation within the SVSS area. Squirrel burrows present a danger to people, dogs, and sheep stepping in the holes. Mr. Barnett estimates there are 300-500 squirrels in the SVSS area and expects the infestation to be significant in the remainder of the park, including the future trail and dog park. Mr. Barnett has counted 12-14 complexes in the SVSS area, but may be many more where hidden by long grass. Mr. Barnett suggested that constructing 10-15 perches in the area would likely be the most cost effective control effort. He also described the benefits and constraints of other control options, including gas, concussion, shooting, and pesticide. Mr. Barnett summarized the estimate he received from Perry's Wildlife Control and provided a handout to the committee. He stated that the most effective control effort would be to treat active burrows with high-pressure carbon monoxide (CO) and then fill the holes with expandable material. Although likely effective, this approach is costly and requires ongoing treatment.

Josh Bush, Wildlife Biologist with CDFW, mentioned that an unpublished study has shown that perches have proven to be an effective control method on levees.

Committee Members discussed the issue and asked questions of Bruce Barnett and Josh Bush. The discussion and questions touched on the following: What is the benefit to plugging the holes with hardened material of squirrels will just go somewhere else?; Squirrels are considered nongame animals in Fish and Game Code and may be shot with non-lead ammunition; Look into obtaining grant funding to address this issue; Construction of perches would be a great project for eagle scouts; Perches may pose a threat to young burrowing owls since some raptors prey on them; What are the habitat changes that can be made in the area to reduce the amount of squirrels?

Director Yarris stated that staff will continue to explore this issue and will continue to communicate with SVSS and CDFW and will bring the item back to a future meeting.

#### 5.4 Gibson House Update

Carolyn West, Analyst in the County Administrator's Office, introduced Iulia Bodeanu, Interim Curator, and James Glica-Hernandez, Executive Director for the Yolo County Historical Museum Corporation. Ms. West explained that the Board of Supervisors directed staff to develop a plan for an operational partnership for management of the Gibson House and historical collection with YoloArts and the Yolo County Historical Museum Corporation (YCHM). In December 2017 the Board reviewed two options for management and recommended to move forward with the option where YoloArts would operate the Gibson House as a cultural center and YCHM would manage the historical collection in partnership with a new county museum curator. A workgroup was created in December to put together details of the implementation plan and bring back to the Board in late April. County Administrator's Office staff is currently developing MOUs with YoloArts and YCHM. The workgroup has also been evaluating capital improvement needs, such as converting the garage to a conditioned space for storage of historical collection items. A community meeting is scheduled for March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, to gather community input on the implementation plan for the proposed operational model for the Gibson House and historical collection.

Director Yarris explained that although the Gibson House grounds are considered a County Park property, the Parks Division does not maintain and is not involved with the day to day management of the site.

#### 5.5 Renewable Energy Development (wind/solar) in County Parks

Chair Portman introduced the item and provided context to the issue. Committee Member Fulks questioned what the perceived threat is. General sentiment among the committee was that they did not want to see a commercial energy project on parks or open space. Committee Member Ullrey suggested

that her and Chair Portman draft a letter to the Board of Supervisors asking them to develop a policy statement affirming that open space lands would be a last resort for solar and wind energy development.

***Motion: Ullrey. Second: Portman. Motion carried.***

5.6 Parks Marketing and Sponsorship Plans

Director Yarris explained that staff is meeting with marketing consultants this week to review the draft plan. Staff will share the plan with the committee and discuss at a future meeting.

5.7 Status Report on CDFW Monies provided to Parks Division

Director Yarris explained that Parks Division typically receives around \$3,000 per year from CDFW and funds can only be used for specific purposes as defined by CDFW. Staff has used the funds in the past years to support operations and maintenance to fix irrigation damaged by fires and squirrels. Staff has not spent the money down this fiscal year. Committee Member Fulks asked how the process would work for the committee to recommend use of funds. He added that the committee may be able to leverage funds or resources. Director Yarris said staff will put more information together to discuss at a future meeting.

5.8 Discuss possibility of changing date and location of PRWAC meetings

Associate Parks Planner Anderson informed the committee that the Parks Division pays for security for the PRWAC meetings held at the Administration Building, and suggested that the committee consider changing the regular meeting dates to Norton Hall located at 70 Cottonwood Street in Woodland. Available dates are the third Monday, first Wednesday, and third Wednesday of the month. The seven committee members present were all in favor of changing the regular meeting date to the third Monday at Norton Hall.

## 6. PARKS DIVISION STAFF UPDATES

A report by the Parks Division staff on recent activities relevant to the Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Advisory Committee. *Please note that per the California Open Meetings Law (Government Code section 54954.2); discussion of the staff update is limited to asking clarifying questions. However, the Committee or any individual Committee member may request that an item be placed on a future agenda for further discussion.*

6.1 Cache Creek Campground Update

Associate Parks Planner Anderson explained that the potential park host fell through so staff increased advertising efforts. We have interest from approximately three individuals. Director Yarris stated that staff will need to look at various long term management options if we are unable to secure a park host.

6.2 Knights Landing Boat Launch Grant Update

Director Yarris provided a brief status report. Associate Parks Planner Anderson noted that the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration is tentatively scheduled for Board of Supervisors action on April 24, 2018. Once the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration is approved and the engineering plans are complete, staff can continue the application process with the state and Federal agencies. Staff is exploring the option of applying for additional project reimbursement with the Wildlife Conservation Board and United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

6.3 Grasslands HCF Grant Update

Associate Parks Planner stated that himself and Director Yarris attended the City of Davis Open Space and Habitat Commission meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup> to provide an overview of the Grasslands Trail project.

Associate Parks Planner Anderson invited the PRWAC members to attend a site visit on Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. to walk the proposed trail.

#### 6.4 OHV Public Outreach

Associate Parks Planner Anderson explained that County staff held public outreach meetings on February 22<sup>nd</sup> in Woodland and March 1<sup>st</sup> in West Sacramento. Approximately 25 people attended each meeting. The general feedback was very good and suggestions focused on a variety of areas for different vehicle types as well as accommodating beginning to advanced areas.

#### 6.5 County Road 40/Low Water Bridge Update

Associate Parks Planner Anderson explained that the Board of Supervisors approved a revenue agreement with CAL Fire on March 6, 2018, in order to access the \$800,000 appropriated in the state budget for the environmental analysis and engineering design for the low water bridge replacement project. Yolo County Public Works will be the lead on the project and will release an RFP for environmental and engineering services within the next few months. Public Works expects the projects to be shovel ready in 2022. The construction is expected to cost approximately \$2 million.

### 7. COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

Ullrey: Cache Creek Conservancy recently awarded grant to improve wetlands. First Foods Dinner planned for April 21<sup>st</sup>. Cache Creek Conservancy has remodeled offices. Introduction to birding workshops are offered this spring.

Chair Portman: California Raptor Center open house May 5, 2018.

Fulks: Tuleyome is purchasing another 160 acres surrounding BLM National Monument and will close escrow this year.

Young: Had conversation with Cedar Seeger around Christmas last year and he said the signs at Putah Creek Fishing Access site have been effective as he hasn't seen any hunters.

### 8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

- A) Grasslands squirrels
- B) Renewable energy projects in County Parks- review letter to BOS
- C) Parks Marketing and Sponsorship Plans
- D) CDFW monies

### 9. NEXT MEETING

April 16, 2018, Norton Hall, 70 Cottonwood Street, Woodland.

### 10. ADJOURN

Chair Portman adjourned the meeting at 7:59 pm.

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The Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee is responsible for providing advice and recommendations on matters within its jurisdiction to the Board of Supervisors, the County Administrative Officer, and the Director of General Services as appropriate. Any person who is dissatisfied with a recommendation of this committee may submit their comments to the Director of General Services prior to a final decision being made on the issue. The appropriate body for making a final decision on a given issue, whether it is the Director of General Services or the Board of Supervisors, may sustain, modify, reject or overrule any recommendations of the Parks, Recreation and Wildlife Advisory Committee. Final decisions may be appealed in accordance with Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Yolo County Code.