

AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, September 16, 2014

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

b. Operations (Thursday, July 17, 2014) (Lane)

Present

Board: Directors Ayn Wieskamp, Carol Severin, Beverly Lane (Chair)

Staff: Jim O'Connor, Mimi Waluch, Kelly Barrington, Denise Defreeze,
Denise Valentine, Noah Dort, Anne Kassebaum

Guests: Judi Bank, Mike Nelson

I. Interpretive Parklands and Stewardship Grazing Program

AGM O'Connor stated that the Board Operations Committee reviews various programmatic elements related to the operation of the regional parklands. The Grazing Program is a significant aspect of resource management and fire control. He introduced Acting Wildland Vegetation Manager Denise Defreeze to provide an update on the program.

Ms. Defreeze provided statistics for the beginning of 2014:

- 114,000 acres of parklands
- 72,700 acres of grazing lands
- 40 total lessees consisting of 38 cattle lessees, 1 sheep lessee, and 1 horse lessee
- Some lessees maintain up to five leases
- 59 grazing units in 25 parks

Ms. Defreeze coordinated an emergency drought meeting in January with the grazing tenants. The President of the California Cattlemen's Association and District Park Supervisors were in attendance.

The grazing tenants requested to provide information on the following items:

- Business background of ranching
- Genetically built stock
- Anaplasmosis (tick borne disease)
- Immunization
- Impact of selling breeding heifers
- Feeding supplemental hay is uneconomical

The grazing tenants discussed new ideas regarding the search for new grazing leases. Due to a lack of availability in the Central Valley, some grazing tenants considered moving to Nevada, and as far as Washington. The information shared proved beneficial to the Park Supervisors, and provided a multi-faceted look into the operations of the grazers.

Ms. Defreese conducted a Grazing Training Program with presenters from Integrated Pest Management and the Natural Resources Conservation District. Staff was presented with the history of the program and the Grazing Task Force and the involvement of Operations on a day-to-day basis. The following tools were distributed to the attendees:

- Grass identification tags
- Pamphlets
- Report on invasive weeds and management and control techniques

It was mentioned that there are currently issues with the District installing material on top of the coastal prairie at Point Pinole. This provided an opportunity to conduct staff training at the site with Integrated Pest Management. Forms and photos were provided to staff to help identify five common grasses.

Other items Ms. Defreese completed, or is currently working on, are:

- Request for Proposals
- Interviews
- Selection of two new lessees
- Offer consulting services to Park Supervisors for program review and recommendations
- Attended the Society for Range Management Range Camp in Half Moon Bay
- Working with NRCS on matching grants for projects at Briones, Diablo Foothills, and Las Trampas
- Coordinating the Grazing Dinner in October

Ms. Defreese presented a slideshow containing information on a variety of grasses and weeds, as well as cattle, sheep, and wildlife on EBRPD properties.

2. Maintenance and Skilled Trades ADA Projects Status

AGM O'Connor began with a brief description of the Transition Plan Agreement. The agreement relates to improvements to District facilities regarding ADA guidelines and access to regional parks. The annual budget for this program is approximately \$500,000.

Chief of MAST Kelly Barrington provided the following timeline:

- In 1987 the District prepared a whole park access study
- In 1990, the United States Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- In 2002, disability right activists informed the District that its park access plan did not meet the federal requirements for ADA compliance

Mr. Barrington stated that, to address the concerns of the activists, the District retained the consulting firm M.I.G. to gather data and provide a plan. In 2006, with a commitment of \$500,000 over a twenty year period, the transition plan was adopted by the full Board.

He noted that the funding is independent of grants and other one-time funding opportunities used for projects with ADA compliance components.

- MIG collected 3,328 points of data
- 9,960 issues were identified to be corrected, though not all were correctable
- 1,366 issues remain pending

The annual financial commitment is as follows:

- MAST receives \$300,000, which funds a Park Ranger and Carpenter
- Park Operations receives \$100,000, which is entered into a CIP OTA project
- Design and Construction receives \$100,000
- Total expenditures to-date equals \$2.4 million

Mr. Barrington explained the process used to log and track projects utilizing the Geographic Information System (GIS). The projects are ranked by priority, with colored markers signifying completed and partially completed projects. He explained that once a project is completed, Park Supervisors are required to log in to Parkview, enter the data, and close out the respective project.

In the past few years, the District has adopted new standards for ADA furnishings and facilities. The working group consists of staff from the Standards Committee, Design and Construction, and Operations. The goal is to have the District parks branded and as uniform as possible.

Mr. Barrington gave a brief presentation on the following equipment, designed and constructed by staff, which meets the new District standards, and are compliant with the ADA guidelines:

- Hi-Lo Drinking Fountains
- Fish Cleaning Station
- Restrooms and Vault Toilets
- Trail Gates
- Tilden Corp Yard

Updates were provided on the projects at the following two parks:

Shadow Cliffs

- 173 issues identified
- 60 issues not correctable
- 81 issues remain
- Lakeside picnic area – staff designed a new ADA accessible area
- Installed retaining wall
- Improvements to paths
- Created clear path of travel to restrooms near water
- Installed new van accessible parking
- Created a loop trail to serve both parking lots
- Clear path of travel to both parking lots
- Enlarged windows at the concession to make ADA accessible
- New concrete pads poured to make showers ADA accessible
- Created clear path of travel from parking lot to courtesy/boat dock
- When the Land Use Plan is enacted, additional grading will be completed to make the park accessible from the county trail

Tilden

- Removed old parking lot at Indian Camp, and installed a new one
- Pathways upgraded to ADA compliance
- Expanded width of parking lot, and installed pedestrian safety pathways
- Installed crosswalks near speed bumps
- New Restrooms

Director Lane inquired about ADA bench standards as they relate to comfort of seating. She noted that the depth of seating on the newly-installed ADA bench at Roberts Regional Recreation Area makes it difficult for the sitter's feet to touch the ground. She expressed doubt that any persons would find the seating comfortable. Chief of MAST Kelly Barrington explained that the height of the seat allows persons in a wheelchair to transfer to and from the bench with ease. He also noted that the ADA Design Committee's goal was to make these benches look like existing park furniture while complying with ADA standards. AGM O'Connor stated that the comfort of the design will be reviewed.

Mr. Barrington provided a visual step-by-step walk through of the new trail project at the Tilden Environmental Education Center.

3. Review Equestrian Stables Fee Schedule: Anthony Chabot Equestrian Center; Piedmont Stables and Skyline Ranch

AGM O'Connor recounted that, on an annual basis, Administrative Analyst Noah Dort contacts all concessionaires to obtain requests for fee change submissions to the Consolidated Fee Schedule. He indicated that for 2014, no increase was requested by the stable operators. This is a mid-year request for an adjustment.

Mr. Dort relayed that a request has been submitted from two stable operators for a mid-year increase. The stable operators cite the rising cost of hay as the reason for the fee increase request. The increasing price of hay is due to the drought, as well as the exporting of hay overseas to China.

EBRPD staff agrees that the stable operators request for an increase is reasonable, and continues the current trend of a 3% average increase to boarding fees per year. Although mid-year fee increases are not encouraged, and the annual process is sufficient in most cases, the District acknowledges that some concession operators are reacting to rapid price changes that may require a more frequent adjustment.

Staff is seeking recommendation for this increase.

Guest Judi Bank commented on the differences between feeding horses and cattle. Horses have a delicate digestive system, and are fed a certain type of high quality hay. Cattle have more flexibility in what they can eat. Some horses can't eat alfalfa and some can't eat oats. A stable operation typically has a variety of hays to accommodate the horses. She stated that hay is contracted when the price is at its most reasonable. It can become a challenge, and she states that the requested increase today is reasonable.

Director Wieskamp moved that the Committee approve and recommend to the full Board the presented change to the 2014 Consolidated Fee Schedule. Director Severin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (3-0).

4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

5. AGM Comments

AGM O'Connor provided an update on the drought stating that no water has been drawn yet from Del Valle. He advised that ACWD has made an arrangement with the federal agency to secure water at Los Vaqueros, which means they will not need to draw large amounts of water from Del Valle. He continues to work closely with the water agencies to get the District through Labor Day, and keep water levels above intakes for continuation of land-based activities.

Shadow Cliffs water level is good. Although the pipe is not yet fixed, a temporary solution is in place to keep the trees irrigated.

A soft opening of the Merry-Go-Round was held on the Fourth of July weekend. It went well and all looks good at Tilden.

Director Wieskamp inquired about the kayaking at Del Valle. AGM O'Connor stated that the District received a letter from an attorney for Sunrise Mountaineering today. Operations staff has not yet had an opportunity to review it with Legal Counsel.

The Willow Park Golf course Request for Proposal will be posted next week, pending final review from Legal. AGM O'Connor is working with staff on a contingency plan to avoid a gap in golf course management and services. Director Lane asked if the process is going smoothly with EBMUD regarding the Request for Proposal process. AGM O'Connor stated there is no issue that staff is aware of. EBMUD staff has received a copy of the proposal which they are currently reviewing.

Director Wieskamp requested an update on the Anthony Chabot Gun Club. AGM O'Connor stated that the District received a letter from the gun club requesting to exercise the option to extend the term of their lease. Operations staff are working with Legal on a response to the letter. AGM O'Connor stated that a conversation was had with Lieutenant Lance Brede regarding the Stanford staging area of Mission Peak, and it was decided to obtain a generator-operated highway sign to display the park closure hours. Operations staff is also working with Public Affairs to assist in reaching out to the neighbors in the area.

6. Board Comments

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. The next Board Operations Committee meeting is scheduled for 12:45 p.m. on **Thursday, August 21, 2014**, in the Board Room, Peralta Oaks.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Valentine
"Acting" Executive Secretary
Operations Division