

AGENDA  
REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, May 5, 2015

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

b. Operations (Thursday, March 19, 2015) \_\_\_\_\_ (Sutter)

Present

Board: Directors John Sutter (Chair), Diane Burgis, Doug Siden

Staff: Jim O'Connor, Kelly Barrington, Mimi Waluch, Denise Valentine, Sergio Huerta, Noah Dort, Anne Kassebaum, Debra Auker, Carolyn Jones, Renee Patterson, Ira Bletz

Guests: John Maunder, Ruth Gaines, Steve Harker, Lise Liepman, James Birchall

**Review Touchstone Golf LLC Interim Operation and Management Services Agreement: Lake Chabot Regional Park**

AGM O'Connor provided the Committee with a detailed update on the status of the interim operator, Touchstone Golf LLC, and the current conditions and evaluations at the golf course.

Chief of MAST Kelly Barrington updated the Committee on the improvements at the course, and stated that a vast improvement has been made in a short period of time. AGM O'Connor elaborated on the conditions of the food and beverage operations, and advised that the event and banquet centers are operational. He noted the District will be participating in the Spring Fling event to promote the golf course.

Mr. Steve Harker mentioned the low rounds of golf booked per year at the golf course. He indicated the marketing pace was not in line with programming, maintenance, and repairs. Touchstone Golf LLC is including members of the club and District staff, to create a plan to maintain and promote the golf course. The goal is to increase rounds of golf to the 50,000 per year range.

AGM O'Connor advised the Committee that staff is working on required repairs and improvements. Some of these items include an entry gate, signage, clubhouse kitchen renovations, painting, safety, electrical, driving range, and flooring. The District will take over responsibility of the sewage system from the concessionaire.

Director Burgis inquired if the work was being completed by staff or contracted. AGM O'Connor replied by stating that it is both, for cost saving purposes.

Director Siden inquired if there were any parts that weren't open or in use. AGM O'Connor replied that the Spikes Café food service facility is non-operational. Mr. Harker explained that, after the Alameda County Health Department inspected the site, it was determined that the café is not operational and will potentially be converted into a meeting room.

AGM O'Connor reviewed the strategy moving forward with the next RFP process to include information acquired from the first RFP. Required changes and improvements will be inserted in the next proposal. This will allow the future operator to focus on the golf course.

Director Sutter inquired on the balance of the 553 fund. CFO Debra Aufer stated the available balance in the fund is approximately \$6.5 million with funds budgeted for projects out of the \$11 million. The agreement with the previous operator did not require this level of maintenance, which prompted the Concessionaires Maintenance Fund program to be created.

AGM O'Connor shared that, with the improvements made, the goal is to extend the service life of the building for an additional ten to fifteen years.

Director Burgis moved to recommend to the full Board the staff recommendation requesting authority to negotiate and extend the interim agreement with Touchstone Golf LLC through March 31, 2016, and a recommendation that the Board appropriate \$500,000 from the District's 553 Infrastructure Replacement Fund for capital improvement projects that will address long-term asset preservation and sustainability of the existing golf course and clubhouse facilities. Director Siden seconded, which passed unanimously.

### **Review Chabot Gun Club 2015 Fee Schedule: Anthony Chabot Regional Park**

Revenue and Administration Manager Mimi Waluch updated the Committee with a detailed overview of the current agreement status. Ms. Waluch advised the Committee that the fee increase request was submitted by the club within the timeline and explained the reasons for not moving forward at that time. She noted that Mr. Maunder has submitted a request today to increase fees 10%.

Mr. Maunder stated they re-evaluated the initial request, reviewed other range rates, and resubmitted a request for a 10% increase instead of a 23% increase. In 2016, another increase request would be considered.

Club Accountant for Anthony Chabot Gun Club Ruth Gaines began by stating the last requested increase was in 2006. Since that time, the consumer price index has increased 17%. The expenses of the club have increased substantially. Ms. Gaines provided a list of areas affected. In response to Director Sutter, Ms. Gaines provided a financial update on club expenses, earnings, and personnel costs in 2006 compared to 2014.

Ms. Waluch presented a District financial overview through a slide presentation that included information from 2009-2014. She provided explanations and clarification on questions posed by Directors Siden and Sutter.

In response to Ms. Waluch, Mr. Maunder explained the additional elements they would work on to generate more revenue at the facility.

AGM O'Connor reiterated the staff recommendation is not to approve a fee increase at this time, due to the current negotiations occurring with the club over the future extension of the contract. He requested the Committee to consider the research work being completed.

Director Burgis inquired on the effect, if a minimal fee increase is allowed. AGM O'Connor replied the belief is that the increase is inappropriate at this time. Director Sutter indicated the request should be considered if they incurred increased costs. Director Burgis clarified that, if the Committee were to approve the fee increase, it is not a statement about future action, rather it would provide assistance with the bottom line at this time.

Director Siden moved to approve and recommend to the full board the revised request submitted on March 19, 2015 for a 10% increase for 2015. Director Burgis seconded, which passed unanimously.

### **Update Oral History Program: District-Wide**

AGM O'Connor recounted the request by former Committee members to increase the number of oral histories. He explained there are two oral history programs. One through Public Affairs focused on elected officials and the other through Interpretive Services focused on park history.

Acting Interpretive Services Manager Ira Bletz provided the Committee with copies of oral histories and began with a detailed overview of each one. Director Sutter inquired on who completed the histories. Mr. Bletz replied that retired Supervising Naturalist Traci Parent and Susan Imboden, historical contractor. He commented that they will eventually be indexed and digitized for easier access by District staff. He explained that the \$40,000 in the 2015 budget should cover 10 new oral histories. In response to Director Sutter, AGM O'Connor indicated that the District has shared histories with a few outside agencies. Director Burgis mentioned that it might be valuable to record video of the histories in the future.

### **Review of Briones Archers Special Use Agreement: Briones Regional Park**

Administrative Analyst Renee Patterson provided an overview of the current agreement between the District and the archery club. The club has exclusive use of the area, although it is not closed to the public. A long term lease has not been issued in the past. Since the camping aspect has been ruled out at the site, staff is seeking Committee approval to enter into a new agreement.

Director Sutter inquired what would occur if the District wanted to use the park for something different in the next 5 years. AGM O'Connor stated that, when conducting the camping update, the consultant reviewed the utilization data for the Homestead Camp area and determined the usage was low. The findings determined the Homestead area is a more useable site in terms of accessibility for camping tent sites and vehicles. Improvements to the Homestead site was the recommendation. There are no short term plans for conversion.

Ms. Patterson commented that it is standard for every agreement to include a section that states the Board has the right to terminate the agreement. In response to Director Sutter's inquiry about more detailed club use information, Ms. Patterson stated that the District does not require the club to provide usage data.

In response to Director Siden's inquiry about alternate club locations, AGM O'Connor recalled that when issuing the initial agreement, it was done as a temporary agreement. At this time staff is not seeking an alternate location.

Ms. Judi Banks recounted Jerry Kent's interest in developing an alternative site to relocate Briones Archery club from the center of the park, but could not reach an agreement on relocation.

Director Burgis moved to approve the staff recommendation to issue a Special Use Agreement with a 5-year initial term and a 5-year renewal to be agreed upon by both parties. In addition, staff recommends the fee remain at \$1,200 per year for the use of the site within Briones Regional Park. Director Siden seconded, which passed unanimously.

### **Review of Montclair Swim Team Special Use Agreement: Roberts Regional Recreation Area**

Administrative Analyst Renee Patterson advised the Committee the request being submitted will have no substantial changes. The prior agreement was five 1-year individual terms, while this agreement is for one 5-year agreement. Ms. Patterson provided the Committee a brief history of the swim team and an update of the partnership with the District.

Director Sutter inquired on the hours of usage per day. Ms. Patterson provided the months of use. The pool is also used by the District Aquatics Department, in addition to the public. Chief of Park Operations Mark Ragatz mentioned that, during pre and post season, the pool is available for rental on weekdays. The pool is open to the general public on weekends, from April through September. During peak season they are open 7 days a week. The District conducts swim lessons in the morning.

Director Sutter inquired if complaints are received from the public for not being able to use the pool. Mr. Ragatz replied that there are no such complaints, and AGM O'Connor inserted that the team is very flexible and cooperative.

Director Siden moved to approve and recommend to the full Board a five-year agreement with the Montclair Swim Team for utilization of the Roberts Pool for swim team training. Director Burgis seconded, which passed unanimously.

### **Review Sole Source Contract for Maintenance and Preservation of Merry-Go-Round: Tilden Regional Park**

Administrative Analyst Noah Dort provided highlights on the carousel through a PowerPoint presentation, including the restoration work to be completed and a current update on the condition of the figurines.

In response to Director Sutter's question about the timing of preservation versus restoration, Ms. Lise Liepman with Hawk's Eye Studio indicated that with the amount of original paint still in place, and with regular maintenance completed twice a year, the carousel would last the time needed to conduct a campaign for a full restoration.

Director Burgis expressed interest in viewing a detailed report of the restoration work completed and pending. AGM O'Connor shared with Director Burgis that this concession just turned over in 2014 and, during the transition process, completed some work to the carousel.

Director Siden moved to approve the staff recommendation for the acceptance of the Hawk's Eye Studio proposal to be the foundation of a sole source contract for the near-term preservation of the Tilden Merry-Go-Round. Director Burgis seconded, which passed unanimously.

### **Public Comments**

No comments.

### **AGM Comments**

AGM O'Connor expressed appreciation to the Committee for the approval of the Operations Division reorganization.

### Parkland Unit update

He advised the Committee that Dan Sykes will be joining the District as the new Unit Manager.

### Drought Update

The District received notification that the Department of Water Resources increased the allocation of the water at Del Valle from 15% to 20% of our 400 acre feet.

### **Board Comments**

Director Siden inquired on the public safety notification regarding the blue/green algae issue at Lake Chabot. AGM O'Connor stated that the District is working with the County Environmental Health Department to monitor the levels of toxin and search for a way to mitigate the issue. There is a possibility the District could restrict hand-launched boats at the lake. The effect of toxins on fish is a concern. The District is taking samples of the fish species and having them tested to see if the toxin is transferring into the fish flesh. At this time, staff is instructing people to wash their hands, fish, and not to eat the innards of the fish. The District kiosk staff and concessionaire staff provide warnings to the public regarding the blue/green algae, as it is also toxic to humans. AGM O'Connor stated that, if requested, staff could provide a memo to the Committee on steps taken regarding the issue.

In reply to Director Siden's question on the response to the Tri-Cities Horsemen Association proposal, AGM O'Connor advised that the process is to receive a proposal, conduct an internal review, and submit it to the Parkland Operations group. If the proposal merits further attention, staff will potentially bring it before this Committee, a review at the AGM's meeting, and then before the full Board.

In response to Director Siden, AGM O'Connor stated that staff is in the stages of hiring a consultant to review convenience camping. A contract is currently under review.

Meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.