



# Monterey County

## Item No.

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

**Legistar File Number: 21-353**

**May 25, 2021**

**Introduced:** 5/11/2021

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** General Agenda Item

- a. Adopt the proposed, updated County Parks Volunteer Program Handbook, and
- b. Delegate and Authorize the Public Works, Facilities, & Parks Director, or designee, with the support of the Parks Commission, to make future updates to the Volunteer Program Handbook and related forms that do not involve major program or policy changes.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Adopt the proposed, updated County Parks Volunteer Program Handbook, and
- b. Delegate and Authorize the Public Works, Facilities, & Parks Director, or designee, with the support of the Parks Commission, to make future updates to the Volunteer Program Handbook and related forms that do not involve major program or policy changes.

#### SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

On March 30, 2004, the Board of Supervisors approved the amended Live-On Volunteer Application and Letter of Understanding for the Monterey County Parks Department's Live-on Volunteer Program [Attachment A-03/30/2004 Board Report]. In December 2016, the County Parks Department was integrated into the Resource Management Agency. On September 6, 2018, RMA staff presented a report to the Parks Commission on a proposed, updated Volunteer Handbook. Additionally, on August 2, 2018 and September 5, 2019, staff presented a report to the Parks Commission on volunteer hours and services that illustrated how volunteers provide an essential component to the success of each park facility's operations.

The Department of Public Works, Facilities, & Parks (PWFP) conducted an extensive review of the County Parks Volunteer Program Handbook [Attachment B-2004 Live-On Volunteer Handbook, March 2004] and found it significantly outdated. A proposed, updated Volunteer Program Handbook (Handbook) is presented today for the Board of Supervisors' consideration and adoption. Due to the complete reorganization and update of the 2004 handbook, a comparison redlined was not produced.

The proposed, updated Handbook reflects recent County organizational changes and current County Parks' operations and conditions [Attachment C- Proposed County Parks Volunteer Program Handbook]. The description of the County Parks Volunteer Program (Program) has been updated. Seven categories of volunteers are highlighted in the Handbook, including the introduction of the *Virtual* Volunteer. An updated overview of the volunteer application process, volunteer responsibilities, and volunteer benefits as well as County Parks' commitment to its volunteers is included. Lastly, the proposed Handbook takes advantage of available electronic/digital technology to improve the volunteer application process and access to Program materials. The website will provide

24/7 access to application packets, County policies and Park rules, parks governance structure, and new fillable forms. The website, which is under construction, will contain all Program materials in one location. Ultimately, the website may serve as a supplemental volunteer orientation and training venue. The new County Parks Volunteer website will facilitate prospective volunteers in joining the Program and better serve volunteers over their tenure.

Along with the proposed Handbook, various Program forms have been updated. New position-specific volunteer applications have been developed to best match prospective volunteers with County Parks' needs. Additionally, the Volunteer Letter of Understanding, specific to Park Host volunteers, and the Waiver and Release Agreement that all volunteers must sign have been updated to be consistent with the proposed Handbook and current practices.

An added provision for acceptance to the Program is a requirement for a photographic identification and consent for a general criminal background and reference check for all volunteers interacting with the public. This addition is proposed to enhance the safety and well-being of park patrons and county employees and to align County requirements with those of other county, state, and national park facilities. Acceptance to and continuance with the Program is contingent upon a successful screening.

Staff requests the Board of Supervisors: 1) Adopt the proposed, updated County Parks Volunteer Program Handbook, and 2) Delegate and Authorize the Public Works, Facilities, & Parks Director, or designee, with the support of the Parks Commission, to make future updates to the Volunteer Program Handbook and related forms that do not involve major program or policy changes.

#### OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

PWFP worked with the Human Resources Department, County Administrative Office, Auditor-Controller's Office, and Office of the County Counsel in preparing the Handbook. Staff presented the proposed Handbook to the Parks Commission on April 1, 2021. The Parks Commission voted to support presenting the proposed, updated Handbook to the Board of Supervisors for consideration and adoption. The proposed Handbook was provided to the Service Employee International Union Local 521 (SEIU 521) for their information and review.

#### FINANCING:

Volunteers enable County Parks to offer enhanced services to the public. Positive guest experiences convert first-time park users to loyal, repeat visitors, generating ongoing revenue essential to continued Parks' operations. The anticipated modest costs of reference and background checks for volunteers will be included in future annual budget requests.

#### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

The recommended action supports the Board of Supervisors Economic Development, Administration, Health & Human Services, Infrastructure, and Public Safety Strategic Initiatives. A vigorous Volunteer Program supplements County Parks' provision of safe outdoor recreational environments for people to engage in activities that promote fitness and physical and mental health. The latter is attributed to reducing crime, which enhances surrounding communities making them attractive areas in which residents can thrive and businesses can grow.

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- Economic Development
- Administration
- Health & Human Services
- Infrastructure:
- Public Safety

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Attachments:

Attachment A-03/30/2004 Board Report

Attachment B-Live-On Volunteer Handbook, March 2004

Attachment C-Proposed County Parks Volunteer Program Handbook

(Attachments are on file with the Clerk of the Board)