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Parks Commission

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Receive a report on San Lorenzo Park operations.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Parks Commission receive a report on San Lorenzo Park operations.

SUMMARY:

During the October 4, 2018 Parks Commission Meeting during public comment, the Executive Director of Monterey County Agricultural & Rural Life Museum (MCARLM) presented to the Parks Commission a brief history of MCARLM, their relationship to San Lorenzo Park and surrounding Community, including their opinion regarding RMA's ability to manage San Lorenzo Park. At the request of Commissioner Sanchez, staff was requested a presentation on San Lorenzo Park and the Museum at a future Parks Commission agenda. This report responds to specific assertions presented by MCARLM and what actions RMA has taken, or will take, to address these concerns. This report also provides examples of accomplishments and items pending since RMA as was appointed by Board of Supervisors to oversee park operations in December 2016.

RMA is devoted to improving San Lorenzo Park. With this goal in mind we recognize that improving working relationships with both King City Leaders, MCARLM, and the local community will be the key to our success.

DISCUSSION:

The Board of Supervisors assigned the RMA Director as the Interim Director of Parks in July 2016 and directed RMA to reopen Lake San Antonio without any added resources after LSA had being fully closed for a couple years and parks staffing levels were significantly reduced in the FY 2016/17 budget that RMA inherited. On December 13, 2016, the Board of Supervisors reorganized for RMA to assume duties and responsibilities of the Monterey County Parks, excluding Laguna Seca Recreation Area. Shortly after, in January/February 2017, Monterey County experienced over \$60 million in damage to infrastructure, including County Parks. Managing these two events took all of the RMA resources.

During the October 4, 2018 Parks Commission meeting the Executive Director of MCARLM asserted her opinion that there are deficiencies in the RMA's Management of San Lorenzo Park, including:

- Qualified supervision
- Qualified and informed reservation system with a focus on customer service
- Trained volunteers and enough staff to maintain a 200+ acre park

On one hand, MCARLM stated that as an organization they do not need micromanaging, the museum does not need interference from RMA. MCARLM stated that the museum needs to be allowed to continue to flourish, and not be hindered in their progress by RMA. MCARLM claims that they are being regulated by the RMA and RMA is not managing, but instead alienating the community, MCARLM and allowing San Lorenzo Park to deteriorate.

On the other hand, MCARLM specifically requested staff (RMA) pay increased attention to maintenance for the museum. RMA agrees that there are Operation and Maintenance challenges facing San Lorenzo Park resulting from years of neglect, limited supervision and limited staff. A large part of RMA's challenge has been discovering policies and agreements that have not been implemented as drafted.

RMA initiated the process to recruit a permanent Chief of Parks and Administrative Operations Manager in early 2017. In the interim, we have been fortunate to have Mr. Cam Sanchez (part time as retired annuitant) and Mr. Brett Fulgoni (shifted from RMA's property management unit) working in these capacities, respectively. We anticipate permanent hires will be made for both positions this fiscal year.

Staff resources assigned to support San Lorenzo Park when parks functions were added to RMA included one Museum Assistant as well as two Buildings and Grounds staff and a Buildings and one Grounds Supervisor who split their time to support Lake San Antonio and Lake Nacimiento. Early on Mr. Sanchez used his status as a retired police chief to connect with the City of King Police Chief, which resulted in an agreement for King City police officers to patrol through San Lorenzo Park occasionally. Cam also met with City official where those discussions resulted in a volunteer program with students from the local high school assisting park maintenance. In addition, RMA is in the process of revamping the Volunteer Program to assist Parks staff, which is scheduled for Board approval on February 5, 2019.

Despite the challenges in staff resources and volunteers, there has been a significant amount of work completed at San Lorenzo Park since July 1, 2018 as listed below:

- Obtained depredation Permit and working with Fish and Wildlife trappers to eliminate Feral Pigs
- Currently repairing fields caused by wild pigs
- Reopening of Depot building (decks have been repaired, and bats have been eradicated)
- Completed road patching for the Park
- Repaired Electrical issue in shop building
- Cleaned out and reorganized the yard & shop building
- Re- built equipment shed
- Painted signs
- Rebuilt 15 Tables, and plan to replace the rest
- Fixed lighting issues in Irrigation Museum
- Purchased and have begun install of new LED lighting for Museum
- Completed Paver Project at main entry of Museum
- Fixed electrical pedestals in Camping Spaces

- Collected quotes to repair roofs in disrepair
- Adjusted policies to be more accommodative for MCARLM, and plan to work with MCARLM to ease paperwork burden
- Prepared new reservation system, ready to go live
- Fixed legacy telephone and reservation issues
- Began work on major Tree Trimming along the fence bordering San Lorenzo Park and residents to the East and fallen tree(s) in the Shop Yard
- Repainted all DeAnza Building Picnic Tables
- Cleaned up Garden in front of Irrigation Museum

Attachment A contains accomplishments over the last two fiscal years since RMA began to oversee park operations.

In addition, the following are near-term Projects currently being planned:

- Tractor Museum Exterior Repaint
- Restroom & Shower Building new roofs
- DeAnza Building Exterior and Interior Repaint
- Front Entry Gate Repaint
- Depot Interior Repaint
- Signage upgrade
- Shop Repairs
- Spreckles House Termite Fumigation
- Pig Damage Repair
- Repair Lighting on Depot
- Working with Cal Fire to remove dead trees in January

Other areas of work in progress is the implementation of an on-line reservation system for Parks anticipated to go-live in January 2019; Updated Fee Article V to be presented to the Board of Supervisors on December 12, 2018; Updated Parks Ordinance to be heard by the Board of Supervisors on January 15, 2019; and Updated Park Volunteer Program to be heard by the Board of Supervisors on February 5, 2019.

Upon being appointed to oversee the Park operations, RMA identified several inconsistencies on how the parks had been operated in the past. It has been an on-going experience for RMA to learn things that were never memorialized or approved by an appointing authority, such as the Board of Supervisors. As a result, there have been many instances where policies, fees, and agreements were not managed as approved, unbeknownst to RMA staff now responsible for overseeing Parks.

Examples where inconsistencies have occurred include the Parks Ordinance Chapter 14.12, Article V Parks User Fees for Park Use, existing executed Agreements including MCARLM's, Parks Volunteer Program, Facility Use Application, etc. This has created angst with those organizations, such as MCARLM, or members of the Community where they have been operating in a manner that is not consistent with the operative agreement. Because of inconsistencies from prior Parks management, RMA has been accused of imposing new rules, regulations, fees, etc. When in fact, RMA has been focused on establishing consistent practices that are aligned with the established policies, fees, and agreements as approved by the Board of Supervisors.

RMA shares several of the concerns raised by MCARLM at the October 4, 2018 Parks Commission

meeting and has been working diligently to make improvements as we are made aware of issues. Staff appreciates receiving feedback to ensure we are staying on-track and made aware where we may be falling short on expectations. For example, MCARLM brought forward complaints regarding constituents not receiving call backs for reservations. RMA's IT staff investigated the matter and found that an old phone tree was still active where calls went into void mail boxes assigned to former parks staff.

RMA is committed to improve the relationship with our partners, such as MCARLM and the community. To begin to rebuild our relationships and trust, we will be focused on improving communications. Since the October 4, 2018 Parks Commission, the Administrative Operations Manager has attended two (2) MCARLM board meetings and will continue to attend provided the invitation continues to be extended by MCARLM. RMA will seek to involve MCARLM in discussions about the park, and encourage them to keep us apprised of ideas for the facility and upcoming events and solicit feedback on how we can improve. The goal is to move forward with a partnership to improve the Park and expand educational opportunities for children and adults. RMA is addressing MCARLM's concerns about processing timelines for special events. MCARLM has single point of contact to process special event requests. In addition, RMA is adjusting our process to include all events for the year on one application, which will significantly reduce the paperwork, while still protecting the County from a liability perspective in keeping with the adopted ordinance.

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Attachments: Attachment A-Accomplishments at SLP December 2016 to June 30, 2018