



**CITY OF NOVATO**  
PARKS & RECREATION

**Recreation, Cultural and Community Services Advisory Commission**

**MEETING**

**Minutes**

**Thursday, July 14, 2022 - 6:00 PM**

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ricketts at 6:07 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Dennis Bentley, Suzanne Crow, Vice Chair Erin Lacey, Chair Betsy Ricketts

**Commissioners Absent:** Ericka Erickson, Jessica Fernandes-Miller, Nancy Weber

**Staff Present:** Director of Parks Recreation and Community Services Katie Gauntlett, Senior Management Analyst Drew Bendickson

**B. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA**

**Commission Action:** Upon motion by Commissioner Crow and seconded by Commissioner Bentley the Commission voted 4-0-0-3 to approve the final agenda.

**Ayes:** Bentley, Crow, Lacey, Ricketts

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Erickson, Fernandes-Miller, Weber

**Motion Carried**

**C. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**D. CONSENT ITEMS**

**D.1. Approve the Special Meeting Minutes from May 26, 2022**

**Commission Action:** Upon motion by Commissioner Bentley and seconded by Vice Chair Lacey, the Commission voted 4-0-0-3 to approve the minutes.

**Ayes:** Bentley, Crow, Lacey, Ricketts

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Erickson, Fernandes-Miller, Weber

**Motion Carried**

**E. UNFINISHED AND OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**F. GENERAL BUSINESS**

**F.1. Receive an update and provide direction on the proposed Commemorative Bench Program from Senior Management Analyst Drew Bendickson**

Deputy Director Gauntlett provided an overview of the topic and stated the department utilized email and social media outreach to inform the discussion topic. Along with signs at pickleball courts and City Hall.

Recreation Supervisor Baccei presented a history of the Hill Recreation Area and its pickleball courts. The pickleball courts are open to all community members, resident & non-residents alike, and do not require reservation to play. Individual pickleball courts are not designated for any one skill level and welcomes all levels of play.

Recreation Supervisor Baccei shared she receives community feedback about long wait-times, interest in rotational play for the pickleball courts as well as individuals looking for new partners to play with. Staff have explored the concept of rotational play from other agencies, spoken to the pickleball community and are recommending a pilot use policy implementing rotational play for the summer months to meet the community's requests.

Recreation Supervisor Baccei provided an example of rotational play for the pilot policy. Rotational play would begin when all six courts are in-use, and one or more players are waiting to play. The courts would utilize Paddle Racks, one for each court, to be used to guide the flow of play by indicating the next group of players

waiting for an open court. A Paddle Rack is a convenient paddle holder, designed specifically for the game of pickleball, that attaches to fencing and provides organization of which player is next in line to play.

Recreation Supervisor Baccei shared Pickleball games are played to eleven points and players should play one game before rotating off the court for the next set of players. This policy would apply to either singles and doubles games. Rotational play at the Hill Recreation Area Pickleball Courts would provide members of the community the ability to participate at a faster rate and in turn reduce wait times for courts.

Recreation Supervisor Baccei stated that staff are recommending that this Pilot Policy be implemented after hosting an in-person community workshop in June and be carried out through August 2022 to allow staff time to evaluate the changes and collect community feedback. Staff will then return to the RCCS Commission at their scheduled meeting in September with the analysis of this Pilot Policy and a recommendation for next steps based on findings.

Commissioner Weber asked a question if this system of play is used in other cities. Recreation Supervisor Baccei shared it is utilized in other cities.

Chair Ricketts asked for clarification on rotational play and when it's in use. Recreation Supervisor Baccei confirmed it would only begin when all courts are occupied.

Chair Bentley asked how this would work if a court was rented. Deputy Director Gauntlett noted the priority use for the courts and if somebody has a reservation, they have the court. Recreation Supervisor Baccei mentioned all reservations are noticed at the courts indicating which are reserved.

Vice Chair Lacey asked if lessons or reservations of courts are taking up peak hours for the pickleball community and if the City has considered making reservations unavailable at peak times. Deputy Director Gauntlett stated the City has explored this however rentals are typically during peak hours.

Commissioner Erickson asked if the Commission was being tasked with considering changes to the court rentals. Deputy Director Gauntlett clarified that staff is asking the Commission to consider the pilot and proposal for rotational play during the summer months of June through August.

Commissioner Bentley asked about priority use for Novato residents with the pickleball courts being used by a variety of people in the area. Deputy Director Gauntlett noted the courts draw a lot of interest from players around the Bay Area. However, implementing priority use without a facility attendant is not feasible.

Chair Ricketts asked if staff have considered dedicating courts based on level of play. Deputy Director Gauntlett noted staff have considered that idea but it would be extremely difficult to manage as players may have different opinions on their own level of play thus leading to potential conflicts.

**Public Comment:**

1. Russ Wilson
2. Gary Flatow
3. Derek Layto
4. Fred Reese
5. Juanito Diaz
6. Gregory Silva
7. Irene Neigan
8. Anne Taylor
9. Mary Leet
10. Ben Grant
11. Melanie Field
12. Cecilia Nunes
13. Dan Philips
14. Laurie Zaeger
15. Carol Lewis
16. Rafael Nunes

**Commission Action:**

Upon motion by Commissioner Bentley and seconded by Chair Ricketts the Commission voted 5-0-0-2 for staff to implement the recommended pilot use policy with rotational play and to include an amendment to install only 2 paddle racks on each side of the courts.

**Ayes:** Bentley, Erickson, Weber, Lacey, Ricketts

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Crow, Fernandes-Miller

**Motion Carried**

**F.2. Receive a presentation from Rotary Club of Novato on potential donated sculpture and provide recommendation**

Jim Spillman of Rotary Club of Novato presented a sculpture for donation to the City of Novato, titled "On The Rise", a memorial for 9/11.

Rotary Club of Novato would like the site location for the sculpture to be on the bus side of the intersection on Grant Ave & Redwood Highway.

Commissioner Bentley asked if a sculpture donation falls under the RCCS purview. Deputy Director Gauntlett shared that it does fall to RCCS under the art in public places policy as the recommending body.

Deputy Director Gauntlett shared that further discussion with public works would need to take place regarding the sculptures placement on the median. As well as an inspection of the sculpture and it's weld.

Rotary Club of Novato shared they were not interested in the City's suggested location for the sculpture at the Hill Recreation Area.

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Commission Action:**

Upon motion by Commissioner Erickson and seconded by Chair Ricketts the Commission voted 4-0-1-2 for staff to table the sculpture donation and place Rotary Club of Novato on the next RCCS agenda on July 14, 2022 for further discussion.

**Ayes:** Erickson, Weber, Lacey, Ricketts

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** Bentley

**Absent:** Crow, Fernandes-Miller

**Motion Carried**

**G. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS**

**G.1. Staff Updates**

Deputy Director Gauntlett shared the new recreation registration system launched on April 4, 2022. The user-friendly platform makes registering for programs, camps, classes and events event easier for our community – First day revenue – over \$100,000 before noon.

Deputy Director Gauntlett announced that over 3,000 accounts were created in the first month of registration system launch.

Deputy Director Gauntlett shared the Hamilton Pool would be opening on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

Deputy Director Gauntlett announced special events and dates:

- Concerts on the Green – June 3, 17, July 15, August 5, 19
- Hamilton Amphitheater Concerts – June 25, July 30, August 27
- Pride Flag Raising Ceremony – June 1

Deputy Director Gauntlett shared the department's first annual Special Needs Safety Event held April 24 – was a huge success!

Deputy Director Gauntlett announced the fee study was approved by City Council and its implementation will begin September 1, 2022.

Deputy Director Gauntlett shared the department has received preliminary approval from City Council for a Parks Master Plan to begin in the new fiscal year.

Commissioner Weber asked about the status of the Community Garden. Deputy Director Gauntlett shared that City Council decided to end the project and direct staff to reassess the proposed land for other projects.

**Public comment:**

None.

**G.2. Commissioner Reports**

None.

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM.

The next RCCS meeting is on September 8, 2022.

**I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly adopted at the RCCS Commission meeting of \_\_\_\_\_.**

/ Drew Bendickson /

Drew Bendickson, Senior Management Analyst