



CITY OF NOVATO
PARKS & RECREATION

Recreation, Cultural and Community Services Advisory Commission

SPECIAL MEETING

Minutes

Thursday, April 13, 2023 - 6:00 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Weber at 6:00 PM.

Commissioners Present: Dennis Bentley, Emily Larsen, Mavi Pilloton, Vice Chair Nancy Weber, Beverly Winsor

Commissioners Absent: Suzanne Crow, Betsy Ricketts, Chair Erin Lacey

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 Bentley and seconded by Commissioner Larsen, the Commission voted 5-0-0-4 to approve the final agenda.

Ayes: Bentley, Larsen, Weber, Pilloton, Winsor

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Crow, Ricketts, Lacey

Motion Carried

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

D. CONSENT ITEMS

D.1. APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

Upon motion by Commissioner Bentley and seconded by Commissioner Pilloton, the Commission voted 5-0-0-4 to approve the RCCS Commission Meeting Minutes from March 9, 2023.

Ayes: Bentley, Larsen, Weber, Pilloton, Winsor

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Crow, Ricketts, Lacey

Motion Carried

E. UNFINISHED AND OTHER BUSINESS

None

F. GENERAL BUSINESS

F.1. **Receive a presentation from Christina Stroeh with Rotary Club of Novato on proposed mural artwork for Pianos on Grant Program; Consider approving design and providing a recommendation to the Novato City Council to approve a mural design and program concept for the Pianos on Grant Program**

Christina Stroeh presented three design concepts created by a San Marin High School student. The three designs highlighted local features with an emphasis on color, hopefulness, and inclusivity. The upright piano is to be painted by the student, delivered and maintained by the Rotary Club, and secured to the sidewalk by the City.

Commissioners expressed preference for the third design concept, which featured a variety of faces and mirrors on the side panels. The Commission added that the faces should be adjusted to reflect friendly rather than serious expressions and the mirrors should be made from shatter-proof materials.

The Pianos on Grant Program concept is to be presented to the next City Council meeting on April 25, 2023. Pending final approval, the installation should take place in June.

Commission Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Bentley and seconded by Commissioner Larsen, the Commission voted 5-0-0-4 in favor of selecting the third “Novato Proud” design with two modifications; including a shatter proof mirror, or reflective material, and friendly expressions on the faces depicted.

Ayes: Bentley, Larsen, Weber, Pilloton, Winsor

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Crow, Ricketts, Lacey

Motion Carried

F.2.

Receive a presentation from Emily Rich, owner of Village Child on Grant Avenue, on two proposed mural designs; Consider approving the designs and providing a recommendation to the Novato City Council to approve the mural design and to allocate \$8,845 from the Art in Public Places Fund to support the installation of two murals outside of the Village Child storefront located at 867 Grant Avenue as a public art installation.

Emily Rich announced the expansion of Village Child’s sister store, Village Collective, into the adjacent storefront at 867 Grant Avenue. This portion of the business is not specific to children, like Village Child, and features local artwork and handmade goods.

Local landscape artist Jenny Partridge will oversee a group of artists, which includes both professionals and students from San Marin High School. Two murals will showcase Novato’s unique outdoor landmarks including Stafford Lake and Mount Burdell. The work also includes rainbow hearts meant to symbolize inclusivity. The larger mural will be inscribed “Fall In Love With Novato” in large lettering.

The timeline for completion is late May, with changes to the artwork and weather being determining factors.

Commission Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Larsen and seconded by Commissioner Winsor, the Commission voted 5-0-0-4 to recommend artwork be approved with the inclusion of more color hearts, representing all colors of the progress Pride Flag, and adjusted font; additionally, Village Child will maintain the mural in perpetuity, and funds from the Art in Public Places Fund will be allocated to support for cost not to exceed \$8,845.

Ayes: Bentley, Larsen, Weber, Pilloton, Winsor

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Crow, Ricketts, Lacey

F.3.

Receive a presentation on upcoming playground improvements and provide a recommendation and approval on playground equipment for Olive Tot Lot

Director Gauntlett apprised the Commission of the background and status of the Olive Tot Lot improvement project. The project is part of a city-wide play structure upgrade initiated by a 2019 playground assessment by Public Works citing safety and maintenance concerns at multiple sites; this CIP project is separate from the Parks Master Plan project and has an approved budget of \$250,000 to be distributed between four park sites. The Olive Tot Lot play equipment improvements have a budget of \$20,000 allocated.

The projected improvements would include the replacement of concrete pavers supporting the pergola structure by a new concrete pad, a new water fountain that includes a bottle refilling station, and the replacement of the slide and playhouse with an appropriate fall zone around each structure. The size of the park and its targeted age group of two to five years are limiting factors. The hope is to maintain the existing “automotive” theme at the park given its unique location and proximity to Highway 101.

Director Gauntlett presented three options for replacement play equipment. As the City Council has already approved the budget, the next step following, the Commission’s recommendation and approval of the replacement equipment, is to receive approval from City Council authorizing bid advertisement and find the project is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(d) Existing Facilities. This request for approval from City Council is slated for their next meeting, April 25, 2023.

Commission Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Winsor and seconded by Commissioner Pilloton, the Commission voted 5-0-0-4 to recommend Option 2.

Ayes: Bentley, Larsen, Weber, Pilloton, Winsor

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Crow, Ricketts, Lacey

G. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

G.1. Staff Updates

Senior Management Analyst Drew Bendickson updated the Commission about two upcoming special events. These events included Fishing in the City, which is cosponsored by PRCS, Novato Sunrise Rotary, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. This free event is geared towards children ages 6 – 15, and it will include a Learn to Fish clinic and mini workshops. It will take place at Scottsdale Pond on the morning of May 6th and is almost booked to capacity. PRCS will also be hosting the second annual Special Needs Safety Event in partnership with Novato Police and Fire Departments at Pocket Park on April 22nd. This event is focused on connecting the special needs community with first responders and is curated towards children with physical and cognitive adaptive needs.

Senior Management Analyst Drew Bendickson announced the upcoming opening of Hamilton Pool on May 27th. Registration for Aquatics Programs will open May 1st. Lifeguard classes and certifications are on-going, and several trainees are currently in the hiring process to be lifeguards and swim instructors for the Hamilton Pool season.

Director Gauntlett advised the Commission of the launch of the Parks Master Plan public outreach website, which features an Interactive Map and a Share Ideas Wall where members of the public can suggest improvements and rank sites' priorities. The public survey will open soon and can be found on the same website. The Ad Hoc Committee met to discuss the Parks Master Plan and will present to the RCCS Commission at a later meeting.

Public comment:

None.

G.2. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Larson shared an invitation from the Islamic Center of North Marin and their ongoing community outreach programs on Fridays.

Commissioner Bentley shared that the San Marin Robotics club will be traveling to Houston for a national competition.

Commissioner Winsor expressed an ongoing interest in reopening indoor pickleball courts. Director Gauntlett advised the commission that, as the Parks Master Plan is dedicated to outdoor facilities and the indoor space has decreased availability due to the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions and increased programming at these sites. Indoor pickleball facilities are not included in any upcoming projects.

Commissioner Weber opened the possibility of renewing the Community Garden project that was discontinued by City Council during the previous Parks Master Plan. That project would be dependent upon deed restriction requirements for passive recreation sites, but the public is still encouraged to make requests on the Interactive Map and Shared Ideas wall.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 PM.

The next RCCS meeting is on May 11, 2023.

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

/ Drew Bendickson /
Drew Bendickson, Senior Management Analyst