



**CITY OF NOVATO**  
**PARKS & RECREATION**

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

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**Wednesday, November 8, 2023 - 6:00 PM**

**Novato City Hall**  
**Council Chambers, 901 Sherman Ave**

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**Chair**

**Erin Lacey**

**Vice Chair**

**Nancy Weber**

**Members**

**Dennis Bentley, Suzanne Crow, Emily Larsen, Mavi Pilloton, Zachary Schmechel,  
Betsy Ricketts, Beverly Winsor**

**Staff Liaison**

**Katie Gauntlett**

The Recreation, Cultural and Community Services Advisory Commission welcomes you to attend its meetings which are regularly scheduled the second Thursday of odd months. Your interest is encouraged and appreciated.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (415) 899-8986. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable accommodation to help ensure accessibility to this meeting. The Recreation, Cultural and Community Services Advisory Commission may discuss and/or take action on any or all of the items listed on the agenda irrespective of how the agenda items are described.

**Public Participation/Comment Instructions**

Members of the Public may participate and provide public comments to teleconference meetings as follows:

- **Written public comments** may be submitted by email to [prcs@novato.org](mailto:prcs@novato.org). Written public comments received more than 3 hours before the start of the meeting will be distributed to the Commission. Written public comment received after the three-hour cut-off, including during and after the meeting, will be collected and placed in the public record. Written public comments will not be read during the meeting.

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

**B. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA**

**C. PUBLIC COMMENT**

*There is a three-minute time limit to speak although the Chair may shorten the time based on the number of speakers or other factors. A speaker may not yield his or her time to another speaker.*

*For issues raised during Public Comment that are not on the published agenda, except as otherwise provided under the Ralph M. Brown Act, no action can legally be taken. The Board, Committee, Commission may direct that the item be referred to the Staff Liaison for action or may schedule the item on a subsequent agenda.*

**D. CONSENT ITEM**

*All matters listed on the Consent Calendar are considered to be routine and will be enacted by a single vote of the Commission. There will be no separate discussion unless specific items are removed from the Consent Calendar for separate discussion and action. Any Commissioner may remove an item from the Consent Calendar and place it under General Business for discussion.*

**D.1. Approve the Special Meeting Minutes from the August 31, 2023 Meeting**

**E. UNFINISHED AND OTHER BUSINESS**

**F. GENERAL BUSINESS**

*These items include significant and administrative actions of special interest and will usually include a presentation and discussion by the Recreation, Cultural and Community Services Commission. They will be enacted upon by a separate vote.*

**F.1. Receive a Presentation on the 2023 Hamilton Community Pool seasons from Community Services Division Manager, Drew Bendickson**

**F.2. Discuss Potential Sponsorships and Funding Options for a Miwok Park Bocce Courts Rehabilitation Project from Parks, Recreation, & Community Services Director, Katie Gauntlett**

**G. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS**

*This section is used for Commissioners and the Staff Liaison to orally report on topics that can be considered for discussion at a future meeting.*

**G.1. Staff Updates**

**G.2. Commissioner Reports**

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

***Materials that are submitted to members of Commission after the distribution of the agenda packet will be made available to the public at the time it is provided to the Commission.***

**AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

I, Drew Bendickson, certify that on the Thursday before the Recreation, Cultural and Community Services Advisory Commission meeting of November 8, 2023, the agenda was posted on the City Community Service Board at 922 Machin and on the City's website at [novato.org](http://novato.org) in Novato, California.

/ Drew Bendickson /

Drew Bendickson, Community Services Division Manager



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**CITY OF NOVATO**  
PARKS & RECREATION

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

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**Draft Minutes**

**Thursday, August 31, 2023 - 6:00 PM**

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

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

**Commissioners Present:** Chair Erin Lacey, Dennis Bentley, Suzanne Crow, Emily Larsen, Mavi Pilloton, Betsy Ricketts, Beverley Winsor

**Commissioners Absent:** Vice Chair Weber

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

**B. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA**

**Commission Action:** Upon motion by Commissioner Weber and seconded by Commissioner Crow, the Commission voted 7-0-0-1 to approve the final agenda.

**Ayes:** Bentley, Crow, Lacey, Larsen, Pilloton, Ricketts, Winsor

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Weber

**Motion Carried**

## C. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Trish McCurdy

## D. CONSENT ITEMS

### D.1. APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

**Commission Action:** Upon motion by Commissioner Crow and seconded by Commissioner Larsen, the Commission voted 7-0-0-1 to approve the meeting minutes from the Recreation, Cultural, and Community Services Advisory Commission Special Meeting from July 13, 2023.

**Ayes:** Bentley, Crow, Lacey, Larsen, Pilloton, Ricketts, Winsor

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Weber

**Motion Carried**

## E. UNFINISHED AND OTHER BUSINESS

None

## F. GENERAL BUSINESS

### F.1. Receive a Presentation to Review and Consider Providing a Recommendation to Novato City Council Approving The Scottsdale Pond Wayside Signage Artwork By Scientific Illustrator Emma Oyle, for the Approved Public Art Installation at Scottsdale Pond in Partnership with The Rotary Club Of Novato from Community Services Division Manager, Drew Bendickson

Community Services Division Manager Drew Bendickson and Scientific Illustrator Emma Oyle presented two final versions of the signage artwork for Scottsdale Pond. As requested, modifications were made including a light blue background and a white text box behind the informational text.

Division Manager Bendickson noted the white text box may not be necessary, so a second version without it was created for the commissioners to review and decide on a preferred design.

Commissioner Bentley called on Jim Spillman of the Rotary Club of Novato regarding sign production. Jim confirmed the signs would come from the original manufacturer, be graffiti-proof and withstand UV rays for longevity. He added that having the digital files will enable easy reproduction if needed.

After discussion, the commission opted to move forward with the version without white text boxes behind the informational content. They requested Emma also add "Artwork by Emma Oyle" on the "Welcome to Scottsdale Pond" sign.

Emma expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work on this meaningful project for her hometown. Researching the native plants and animals of Novato was a rewarding learning experience for her.

**Public Comment:**

1. Trish McCurdy

**Commission Action:** Upon motion by Commissioner Crow and seconded by Commissioner Bentley, the Commission voted 7-0-0-1 to recommend the final version, without the white text boxes to the City Council.

**Ayes:** Bentley, Crow, Lacey, Larsen, Pilloton, Ricketts, Winsor

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** Weber

**F.2. Receive a presentation on the 2023 Margaret Todd Senior Center Programming from Recreation Supervisor, Teresa Ehteshami**

Recreation Supervisor Recreation Supervisor Teresa Ehteshami presented to the commission about The Margaret Todd Senior Center (MTSC), a community resource for Novato seniors and residents. The facility includes classrooms and an auditorium, next to the Hill Recreation Area. It hosts senior activities and community events. Last year it hosted over 3,500 event hours.

MTSC has 347 members and offers diverse classes including art, yoga, and French. This fall saw a 43% membership increase and 730 participants.

Additional offerings include AARP driving classes, a computer lab, and a library. In partnership with Marin County, the Center provides federally funded lunches through a congregate meal program, twice a week for around 2,000 seniors annually. Special events held throughout the year include flea markets, craft faires, and tournaments, averaging 1,300 multigenerational attendees.

Recreation Supervisor Teresa Ehteshami informed the commission that Margaret Todd Senior Center staff will be representing the senior center at the Marin Senior Info Fair on September 7th. The staff will be among 140 community organization booths at the county event. In honor of the 30th anniversary of the Margaret Todd Senior Center, a survey will be distributed to local adults and seniors to gather input to enhance offerings and services over the next 30 years.

**Public Comment:**

None

**G. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS**

**G.1. Staff Updates**

Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Director Gauntlett provided the commission with a recap of the department's summer programming. The PRCS department operated 9 weeks of summer programming in 2023. Camp Ton-of-Fun served 790 participants at 95% capacity and Gymnastics camps served 540 participants at 99% capacity. The Summer Gymnastics camps had 482 participants.

For Aquatics' inaugural season operating the Hamilton Pool, 273 summer pool passes were sold - a 17% increase from when San Rafael operated the pool. An inflatable obstacle course was added on Fridays to boost attendance. With new lifeguards and swim instructors gaining experience, the department feels well-positioned for next summer season.

The final Hot Amphitheater Night concert took place on August 26th. All concerts were well-attended and we received positive feedback throughout the summer months.

Heading into fall, the Activity Guide launched August 8th with registration opening the same day, achieving a record \$80,000 in revenue within 24 hours. The Gymnastics Center opened its first fall session with over 100 weekly classes. The pool will stay open through October 29th. Youth and adult leagues are kicking off including basketball.

Upcoming events include the Fall Flea Market, Movies at Pocket Park, a Floating Pumpkin Patch at the Hamilton Pool, the Senior Center's Holiday Crafts Faire, Photos with Santa, and Gingerbread Build.

Director Gauntlett mentioned that she will be in contact with the commission about the date for the next Parks Master Plan community meeting where consultants will share findings from the community survey and engagement efforts.

Lastly, Director Gauntlett shared that Dogbone Meadow was selected as the best dog park in Marin County by Pacific Sun readers. Additionally, for the second consecutive year and fifth time overall, the Novato Gymnastics Center was voted the best indoor children's sports center in Marin County.

**Public Comment:**

None

**G.2. Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner Crow expressed her gratitude and appreciation to the department for the successful summer concert series. She remarked that the concerts were thoroughly enjoyable this year and it was wonderful to see the local community in attendance. Commissioner Crow also noted her appreciation for the pop-up tents that were provided on extremely hot days to keep attendees comfortable.

Commissioner Winsor inquired about the absence of the future agenda item Budgeting for Miwok Park Bocce Courts.

Director Gauntlett explained that approving an item for a future agenda does not guarantee placement on the next agenda due to a number of factors. She noted that presently there is no change to the budget status for revitalizing the Miwok Park bocce courts, as no funding has been allocated. Staff continue to research options in preparation for bringing this item back to the commission at a future meeting.

Chair Lacey referenced the public comment received earlier in the meeting from Trish McCurdy regarding outdoor exercise equipment in parks. She suggested tabling a presentation on this topic until after the results from the Parks Master Plan are available, as community feedback on exercise equipment may be included.

**Commission Action:** Upon motion by Commissioner Crow and seconded by Commissioner Bentley, the Commission voted 7-0-0-1 to revisit a presentation about outdoor exercise equipment, pending findings from the Parks Master Plan community engagement process.

**Ayes:** Bentley, Crow, Lacey, Larsen, Pilloton, Ricketts, Winsor

**Noes:** None

**Abstain:** None



**Absent:** Weber

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 PM.

The next RCCS meeting is on September 14, 2023.

DRAFT

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

/ Drew Bendickson /  
Drew Bendickson, Community Services Division Manager