

MONTEREY PENINSULA REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

DATE: October 09, 2019
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Rafael Payan, General Manager
SUBJECT: Status of Laguna Grande Regional Park

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends the Board receive this report and provide direction to Staff on how to proceed.

FISCAL IMPACT:

\$60,000

FUNDING SOURCE:

Laguna Grande Improvements: Account #6953

FUNDING BALANCE:

\$60,000

DISCUSSION:

On Monday, September 30, 2019, the Laguna Grande Regional Park Joint Powers Agency (JPA) held a public meeting at the City of Seaside Council Chambers for the purpose of the JPA's reception of an update, to accept public comment, and provide comments related to Laguna Grande Regional Park (Park). MPRPD and the cities of Monterey and Seaside comprise the JPA (**ATTACHMENT 1**). Alissa Kispersky (City Councilmember, City of Seaside), Clyde Roberson (Mayor, City of Monterey), and Kevin Raskoff (MPRPD Director) attended the meeting, representing the JPA. Approximately 50 guests, representing the public and staff, attended the meeting.

The meeting was congenial, informative and productive. Several residents spoke, stating that they appreciated the JPA holding the public session, and offered their ideas and assistance related to the "re-master planning" of the Park to address current challenges and enhance its future use.

As noted in the meeting agenda (**ATTACHMENT 2**), five (5) business items were discussed. These included:

ITEM A: Establishment of a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority: The JPA's members moved and unanimously seconded that Mayor Roberson serve as the JPA's Chair and that Councilmember Kispersky serve as Vice-Chair.

ITEM B: Introduction to the Laguna Grande Regional Park: Ms. Kimberly Cole (Community Development Director, City of Monterey) provided the JPA panel and public a brief summary of the JPA, reflecting language found in **ATTACHMENTS 1 and 2**.

ITEM C: Review of Completed Projects: The cities of Monterey and Seaside provided brief summaries of capital improvement projects they have recently completed: Some of these projects include:

Monterey:

- a. Installation of an artificial turf-surfaced soccer field
- b. Little library
- c. Trail improvements
- d. In partnership with Seaside, homeless encampments cleaned-up in July and August. Four large dump truck loads of debris and abandoned items were hauled to the landfill. Fifteen (15) syringes were found and disposed of.

Seaside:

- a. Installation and enhancement of playground equipment
- b. Installation of new BBQ grills and drinking fountains
- c. Repair of asphalt-surfaced trails
- e. Pergola and playground at Roberts Lake
- f. In partnership with Seaside, homeless encampments cleaned-up in July and August. As previously mentioned, four large dump truck loads of debris and abandoned items were hauled to the landfill. Fifteen (15) syringes were found and disposed of.

ITEM D: Police Jurisdiction and Response:

Monterey (Police Chief, Dave Hober): Some of the key items/topics that were briefly discussed include:

- a. The Park's boundaries are unknown or undiscernible to many members of the public thus, they are often confused as to who they should call when trying to reach a law enforcement agency.
- b. An extant agreement between Monterey and Seaside allows for law enforcement personnel "cross-over" for minor infractions (such as a park user disturbing the peace by being too loud) but felonies are referred to the respective city in which the alleged felony has taken place.
- c. An illegal fire was ignited in proximity to a private residential property. The fire was extinguished by the local fire department.

- d. Monterey and Seaside coordinate with other organizations to provide options for the homeless. Services are especially provided for homeless women, victims of violence, and veterans. Unfortunately, not everyone wants or seeks help.
- e. The police department typically engages in numerous arrests at this Park during the year but wants to stress that being homeless is NOT a crime.

Seaside (Deputy Police Chief, Judy Veloz): Some of the key items/topics that were briefly discussed include:

- a. In the past, the police department partnered with the Public Works Department to address homeless camps.
- b. A “Homeless Outreach Team” has been created to interface with the homeless to provide social and other services.
- c. In 2018, the police department stopped issuing citations to the homeless. The removal of camps continues however, in alignment with statutory parameters.
- d. The city’s most recent encampment removal project resulted in 90% of the homeless in that encampment leaving the area. No telling if or how long it will be before they return. The cost for this project was \$8,000.
- e. A new ordinance should be developed to discourage homeless encampments – however, new legislation is being developed that may result in even more homelessness in our parks and public places. This proposed legislation resembles Boise, Idaho’s response to homelessness wherein when homeless shelters are full, the homeless are authorized to sleep on public property – especially parks. It has been deemed that being homeless is NOT a criminal activity in and of itself. Thus, the homeless may sleep in parks from 7pm to 7am. They must not impede public access or create a public nuisance – but what constitutes a public nuisance is often a challenge to legally define or prosecute.

ITEM E: Identify Concerns and Brainstorm Ideas:

- a. FORTAG Project representatives presented options to enhance trails through Laguna Grande Regional Park and provide connectivity to a multi-modal transportation network that could link Fort Ord, Frog Pond Regional Park, the Coastal Trail, and the peninsula’s communities through a 30-mile bicycle/pedestrian trail system.
- b. Measure X, which was authorized by voters in the 2016 election, will provide funds for some of these improvements. Ten million dollars are presently available to provide improvements that include connecting the Safeway Store (located at the intersection of Fremont and Canyon de Rey) to Frog Pond. Ideally, this stretch of trail will be completed within the next five years
- c. The proposed FORTAG improvements could also provide options for community events, such as 5K and 10K runs.

- d. MPRPD stated that we have been meeting with the City of Monterey for the last two-years and have reached consensus wherein MPRPD provides said city up to \$60K for environmental analysis of those portions of the Park they manage (\$48K) and funds to enhance those portions of Park's trail network the City of Monterey is responsible for (\$12K). MPRPD invited Seaside to also participate in a similar opportunity for the "Seaside side" of the Park.
- e. The JPA members agreed to meet again sooner rather than later.
- f. A meeting is being scheduled between the cities of Monterey and Seaside, and MPRPD's staff to further explore options. The cities will present the findings and recommendations to the JPA for their consideration at a future meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. [JPA Agreement](#)
- 2. [JPA Meeting Agenda \(Monday, September 30, 2019\)](#)