



MINUTES  
Recreation and Community Services Commission  
Adjourned Regular Meeting  
April 10, 2024

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MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Veronica Lucio.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Ted Spaseff.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Vice Chairperson Veronica Lucio  
Commissioner Dave Allen  
Commissioner Ted Spaseff  
Commissioner Anitza Valles

ABSENT: Chairperson Stacy Valdez

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of February 14, 2024 and March 13, 2024. A motion was made by Commissioner Ted Spaseff and seconded by Commissioner Anitza Valles to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 14, 2024. Minutes were approved as submitted with Commissioner Dave Allen abstaining. A motion was made by Commissioner Dave Allen to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 13, 2024 and seconded by Commissioner Spaseff. Minutes were approved as submitted with Vice Chairperson Veronica Lucio abstaining.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Director Valarie Frost began her announcements by informing the commission that at a recent Lakewood City Council meeting, the City Council adopted the resolution accepting the results of the March 5 municipal election, and the City Clerk swore in the two winning council candidates: re-elected Council Member Jeff Wood (District 3) and newly elected Council Member David Arellano (District 4).

Ms. Frost noted that Council Member Arellano would likely appoint a new RCS Commissioner prior to the May commission meeting. She noted that since Commissioner Stacy Valdez was serving as Chair of the Commission, and appointed by former Mayor/Council Member Ariel Pe, Vice Chairperson Veronica Lucio would lead the commission meetings until the annual commission re-organization in July.

The commission was asked to please reserve the evening of Tuesday, May 14 on their calendar for a Lakewood Celebrates honoring Commissioner Valdez for her service to the community.

Next, Ms. Frost provided the commission with information regarding the 70th Anniversary Celebratory Event taking place at the Weingart Senior Center. It was said that as a part of Lakewood's 70th anniversary celebrations, staff would incorporate special elements to the senior luncheon at the Weingart Senior Center on the actual anniversary date of April 16, with entertainment, décor, giveaways and an appearance by Woody the Tree and Council. Ms. Frost noted that family members of original council members were expected to attend, including

Beverly Nye Perez (daughter of George Nye), Jamie Baker (daughter of Robert Baker), Angelo Iacoboni (grandson of Angelo Iacoboni), and Rachel Iacoboni (great-granddaughter of Mr. Iacoboni). They will be acknowledged during the remarks and presented with 70th anniversary gifts and a certificate, thanking their families for contributing to the creation and development of Lakewood. Festivities are scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. with the Vice Mayor providing remarks at 11:50 a.m.

Lastly, Ms. Frost announced that in celebration of Lakewood's 70th birthday, the city was organizing a free Family Movie Night that will feature a showing of the classic movie *Back to the Future* along with free popcorn, giveaways, carnival games, surprises, and plenty of photo opportunities with 70th Anniversary backdrops and the city's 70th Anniversary mascot, Woody the Tree. The commission was informed that the fun happens at Mayfair Park, on Lisa Fernandez Field, on Saturday, April 20 from 6 to 10 p.m., with the movie set to begin at 7:30 p.m.

Assistant Director Kevin Bright announced that the annual Volunteer Day was scheduled to take place on Saturday, April 13 at 8 a.m. He noted that with impending rain in the forecast, the event might be moved to Saturday, April 20. It was said that contingencies were in place in the case of rain, and that an email would go out to all volunteers in the case that the event needs to be rescheduled. Secondly, Mr. Bright shared that the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) Volunteer Coaches Recognition Dinner and Angel's game would take place on Saturday, April 27 at 4 p.m. at Mayfair Park. It was said that an Italian dinner would be provided. The commission was asked to RSVP with their secretary if interested in attending.

Parks Superintendent Abel Andrade provided details to the commission regarding several landscape projects taking place throughout the city. Mr. Andrade reported that at the corner of Clark Avenue and Del Amo Boulevard, staff installed beautiful new landscape consisting of annual flowers in the shape of the number 70, to celebrate Lakewood's 70th Anniversary of incorporation. In addition, at the George Nye Library, staff installed fresh new landscape featuring drip irrigation and drought-tolerant plants. It was said that staff had also completed an inviting new landscape, highlighted by a dry creek and Palo Verde trees, on Carson Street at the entrance of Phase I of The Nature Trail.

Mr. Andrade informed the commission that a small crew, led by Irrigation Repair Worker Sean Weiby, completed an eight-week grant-funded project, installing eight Cal Sense smart irrigation controllers, master valves, flow sensors, and thousands of feet of wire. It was said that staff battled inclement weather and backordered materials and still managed to complete the project on time and under budget.

Lastly, Mr. Andrade announced that the turf would be renovated once again at Home Run Dog Park. It was said that park patrons and their dogs loved the new grass installed in 2023, and staff works hard to maintain it. Mr. Andrade informed the commission that the dog park was tentatively scheduled to be closed April 29 to May 23 for the turf renovation.

Ms. Frost then introduced to the commission, Madison Yarak, the Odyssey Stem Academy Tree Huggers, and members of the Lakewood Women’s Club, who were in the audience. All guests introduced themselves to the commission and spoke about their passion for volunteering for and serving the Lakewood community.

Commissioner Dave Allen thanked Ms. Yarak, the Odyssey Stem Academy Tree Huggers, and the Lakewood Women’s Club for their contributions to the city.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff echoed Commissioner Allen’s sentiments. He thanked the volunteers for coming to the meeting and expressed his appreciation for all that they do to make Lakewood a better place.

Vice Chairperson Veronica Lucio mentioned that she admired the fact that the teachers of the Odyssey Stem Academy Tree Huggers loved volunteering with their students so much that it did not feel like work at all. She commended the students for their courage to step to the microphone and speak during the meeting, noting that public speaking is even difficult for most adults. Ms. Lucio thanked the Lakewood Women’s Club for their service and commended Ms. Yarak for all of her hard work with the aquatics program.

#### REPORTS:

##### **1. Pan Am Fiesta Preview**

Community Services Supervisor Brianna Tavera displayed slides and provided information regarding the 2024 Pan Am Fiesta as noted in the written report. Ms. Tavera reported that the Pan Am Fiesta would take place beginning Thursday, May 9 and conclude on Sunday, May 12. It was said that the 2024 Pan Am Fiesta would continue with special event elements, including amusement rides, food booths, a cultural mix of live entertainment, the Children’s Cultural Booth, a shoppers circle, and a display of Lakewood’s Pan American history. Details were provided regarding each element as noted in the written report.

Ms. Tavera reported that amusement rides and carnival attractions would once again open on Thursday, May 9 with a “Family Fun Night” of carnival games and rides from 5 to 9 p.m. It was said that this popular element features \$3 amusement rides and concession items for sale. The family-friendly celebration will continue Friday, May 10 from 5 to 10 p.m., Saturday, May 11 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday, May 12 from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. The commission was informed that advanced purchase of promotional wristbands and ride tickets will go on sale beginning Monday, April 29 at Lakewood City Hall.

Lastly, Ms. Tavera informed the commission that a free shuttle will run from City Hall to Mayfair Park every 15 minutes beginning at 10 a.m. and ending at 9:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 13. Fiesta participants can park in the east parking lot of City Hall and get shuttle service to the main Pan Am Fiesta entrance on Clark Avenue.

The commission received and filed the report on Pan Am Fiesta Preview.

## **2. Sports Programs Annual Report**

Community Services Supervisor Jonathan Gorne provided an annual review of Lakewood sports programs for 2023-2024 as noted in the written report. Mr. Gorne reported that the LYS program was approaching its 68th year. The commission was reminded that an LYS sports year runs from June through March, encompassing three sports seasons; baseball, softball and T-ball in the summer, flag football, volleyball and volleytennis in the fall and basketball in the winter.

It was said that in the last sports year, 2,474 children participated as compared to the 2,120 participants from the 2022-2023 sports year, which was said to reflect a 17% increase. Mr. Gorne noted that the program maintains strong participation from Lakewood residents, with 77% of total registrations by those living in the city in the 2023-2024 sports year. The commission was informed that a table detailing the participation numbers for the past three sports years of LYS was included in their agenda packet.

Mr. Gorne then introduced to the commission, Community Services Specialist Alfonso Villaneda. He gave a description of Mr. Villaneda's job duties and spoke about the many ways in which Mr. Villaneda contributes to the success of both the LYS and the Adults Sports programs. Mr. Villaneda expressed to the commission his love for his job and described his experience in the role.

Commissioner Spaseff thanked Mr. Villaneda for his hard work and commended him for his passion for the city's sports programs. He commented that his grandson had the most fun he has had in sports while playing in the LYS program. He shared his appreciation for the fact that the program was free for all residents, allowing every child within the city an opportunity to play.

Commissioner Allen commented that Mr. Villaneda brings passion and feeling to the program. He thanked him for his dedication and stated that he was appreciative of Mr. Villaneda's efforts to enhance the city's sports programs.

Commissioner Anitza Valles thanked all of the volunteers in attendance. She expressed her appreciation for their passion for the community. She mentioned that her children enjoy the many programs offered, and mentioned that their hard work and efforts help to make it all possible.

The commission received and filed the annual report on Sports Programs.

## **3. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 10**

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Events, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month of March and a listing of upcoming activities for May 2024.

The Commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Letter to Kasandra Patron, Employee of the Month for February 2024.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Vice Chairperson Lucio adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m. to Wednesday, May 8 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary  
Recreation and Community Services Commission