



CITY OF HEALDSBURG PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING – AGENDA

City Hall Council Chambers
401 Grove Street, Healdsburg CA 95448
Phone: 707-431-3301

Meeting Date: January 11, 2017
Time: 6:00 P.M.
Date Posted: January 6, 2017

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a) Roll Call
- b) Pledge of Allegiance
- c) Changes (Deletions) from Agenda
- d) Approval of Minutes: December 14, 2016

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

This time is set aside to receive comments from the public regarding matters of general interest not on the agenda, but related to Commission business. Pursuant to the Brown Act, however, the Commission cannot consider any issues or take action on any requests during this comment period.

3. OLD BUSINESS

- a) Project Update
Receive an Update on Community Services Projects

4. INFORMATION AND REPORT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES ACTIVITIES (*Staff, Information Only*)

- a) Commission Appointment Process (Verbal)
- b) Other

5. COMMISSION REPORTS ON MATTERS OF INTEREST OCCURRING SINCE PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETING

- a) Subcommittee Reports
 - i. Parks and Facilities (Herrod, Tripathi, Widick)
 - ii. Open Space (Birdsong, Herrod, Widick)
 - iii. Partnership (Birdsong, Hyde, Tripathi)
 - iv. Services and Funding (Hernandez, Hyde, Mota)
- b) Other

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (*Tentative*)

- a) Fitch Mountain Management Plan - February
- b) 2016 Special Event Summary/2017 Special Event Planning – February
- c) Cerri Site Redevelopment - March

7. ADJOURNMENT Next meeting: February 8, 2017 at City Council Chambers (unless otherwise established)

SB 343 - DOCUMENTS RELATED TO OPEN SESSION AGENDAS: Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the City Parks and Recreation Commission regarding any item on this agenda after the posting of this agenda and not otherwise exempt from disclosure, will be made available for public review in the Parks and Recreation Office located at 1557 Healdsburg Avenue during normal business hours. If supplemental materials are made available to the members of the Commission at the meeting, a copy will be available for public review at the Parks and Recreation Office located at 1557 Healdsburg Avenue, Healdsburg, CA 95448. These writings will be made available in appropriate alternative formats upon request by a person with a disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

DISABLED ACCOMMODATIONS: The City of Healdsburg will make reasonable accommodations for persons having special needs due to disabilities. Please contact Parks and Recreation Office, at 1557 Healdsburg Avenue, Healdsburg, California, 431-3301, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting, to ensure the necessary accommodations are made.

**CITY OF HEALDSBURG
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**December 14, 2016
City Hall Council Chambers
401 Grove Street, Healdsburg, CA 95448**

The Parks and Recreation Commission met in regular session.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Mota called the meeting to order at 6:03P.M.

1.a. Roll Call

Present Commissioners: Birdsong, Herrod, Hyde, Mota, Tripathi, Widick

Absent Commissioners: Hernandez

Staff Present: Community Services Director Themig, Recreation Supervisor Jahns,
Parks Superintendent Licea, Office Assistant Salas

1.b. Pledge of Allegiance

1.c. Changes (deletions) from Agenda

The agenda was revised to remove Item 4.b, Mitchell Memorial and 5.a, Quarterly Project Update Presentation from the agenda, items will be deferred to the meeting in January. Item 3.a, Introduction of Dave Jahns will take place after item 4.a., Fitch Mountain Park and Open Space Preserve Plan.

1.d. Approval of Minutes: September 14, 2016 and October 11, 2016

On a motion by Commissioner Tripathi, seconded by Commissioner Birdsong approved the September 14, 2016 regular meeting minutes as submitted. The motion carried on a voice vote. (Ayes - 6, Noes - 0, Absent - Hernandez)

On a motion by Commissioner Tripathi , seconded by Commissioner Birdsong approved the regular meeting minutes for October 11, 2016 as revised; the meeting took place at the Community Center and not at City Hall. The motion carried on a voice vote. (Ayes - 6, Noes -, Absent - Hernandez)

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.a. Fitch Mountain Park and Open Space Preserve Management Plan (Licea)
Review, and by motion, make recommendation to the City Council on the proposed Management Plan for Fitch Mountain Park & Open Space Preserve

Mota proposed that the Commission listen to the public comment and extend public input until December 21st. Commissioners asked questions regarding the process. Due to some confusion about the process Themig clarified that staff would give a presentation, question and answer would follow. The Commission would then listen to public comment and extend the public comment period until December 21st if they agree. Commissioner Herrod spoke regarding the timeline and whether staff had any concerns about meeting the deadline. Themig responded that due to the vacancy at the City Council level, the item will go before them in February. Staff is confident they will be able to open to the public November 2017.

Commissioner Licea and Jennifer Michaud from Pruneske Chatham Inc., (PCI) provided a presentation for the Fitch Mountain Management Plan. The City of Healdsburg acquired the Fitch Mountain and Open Space preserve with the help of Sonoma County Preservation and Open Space District in 2014. The property was a two-phase acquisition; Phase 1 includes 173 acres and Phase 2 contains 26 acres. LandPaths is the interim landowner and manager until the property transfers back to the City in November 2017, they provide outreach and workdays on the property to preserve the mountain. The District provided \$250K for the interim management, \$150K came from the California Coastal Conservancy and the \$50K came from the City of Healdsburg.

Licea and Michaud went over the following items in regards to the FM plan:

- Preserve Overview
- Framework for the Acquisition
- Conservation Values
- Development Process
- Public Input
- Management Plan Goals
- Resource Management
- Fire Risk Abatement
- Current Public Uses
- Trail and Recreation Planning
- Next Steps and Acknowledgements

After the presentation the Commissioners asked questions regarding special event processes, park uses and requirements both from the City and the County. Commissioners showed concern about how many and what types of events would be allowed, number or attendees, and who would approve the events. Themig replied that the City currently has a special event process but

staff may have to develop a process that would pertain to the use of the mountain. After discussing the items mentioned above Chairperson Mota opened the item for public comment.

Public Comment

Dave Henderson mentioned that he is President of the Fitch Mountain Association and was approached by Supervisor Mike McGuire for the group to participate in the process of the Fitch Mountain Preserve Plan. Henderson stated that the plan has recently included a provision for mountain biking and a second park improvement area at the summit of the mountain that would allow large group gatherings and camping and which is different from the plan that was promised. He added that both of these are substantial changes that are revenue generators for the City. He added that they feel that the City is being non-transparent and undemocratic due to the fact that these changes are taking place at the end of the public process. They are strongly requesting that another public input meeting take place before this is taken to City Council for review. Henderson asked people in the audience to stand if they requested another public meeting, over half of the audience stood in support.

Ellen Silge thanked Commission for extending the public comment period due to the recent changes. She added that the nature preserve values stewardship over recreation, and that the park improvement could negatively impact the preserve.

Diana Stratton read a statement from observations at her home on Hilltop Road. She added that it is a very narrow road and provides residents with limited parking. She added that dog walkers are a problem with dogs being off-leash and pet waste is usually not collected. Mountain bikers usually will ride down the mountain at very high speeds. She added that she sees potential problems if horse riding is allowed especially with the mountain bikers, she believes all three of these are not a good mix. She is in support of another public meeting before this is reviewed by Council.

Ted Calvert commented that he felt that if more groups used the mountain that would increase the stewardship and it would provide a sense of ownership. He disagreed with PCI and thought the point of entry should be at the Banana Slug trail. He added that he is a biker and is glad to have the plan be inclusive not exclusive. He added that broom is a big threat to the plan, due to the invasive nature and how it is hard to eradicate. He added that he believes that about 90 percent of the dogs are off leash and believes that the dog park is not compatible with the nature preserve and recommends that the city relocate the dog park.

Michael Welch commented he is a rider on the mountain and that he participates in the work parties and picks up the dog waste bags.

Sharon Barbee thanked PCI and staff for the presentation. She added that the biker community is interested in the stewardship at the mountain. She added that a possibility of a parking lot and special events is not what they see as a preserve.

Themig clarified that a parking lot is not proposed at the top of the mountain, the parking lot would be at the Villa site.

Kathryn Henderson commented that she lives on the mountain and is directly affected by the changes to the preserve. They are at a disadvantage by not being able to vote on the City of Healdsburg officials who will decide on what happens to the preserve. She added that the recent proposal is highly inappropriate and it will damage the preserve. Her sense is that there is a lack of transparency, and sensitivity to the residents. She urged the Commission not to make a recommendation before another public meeting. Over half of the audience arose when she asked the public to stand if they were opposed to the designated park area improvement at the summit.

Craig Anderson director of LandPaths spoke and they have been working with the City on the Healdsburg Ridge for about 10 years. LandPaths has focused its work on stewardships and fire reduction and has provided docent lead hikes. He believes that PCI is working together with the different groups to protect the natural resources. The City of Healdsburg has the first public park purchased by the County Agriculture and Open Space District which will soon transfer to the City of Healdsburg, this being Healdsburg Ridge. He shared that a policy was created when someone asked to use a nature preserves for a wedding. He shared that part of the policy was to carpool, a stewardship event from the party, and a donation was required. He added the party was not to leave a trace or be at odds with the conservation values of the preserve. He added that if LandPaths continues to work with Fitch Mountain, special events would have to meet their value based approach. He proposes a stakeholder group to get the dialogue started.

Alicia O'Loughlin with the Sonoma County Biking Coalition and stated that she thinks it is important to provide biking opportunities for recreation or transportation, as healthy life style, and a connection to nature. She stated that the initial draft did not include bicycle access; she thanked staff, PCI and the FM Association for working with them. They want to be a partner with the various groups and willing to help with education, outreach and enforcement.

Ken Wells, Executive Director for the Sonoma County Trails Council which is non-profit that maintains trails in Sonoma County which is volunteer based addressed the group. The Trails Council works in partnership to plan, build, maintain and advocated for shared public trail use. The group is working with different parks to maintain trails in the County. He commented that the trails plan is state of the art. He provided examples of Sugarloaf and Annadel State Park where special events take place. He added that multi-use trails reduce user conflicts.

Christine Culver a board member of the Redwood Empire Bike Alliance and they are excited about the opportunity to keep the mountain open for the community. Their group pledges to be

active participants in trail maintenance and general stewardship of the mountain. They have a digital petition with over 196 signatures. She thanked them for being part of the process and they look forward to working with staff and community members.

Bruce Abramson was concerned about the park improvement area 2. He stated that it should be a nature experience and it would be disappointing to hike to the top of the mountain to be greeted by a special event.

Chairperson Mota thanked the public for their time and comments. Public comment closed at 8:06 P.M.

Commissioners spoke about extending the public comments until December 21st to allow the public to voice their opinions and concerns about the changes to the plan. They acknowledged that the changes to the plan were last-minute and felt the need to allow additional time for comment. Tripathi suggested that staff and consultants respond to the comments for the Commission to review at the January meeting, and then they make a recommendation to City Council. The discussion continued and Commissioners spoke about their concerns. Commissioners asked if statistics could be provided, Michaud added that as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process this information would be provided however it is not available now.

The Commission came to a consensus about extending the public comment period and continuing the conversation in January.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.a. Introduction of Dave Jahns, Recreation Supervisor (Themig)

Themig introduced Dave Jahns as the Recreation Supervisor for the Community Services Department. Jahns comes from the City of Cupertino and shared that he is excited to be onboard. His responsibilities will include the preschool, after school, camps and other recreational programs.

5. INFORMATION AND REPORT OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES (Staff, Information Only)

5.a. Commission Appointment Process (Verbal)

Themig mentioned that City Council will focus on filling the vacancy first, and then two of the Commissioner terms will be up and one will not be reappointed.

Commissioner Widick commented that he will not be reappointing for the position and due to family commitments he will not continue with his positions and he is honored to be participating in the commission.

5.b. Other

Commissioner Tripathi thanked staff for the bike repair stations at West Plaza, City Hall and Giorgi Park.

6. COMMISSION REPORTS ON MATTERS OF INTEREST OCCURING SINCE PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETING

6.a. Subcommittee Reports (Verbal)

- i. Parks and Facilities (Herrod, Tripathi, Widick)
- ii. Open Space (Birdsong, Herrod, Widick)
- iii. Partnership (Birdsong, Hyde, Tripathi)
- iv. Services and Funding (Hernandez, Hyde, Mota)

6.b. Other

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

7.a. Fitch Mountain Management Plan

7.b. Cerri Site (February)

7.c. Mitchell Memorial

7.d. Quarterly Project Update Presentation

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss, on a motion by Commissioner Tripathi, seconded by Commissioner Hyde adjourned the meeting at 8:29 P.M. The motion carried on a voice vote. (Ayes -6, Noes - 0, Absent –Hernandez)

The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2017 at the City Hall Council Chambers (unless otherwise established), 401 Grove Street, Healdsburg CA.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Juan Mota,
Chairperson

Mark Themig,
Community Services Director