

**CONEJO RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
February 20, 2025
6:00 PM
HILLCREST CENTER
M I N U T E S**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

Nickles called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and McQueeney led the flag salute.

2. ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Buss, Cusworth, Huffer, Nickles and Orozco

Directors Absent:

Staff Present: Friedl, General Manager; Callis, Recreation and Community Services Director; Mooney, Parks and Planning Director; Smith, Management Services Director; and Reynders, Executive Assistant

3. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Ride On Therapeutic Horsemanship

Sara Jones, Co-CEO of Ride On, thanked the District's Board and staff for their partnership with Ride On. She provided an overview, via a PowerPoint presentation, of Ride On's activities, programs and events at both the Rancho Potrero Community Equestrian Center (RPCEC) and the Walnut Grove Therapeutic Riding Center. She reported that the RPCEC was a wildfire evacuation site during the recent fires. Jones answered Board member's questions and was thanked for her informative presentation.

4. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Dale Menagh expressed interest in getting further information regarding the District's plans to provide more pickleball courts for the community. Friedl responded that District staff continues to identify possible locations for future pickleball courts.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Cusworth, seconded by Huffer, and carried 5-0 to approve the agenda as presented.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. **Approval of Minutes of February 6, 2025, Regular Board Meeting**
- B. **Approval of Warrants**
Accounts Payable Check Registers Total \$388,101.69
Payroll \$522,500.00

It was moved by Orozco, seconded by Buss, and carried 5-0 to approve the consent calendar as presented.

7. DEFERRED MATTERS

8. NEW ITEMS

A. Modify Conejo Community Park Improvement Project

Mooney reminded the Board of this project's multi-year history and process, leading up to this evening's recommendation. An appeal was filed, in early December, after the City's Planning Commission approved the project last November. The group that filed the appeal met with District staff at the site in an effort to answer questions, address the group's concerns, and look at possible project compromises. A letter was drafted by District staff after that meeting, which was signed by the appellant and is attached to the Board report. Board action requested this evening would approve the modifications listed in the letter and would result in a rescinding of the appeal. Mooney gave details of all the compromises offered in the letter regarding park use and park improvements. If approved, Mooney will be sharing the information with the City's Planning Department; he noted that the modified project does not expand the project, so there would be no undoing of previous environmental approvals.

Steve Davis, speaking on behalf of the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden, supports the revised proposal.

Susan Laschi, who took part in the project negotiations, supports the project modifications and provided underlying reasons for the appeal. She would like the park to be protected and for it to continue to be the natural beautiful place it is today.

Dianne McKay, representing the Greater Conejo Valley of Chamber of Commerce, stated the Chamber has voted to fully support the Park District and this project; they will continue to support it with the suggested modifications.

Stacy Hibbard, representing the Conejo Valley Little League, supports the project and is looking forward to the planned enhancements.

Board members expressed appreciation to staff and to the neighbors for their collaborative efforts that resulted in the Board item brought forth this evening. Mooney answered Board member's questions.

It was moved by Huffer, seconded by Cusworth, and carried 5-0 to modify Conejo Community Park Improvement Project per terms of January 29, 2025, letter.

B. Resolution No. 022025-A Authorizing the Submittal of the Older Americans Act Grant Application to Ventura County Human Service Agency, Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA) for Project Year July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Callis reported this Resolution, which is requested of the Board annually, is necessary so as to allow staff to apply for the Older Americans Act Grant which, if awarded, will provide approximately \$132,000 to the Senior Nutrition Program; this program serves lunch to about 75 patrons, Monday through Friday, in the Goebel Café.

It was moved by Cusworth, seconded by Buss, and carried 5-0 to approve Resolution 022025-A authorizing submittal of the Older Americans Act Grant Application, that it be read in title only and all future readings be waived.

9. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. 2024 – 2028 Five-Year Strategic Plan and Annual Goals and Objectives

Friedl reported that, although no updates or changes are suggested by staff at this time, it is good practice to review the Strategic Plan annually to keep it fresh and to look for any necessary course corrections. The current Five-Year Strategic Plan was adopted by the Board last year. The document is broad in scope and contains larger elements and directions. The 2024 Goals and Objectives (4th Quarter Update) is more task/goal oriented and also open for review by Board members. This is a good time for brainstorming and new ideas. Friedl stated capital projects are becoming more expensive as costs increase. He reviewed each item on the Goals and Objectives list and took notes as Board members discussed possible additions to the list moving forward. Nickles suggested some changes to the Strategic Plan.

10. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. **Recreation Highlights**
- B. **Budget Performance Report – January 2025**
- C. **Park Dedication Fee**
- D. **Youth Outreach Report – Fall 2024**

11. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Parks Division Report

No report.

B. Recreation Division Report

Callis thanked Board members for their cooperation this evening with the upcoming “Unplugged” event, which is scheduled for March 1st. The Spring Arts and Crafts Festival at Borchard Community Center and an Archery Workshop at Dos Vientos Community Center are also planned for that day.

C. Management Services Division Report

Smith reported budget season has officially begun; to that end, last week senior staff spent three days meeting with each work center supervisor. She also reported that a new template and new formatting is being devised for the Budget Performance Reports.

D. General Manager’s Report

On February 7th, Friedl attended an Economic Forecast hosted by the Thousand Oaks Rotary Club. On February 12th, Friedl and Mooney met with owners of the Janss Marketplace. Matt Kouba attended his last Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA) Board meeting last night, where he was honored for his service. Tomorrow, Friedl is meeting with Jacqui Irwin and her staff to talk about the fire/brush clearance process, among other things. From February 23rd to 26th, Friedl and Smith will be attending a Public Agency Risk Management Association (PARMA) Conference.

E. Directors Reports and Follow-up Reports on Meetings/Conferences Attended

Cusworth presented a Conejo Valley history lecture to CRPD employees on February 11th. Cusworth and Friedl met with Kara Ralston and Brandie Thomas from Camarillo Health Care District to discuss the transition of Ventura County Special District Association's (VCSD) chairperson duties. Cusworth also attended the McCrea Ranch Valentine's event, the Greater Conejo Valley's Chamber of Commerce Tourism Board meeting (as a museum liaison), and a Stagecoach Inn (STI) Board meeting. She reminded Board members of the upcoming Buckles and Bows Square Dance at the Goebel Adult Activity Center this Saturday, where the group will be celebrating their 50th anniversary. On February 23rd, Mike Malone will be speaking at STI as part of their speaker series. Cusworth noted that Ed Jones' funeral will be on February 22nd at 2:00 pm on at Immanuel Presbyterian Church. Orozco and Buss attended a Property Acquisition Committee Meeting. Buss attended a Conejo Coalition for Youth and Families meeting. Huffer attended a COSCA Board meeting last night. He announced that last week, at a Kiwanis meeting, a check was presented to Play Conejo. Huffer also attended a Conejo Open Space Foundation (COSF) meeting where he heard a presentation about urban coyotes. The Tax Program has opened and continues to be very busy. Nickles attended the COSCA Board meeting, where Chuck Huffer was appointed as Chair.

12. REQUEST STATUS REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR SUBSEQUENT AGENDAS

13. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Dale Menah presented a letter to Chair Nickles for distribution to all the Board members and to District's counsel.

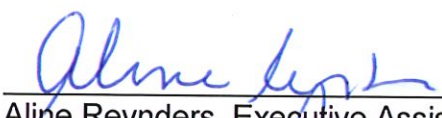
14. EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION

15. ADJOURN

Nickles adjourned the Regular Meeting at 8:53pm to the next special meeting on March 6, 2025 at 4:00 pm.

Date: 3/20/25

Attest:


Aline Reynders, Executive Assistant

Approved by:


Doug Nickles, Chair