

EQUESTRIAN COMMISSION
MINUTES

Tuesday, September 6, 2005
City Council Conference Room

PRESENT: Chair Sally Feola
Vice Chair Darlene McGrady
Commissioner Shari Nichols

Councilman Sandy McHenry
Assistant City Manager Ken Duran
Sycamore Ranch Operator Danny Adair

ABSENT: Commissioner Debbie Humphreys
Commissioner Misty Reiss

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Feola called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. by leading the flag salute.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 5, 2005

Chair Feola made a motion to approve the minutes of August 2, 2005 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair McGrady and passed unanimously.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIR

Chair Feola suggested that the election of officers be postponed to the next meeting since two Commissioners are absent. The rest of the Commissioners agreed.

SYCAMORE CANYON EQUESTRIAN CENTER UPDATE

Mr. Adair distributed the September Occupancy Report which showed 96% occupancy. He commented that some of the vacancies have already been filled.

Mr. Duran reported that the City Manager hopes to present a tentative agreement to the City Council at their next meeting. Chair Feola asked when the Commission will know the details of the agreement.

Councilman McHenry commented that the City Council has assigned the City Manager to negotiate the lease terms and the Council has given him policy direction. He added that the Adairs have the right to their existing lease, the new lease negotiations is an attempt to get a better lease for both parties. He added that some of the key issues are the

level of oversight responsibilities by the City and a plan for future improvements. Chair Feola commented that she has concerns that there won't be any controls on such things as rent. Councilman McHenry responded that in all due respect the City is probably not competent to review matters such as the cost of hay or other rent factors and furthermore, it shouldn't be the City's role to dictate their rents.

Mr. Duran stated that once a tentative agreement is reached he will send the Commission a summary of the significant points. He added that those who have expressed interest in the issue and the boarders will be notified of the meeting when the City is scheduled to take final action on the agreement.

SYCAMORE CREEK TRAIL UPDATE

Mr. Duran reported that the City received bids today for the Sycamore Creek trail project and staff is evaluating them. If the bids are favorable the City Council will take action to award the contract next Tuesday. The plan is to begin construction within several weeks after the contract is awarded.

COMMUNITY ARENA UPDATE – COMMUNITY ARENA PUBLIC FEES REPORT

Mr. Duran reported that the installation of the permanent bleachers at the arena will be completed this week.

Mr. Duran reviewed his staff report which provided the background and process on how the existing community arena rental fees were established. He presented current survey information for fees for other community arenas. He suggested that if the Commission wants to make a recommendation for a change in fees that the recommendation should be made to the Parks and Recreation Commission. He added that they are scheduled to review all facilities fees at their November meeting.

Vice Chair reviewed the survey information she had gathered from other arenas. She showed photos of other facilities and pointed out the amenities that they have that San Dimas' arena doesn't. She stated you can't even compare Chino Hills because of all of the facilities that they offer. She commented that San Dimas charges \$200 a day including the restroom rental and there is no comparison to other arenas.

Chair Feola asked Vice Chair McGrady what rate she would suggest charging. Vice Chair McGrady responded that she does not feel there should be any fee.

Commissioner Nichols commented that she feels that \$50 is probably ok. She added that she has showed with the Ridge Riders and there are some advantages and disadvantages.

Chair Feola commented that the original intent of the arena was that it was a drop in arena and that allowing a limited number of rentals was a compromise. Councilman McHenry concurred and added that originally there was an aversion to any public bookings. He added that San Dimas does not get much in the way of parks fees like

some other Cities so there wasn't money available for additional amenities. He added that he would caution taking too much of a demanding tone on why you feel there is a need to adjust the fees.

Vice Chair McGrady commented that she would like to have a place for local residents to use. Chair Feola commented that the intent was for a community drop-in arena. She added that \$100 covers the City's cost to rent the facility. Vice-Chair reiterated her point that she thinks that the cost is too much for what amenities are available. She added that considering what we have there should be no cost for local clubs. She added that to qualify as a local club a certain percentage of club members should be local residents.

In response to a question, audience member Virginia Nichols stated that Region 7 is based in L. A. County but most of the organization is San Dimas residents. He added that she does not feel that \$100 is unreasonable since City crews have some work to prepare the area for rental. She added that for a community group there should be consideration for a lower fee because of the lack of amenities. She further added that she does not feel the current rate is unfair but it is hard for her group to pay for it. Chair Feola responded that she feels that Region 7 is an L.A. County based club. Ms. Nichols responded that they do serve the region but most are San Dimas. He added that the club donated some proceeds from the last event to another group.

Commissioner Nichols stated that she is fine with a \$50 charge because there is some outlay on the part of the City. Chair Feola added that \$50 may be ok for San Dimas based organizations but that the restroom rental charge should remain. Ms. Nichols added that they are trying to get restrooms donated for future uses.

Commissioner Nichols suggested that Region 7 could donate any profits from their events back to the City for amenities to the arena. Councilman McHenry agreed that that would be a good gesture of a partnership as opposed to asking the tax payers to subsidize your events by not charging a fee.

Chair Feola suggested that since two Commissioners are absent that they continue this item to the October meeting to allow an opportunity for their input. The rest of the Commissioners agreed to the continuance.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

There were no additional Commissioners comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. to the next regular scheduled meeting on Tuesday October 4, 2005.