

**MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING/STUDY SESSION OF THE
WILDERNESS PRESERVE FOUNDATION, INC.
HELD SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2014**

CONVENE: Vice President Matthews convened the Special Meeting/Study Session of the Wilderness Preserve Foundation, Inc. on Saturday, November 15, 2014 at 8:11a.m. in the Community Center, Senior Game Room, Monrovia, California. Staff in attendance: Community Services Director Tina Cherry, Acting Recreation Division Manager Kerri Zessau, Infrastructure Division Manager Mark Carney, Park Ranger Eugene Suk, Assistant Recreation Coordinator Rebecca Romero, and Administrative Secretary Tina Wells

ROLL CALL: In attendance: Boardmembers Cherry, Crudginton, Dittmar, Shevlin, Ulm, Wong, Yuille, Vice President Matthews, and President Mills is Absent/Excused.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Assistant Recreation Coordinator Rebecca Romero led the Flag Salute.

DISCUSSION: Vice President Matthews opened the meeting; topic is Foundation Roles and Foundation Purpose. Thanked staff for providing information in advance on the Bylaws. The meeting was turned over to Boardmember Cherry who noted that some of the members will need to leave at 10:30a.m.

Boardmember Cherry provided a Power Point presentation, and rundown on how the meeting will work. The members will review four possible outcomes; 1) No Change to Purpose, No Change to Member • 2) No Change to Purpose, Change to Member • 3) Change to Purpose, No Change to Member • 4) Change to Purpose, Change to Member. The members will participate in an exercise, to help bring focus to the task at hand. • A brief overview of the September 9, 2014 meeting will be given, and some of the questions that came out of this meeting will be answered. • Ranger Eugene Suk will provide information on the Canyon Park and Hillside Wilderness Preserve wish lists (items that the Foundation may consider funding in the future.) • Acting Recreation Division Manager Kerri Zessau will give a snapshot of the Urban Park wish list. Discuss the most recent Park Master Plan • Does the Board want to expand the purpose of the Foundation, and amend the members of the Foundation. • No formal action will be taken today.

A note board was used to list "Future Us" items that came up during discussion that might not be relevant to the discussion, and can be tabled for future discussion.

Boardmember Cherry conducted an exercise to help bring focus to the task at hand. The intent of the activity is to remind us to put a plan in place – all the pieces of the puzzle are there, but maybe we could do better in aliening them in sequential order.

Staff had a conference call with the City Attorney to discuss the legal and financial implications of where the Foundation is headed. Specific questions were asked, • What would it take if the name of the Foundation were to be changed? • What would it take if the purpose needed to be changed? • What options does the Foundation have? The City Attorney can provide the legal support, and will help to word-smith the Articles and Bylaws, and will make sure that all the paperwork is filed with no charge to the Foundation. Filing fees would apply, and the Foundation would be responsible for the fees, approximately \$200.

Reviewed the background/timeline discussed at the September 9 meeting;

• **March 2000**

Measures A and B were overwhelmingly passed by Voters.

• **November 2000**

Foundation was incorporated, with the intent of being a charitable agency for grant purposes, to have funding and donations flow through the Foundation.

• **May 2006**

Foundation roles move to Community Services Commission

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• **September 2006**

Amended Articles and Bylaws

- Change the specific and general purpose of the Foundation to be Educational and Recreational based
- Specified that the Commissioners are now the Directors, and two individuals appointed by City Council.

• **July 2010**

Amended Bylaws

Allowed for restricted and unrestricted donations for Canyon Park and Wilderness Preserve. Chief Financial Officer would account for funds separately (A copy of all the contributions received since incorporation was provided to the Board.)

Current Articles of Incorporation of the Wilderness Preserve Foundation (possible amendment)

General Purpose: Promote social welfare by engaging in charitable and education activities in connection with the foothills in and near the City of Monrovia.

Specific Purpose: Protecting, preserving, and restoring precious natural resources, rare and endangered species, riparian woodland, and other dwindling wildlife habitats, and furthering educational and recreational programs.

Current Bylaws of the Wilderness Preserve Foundation

Article V. SECTION 5.02 Number and Selection of Directors and Restrictions on Directors.

- a) Authorized number: The authorized number of Directors shall be nine (9).
- b) Selection of Directors
 - 1) Seven Directors shall be the Community Services Commissioners
 - 2) Two Directors shall be members of City Council or appointed by City Council

Budget:

Provided the year to date balance of \$4,354 from various contributors. Boardmember Cherry stated the Board should be thoughtful, when setting up the funds to receive donations – do not want to tie the hands of the Board. The funds could be set up to be Park specific, but not project specific allowing for greater flexibility in how the funds are used. The funds should not be made too broad – example - Urban Parks versus Wilderness.

Hillside Wilderness Preserve (HWP) Wish List

Park Ranger Eugene Suk provided the HWP wish list;

- An additional vehicle for the heavy work projects. The existing vehicle is used for patrols, and impacts the ability of staff to work on/complete projects.
- A heavy duty vehicle such as a Ford F-150 would also be used for utility purposes.

Canyon Park Wish List

Ranger Suk visited other nature centers in the Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside County areas, and has noticed that our nature center is lacking in several areas including, landscaping, an irrigation system (drip irrigation would be ideal ~ (cost estimate \$5,000). Such a system would increase the beauty of the area, and help to facilitate the growth of flowers year round. • Enhanced habitats for the animal displays (cost estimate \$10,000), this would increase the quality of the educational components. • Staff has acquired some items for the Native American display. Would like to add interactive displays, touchscreen capabilities (cost estimate \$25,000). • The gift shop would do better with the look of a store front, upgraded displays, and better quality items available for sale.

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- Facility Lighting (both outdoor and indoor) is dim. If upgraded, strategically placed lighting would enhance lighting the area, including parking area, and around the cabin/conference center, nature center, and fireman's flat. • An added benefit to upgraded lighting would encourage nighttime activities such as night hikes.
- Boardmember Crudgington – expressed a concern with the installation of lighting, how would the lighting impact wildlife? Ranger Suk responded that street lights would not be placed on the road. Lighting would be placed close to the facilities to prevent safety hazards.
- Replace or refurbish the entrance gate and signage. Use colors consistent with nature, and develop consistent signage language. • An enclosed kiosk/self pay station would provide additional facility use for staff, and could house communications, and also double as a ranger station. The self-pay station would primarily be used during the week, not on the weekends. Acting Recreation Division Manager Kerri Zessau reported – during the annual budget audit process the auditor recommended that the City look at the possibility of a self-pay kiosk. Finance reviewed this recommendation, and is in favor of a self-pay kiosk.
- Asphalt replacement primarily for the road to replace roadway damaged from being pushed up from the roots of the trees within Canyon Park. The roots travel under the asphalt, and push up the road, causing a trip and fall hazard. The primary focus of the damage is around the cabin and the main road.

Ranger Suk reported on shared wish list for Canyon Park and HWP. Both areas could benefit from a Polaris Ranger (model 570) looks like an ATV, but has a utility bed on the back with a canopy. The Polaris can be used for patrols. Patrols are currently being accomplished using the electronic bikes. The bikes do not allow for the transport of equipment. The Polaris would allow greater access to the area, unlike the electric bike. Polaris has been in business for a long while, and replacement parts are not proprietary as opposed to the electronic bike parts. Boardmember Shevlin may have a resource for repairs, and parts for the electronic bikes. Vice President Matthews asked which has the priority, the F150 or the Polaris. Ranger Suk responded ~ the F150, for transport of staff, volunteer groups, and equipment. • Boardmember Crudgington asked for a priority list for the Board to review. • Boardmember Cherry requested that an item be added to the wish list for review. Look at parking implications, and solutions for Canyon Park, especially on the weekends. The group had previously explored options such as off-site parking and having people transported in. • Ranger Suk noted there is also a need for a Bobcat Tractor. When it rains, the trails are heavily impacted, and the Bobcat would be ideal to help speed up clearing the trails of debris.

Vice President Matthews ~ quick tally of the wish list items is \$333,000 for the items discussed.

Acting Recreation Division Manager Kerri Zessau reported on the Urban Park wish list, specifically, since the last Park Master Plan was developed and approved in 2011, there have been significant improvements, and renovations in the parks. The current list will be reviewed, and a full analysis of the Park Master Plan will be brought back to the Board within the next few months.

Boardmember Cherry stated that there are other items or program supplies that could fall under this list such as a new dance floor or portable public address system which could also be considered in the absence of a comprehensive list.

In the previously approved Park Master Plan all the playground equipment together was approved. The Boards and Commissions, residents, and staff all thought that new play equipment was important at each of the parks. It is exciting that Julian Fisher Park has been completed. This was due to Mayor Pro Tem Shevlins relationship with Supervisor Antonovich, and the use of his discretionary funds. • Dan Iwata has submitted a grant for Lucinda Garcia Park. • Rotary Park will receive new equipment. • Grand Avenue Park will have a celebration next Saturday, November 22, and show case new playground equipment. • Mr. Iwata has also applied for Proposition A funds for Julian Fisher Park, for landscape and hardscape renovations, basketball court and lighting

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renovations, and a demonstration garden. • Grand Avenue Park renovations include irrigation, slope clearance, landscape and hardscape renovations, and security lighting. Redwood trees were planted in the memory of Phyllis McCarville at Grand Avenue Park. Unfortunately, the trees are dying or dead. The Boardmembers are in agreement that rededication of new trees in honor, and memory is the respectful thing to do. • Recreation Park – items include athletic field lighting, landscape, and hardscape renovations, passive game area, exercise activity station, and walking course. • Rotary Park items include, landscape and hardscape, lighting, and exercise activity station. At this time there are no grants or donated equipment available for Rotary Park. A full analysis (including costs) will be brought to the Board within the next few months.

Boardmember Dittmar noted that Grand Avenue needs a disabled parking space. Infrastructure Division Manager Mark Carney noted that the new playground equipment matched the old footprint exactly; no adjustments were mandated for the addition of a disabled parking space.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Boardmember Cherry - Staff plans to come back to the Foundation Board in January. • The Foundation can choose to have an ad hoc committee work in conjunction with staff (or without staff) on amending the Articles and Bylaws; staff can help facilitate this with the City Attorney. It is not required that City Council approve the amendments, however, it is appropriate to bring this to the City Council prior to making any final revisions. • At the January meeting the Foundation will approve wording and direction, and in February go to City Council, advising of the planned wording in an administrative report, adopt the amendments, and take the action with the state.

Vice President Matthews the job today is:

- a) Do the Commissioners want to continue to be the people that are the Board of the Foundation?
- b) What is the purpose of that Board?

There is a rational for keeping the purpose as it is, keep the focus on Canyon Park and Wilderness Preserve.

Boardmember Crudginton - stated that the Foundation needs to find people who may be a presence on the Board and major contributors. • Boardmember Shevlin - suggested an “umbrella” organization. Find the people with deep pockets. • Boardmember Yuille – sounds like what the Foundation wants to do is start from the beginning. Is that then still a Board that falls under the City is does it become a separate non-profit? • Boardmember Cherry gave an example - that the Library Foundation has chosen to remove themselves from the City umbrella, and have established an account under their name, and is responsible for their tax filing, and monthly reports • Boardmemeber Ulm - should the Board be populated by Commission members? As an open Board, can the City continue to help with the financials, etc. • Boardmember Cherry - it would be organic, and makes sense to collaborate. Staff would not hold seats on the Board. • Boardmember Yuille – the best and most viable option today, is to continue the way the Foundation Board is at the moment. Perhaps establish an ad hoc committee, and deal with specific things. Establish benchmarks and have balance

In conclusion, Vice President Matthews suggested that the sense of the Board be reviewed as follows:

Boardmember Ulm – Agree that the goal is a spin-off Foundation. Not comprised of the Community Services Commissioners. Need a path, and what will engage people on the Board and donors.

Boardmember Dittmar - Referring to the experience working with the County. They have an organization called Friends of Greater Los Angeles Area Parks (FOGLAP). The group does not take away from the administrative duties of the Foundation. Provided an opportunity to interact with the Director of the Parks and Recreation ~ met every three months. They were an advisory board similar to the Commission. Proposed creating one Foundation for parks and wilderness, having the ability to have directed funding, Commissioners remain on the Foundation Board.

Boardmember Wong - Consider a “Friends of” scenario which serves as an advisory to the Foundation.

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Vice President Matthews – Consider outreach to past Community Services Commission applicants, Canyon Park volunteers, large recreation/sporting goods companies, i.e. REI, Dicks, Big 5.

Boardmember Cherry - A “Friends” group would be advisory to the foundation.

Boardmember Shevlin - Suggested outreach to (Monrovia Area Partnership) MAP Leadership, Coordinating Council, service clubs, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club. Suggested the possibility of posting the Wish List on the Chamber of Commerce website – similar to the wish list for the schools

The Foundation will come back in January and take the temperature of the group

PUBLIC INPUT: None

Boardmember Dittmar moved and Ulm seconded

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING: The next meeting of the Wilderness Preserve Foundation is scheduled for Tuesday, January 13, 2014 in the Monroe Room, Community Center, 119 West Palm Avenue, Monrovia, California.

ADJOURNMENT: The Special Meeting/Study Session of the Wilderness Preserve Foundation was adjourned at 10:32a.m.

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