

**CITY OF ONTARIO
RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION
AUGUST 26, 2019
MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: DEAN, NELSEN, RILEY, BINNEY, OVITT,
TRINIDAD, SAUCEDO, CAMARENA

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: LEON, MCALARY, DOREY, HICKEY, HUISMAN,
VALENCIA

MEMBERS ABSENT: SOTO

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair,
Kenneth Dean at 6:01 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Larry Trinidad, Commissioner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**M/S (OVITT/BINNEY) TO APPROVE MINUTES FOR JULY 2019 CARRIED
UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: No Public Comments

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. Monthly Statistical Reports for July 2019.

M/S (TRINIDAD/NELSEN) 2019 CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

1. **Resident Satisfaction Survey** – Mayor Paul S. Leon shared a Power Point focused on a random survey of 500 people to find out what they think about their city. Mayor Paul Leon stated that almost 80% of those that were polled in the random calls love their city. We are rated very high. Most or half of those surveyed have lived here for over 25 years. The focus of the region has come to the City of Ontario. More than 75% of the residents surveyed say that Ontario is headed in the right direction. Growth management and the development of the downtown area was a concern among community members. Mayor Paul Leon shared a Power Point with the breakdown of statistics which reflected that 80% of those polled were satisfied with the Recreation Department and programs. 27% of those polled responded that the Ontario Living Magazine as the best source of information regarding the city. Balancing of the budget and maintaining infrastructure and safety of our community rated high on the survey comments.

A copy of this presentation is available upon request from the Commission Secretary.

COMMENTS:

NELSEN: “I received calls from people who live in my area who had read the survey results in the newspaper. They were wondering why they weren’t contacted to participate in the survey.”

LEON: “All participants were randomly contacted via phone. We don’t know the identity of those that were surveyed. Only 500 residents out of the 175,000 residents live in Ontario were contacted. Some of the people that live in your community may have been called. All participants were anonymous. As the surveys were taken different profiles were documented and once the survey fulfilled the requirements of a certain profile, they moved on to a different profile until all profiles were surveyed.”

NELSEN: “I am pleased with the survey, but I am concerned about those that live in Ontario Ranch and I hope their voice is being heard and that they were represented.”

LEON: “These polls are very scientifically conducted.”

TRINIDAD: “Westwind is flooded with growth. I think it’s on point that resources in South Ontario should be focused on. Is it possible to get a timeline for us to address the needs there?”

LEON: “I suggest we put added emphasis on that area quickly. If we don’t have a center, we need some vans to get our programming down in that community today.”

OVITT: “A question that is a little off subject, but I noticed that the street signs in the northern part of the city are solid white and have no city logo on them.

VALENCIA: “It’s in the historic area, they are going with a vintage historic look for that district.”

BINNEY: “I have talked with many people who have a concern about the growing number of homeless people in and around the city and in our parks. Are there any future plans on doing something about it?”

LEON: “We have created more efficient procedures in addressing the homeless throughout Ontario. We have ordinances set for not camping in parks. Parks are closed after 10 PM, we’ve done everything we possibly can in working with the ACLU. It’s a chronic condition nationwide if not worldwide. We do everything we can including having the Mercy House program that is in place. We don’t have enough resources or money to handle the problem without a system at the Federal or State level. There’s nothing we can do because they also have rights. They choose to be homeless.”

DEAN: “With the help of Officer Matthew Zick, our liaison with the Police Department. My wife and I were over near James Bryant Park the other night. We estimate

there were over 100 citizens of all ages that were in that park. None appeared to be homeless. It's turned into a jewel of a park. It's not just the dog park, it's the equipment. It is an amazing turn. Hopefully, we can make improvements such as that park by park and turn them into that example."

BINNEY: "I totally take pride in what the city has done to address this issue. I was just wondering if there is a plan for improvements especially when we have our new Munoz center."

LEON: "Most of the homeless are that way by choice. There have been people who have become good functioning members of the community because of the programs in place. There are some who have tried but end up refusing to follow the laws and rules that these organizations have in place to enforce. They're chronic homeless that we cannot house or fix. Without a system at the Federal or State level, there's really nothing we can do because they also have rights. They choose to be homeless."

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. **Recreation and Community Services** – Julie Dorey, Recreation and Community Services Director narrated a Power Point presentation on department highlights of program activities that occurred in July 2019.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. No Old Business

NEW BUSINESS:

1. No New Business

COMMENTS:

VALENCIA: "It's an honor to be here with you all. It's breathtaking to see your engagement and asking questions and paying attention to your community." Mayor pro Tem Valencia shared some of his experiences with the homeless in his career as a Los Angeles County Sherriff. "There are a lot of dynamics involved with addressing the homeless issues. I believe with our executives, our staff, police and fire, we are really trying to do the best that we can. Thank you for all of your engaging."

BINNEY: "Safety is my main concern. I'm very proud with what our city is doing with the current issues. We have to stay conscious of safety and what more we can do."

VALENCIA: "I agree with you 100%. I believe in you as a team and our staff as they do a great job. We do have to keep on it. We need partners like you to keep us and staff notified when you see something happening. Our parks have been doing a great job and I hear good comments. I have been hearing about the LED lighting we added in Homer Briggs park. It has made a huge difference."

SAUCEDO: “It was really good to see the response from residents who participated the survey in the Mayor’s report. When growth came to the city and the police station was moved to south Ontario, a lot of people here in the central area of Ontario felt that they were being abandoned. They noticed that more crime started coming about. I know now that a lot more patrols are being done and that’s deterring a lot of it. I fully agree with embracing Ontario Ranch to put the investment by building a center in that area. I think there will need to be a lot of thought placed into it, so the city is not divided by the north and southern part. I know that we have great staff in all departments especially in Recreation and Parks. I think with the leadership that we have and the input from residents, we can come up with some really good ideas and close that gap in the survey in those percentages to show even more favorable next time we do that.

RILEY: No Comment

OVITT: “The outcome of the survey is outstanding. You don’t normally see figures that high for a city. I’m familiar with these types of surveys and participants are called randomly. We have no idea where they live. 500 is a good number to work with. It is very scientifically done.” Mr. Ovitt shared his memories of how businesses thrived in years past on Euclid and as the malls moved in the region, that all changed. The current owners of the buildings do not invest in updates and improvements. At one point, redevelopment funding was going to help us make improvements, but those funds were cut by the State. It has slowed everything down. He stated that we’re a little bit impatient but we’re hopeful. He shared that Ontario has done a very good job at addressing the homeless situation. The conditions in other cities within the state are much worse. He commented on the older developed areas of Ontario do not have assessment programs for lighting and landscaping. There is no money available for improvements. However, the Ontario Ranch area does have assessments which cover landscaping and lighting and there is funding for improvements.

TRINIDAD: “How are your concerts in the parks and movie nights doing as far using the portable restrooms?”

DOREY: “We have not received any complaints. They were moved to a better location and it’s worked out.” The park has such a limited capacity. The library is close by too and the public uses their restroom during those events as well.”

TRINIDAD: “I will talk to Ken a little later to devise a plan to address South Ontario. Years ago, we talked about plans when Mark was here.”

BINNEY: “Thank you to our T.A.C. for their accomplishments on the No Smoking signs and ordinance in our parks. I’m very excited to see it’s implemented so our parks are as healthy and safe as they can be. Thank you for the input on the homeless issue. It was good to talk about. It was good to hear that the people surveyed are as happy with what we’re doing in our jobs.”

CAMARENA: "I feel a way to address the homeless problem we have is by making citizens more aware of the programs we offer. I didn't know about the Mercy House program. I think we should be handing out cards. I'd like to take those cards to my school. We have programs for our students who are homeless. It's called "Helping Hands" and we offer school supplies and back packs and food. With regards to the Resident Satisfaction Survey, I love the results and completely agree how satisfied I am with the city."

NELSEN: "I feel honored to have our Mayor to speak at our Recreation and Parks Commission meeting. I thought it was so inclusive to him to take the time from his busy schedule to present the survey results to us." Ms. Nelsen referenced Daniel Saucedo's comment about South Ontario and the need to create an effort to emphasize our programs and services to that area. She stated she feels that it's a commuter community where people go to work and come home, and they don't have much connection to Ontario other than receiving the Ontario Living Magazine. "I believe if we get involved with them it would help. I loved the survey report, it was an honor to have the Mayor here presenting it. I love my city, it's the best."

DEAN: "What an amazing thing Officer Zick has done to get the environment improved at Bryant Park. It's so exciting to see this all taking place. My wife and I visited it recently in the early evening. It was busy from the north end to the south end. Because of Ann's reminder, I did stop by the Luau at Munoz. Those people are so excited and can't wait for the new facility. It's going to be the crown jewel of all our community centers. One last thing on the homeless, I've had more than one person come up to me and say that Ontario's is doing a great job addressing their homeless problem. Our Police Department has had more of a presence and has made a difference. I'm not sure anything can be done about it because so many of them resist help."

M/S (BINNEY/SAUCEDO) ADJOURNED THE MEETING. NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 23, 2019 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT: 7:25 PM



Ann Huisman, Recording Secretary

APPROVED:



Kenneth Dean, Chairperson