

**CITY OF ONTARIO  
RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 28, 2020  
MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** DEAN, RILEY, NELSEN, OVITT, BINNEY, TRINIDAD, SAUCEDO, AND ESCOBOSA

**NON-MEMBERS PRESENT:** MCALARY, GONZALEZ, HUISMAN, HICKEY, MICHALAK, ALMENDAREZ, MARTHÉ, VALENCIA

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** BRAVO (Un-Excused Absence)

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair, Kenneth Dean at 6:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Led by Rita Nelsen Commissioner

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

M/S (NELSEN/TRINIDAD) TO APPROVE MINUTES FOR AUGUST 2020 CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No Public Comments

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

1. Monthly Statistical Reports for August 2020.

M/S (OVITT/NELSEN) TO APPROVE THE MONTHLY STATISTICAL REPORT FOR AUGUST 2020 CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

1. **Recreation & Community Services** – Nicholas Gonzalez, Recreation & Community Services Director, narrated a PowerPoint presentation on department highlights of program activities that occurred in August 2020.

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

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **No Old Business**

## NEW BUSINESS

1. **Grove Trail Construction Progress Report** – Adrian Escamilla, Parks & Maintenance Manager gave a progress report on the trail connection at James Galanis Park on the east side of D Street and Nocta. This trail will include 8 safety lights, a hydration station, benches throughout the trail and 31 trees along with native plants adjacent to the path. Completion date is November 25, 2020.
2. **Anthony Munoz Community Garden Progress Report** – Nicholas Gonzalez, Recreation & Community Services Director and Adrian Escamilla, Parks & Maintenance Manager. Nicholas Gonzalez shared a report to the Commission describing the design plans for the new Community Garden for Anthony Munoz Park. We have been working with the Non-Profit Foundation, *Caramel Connection Foundation*. Nicholas shared information about some of the programming that will take place at the community garden once it is in full swing and how it will benefit the entire community. It will be located on the north east corner of the park near the restrooms. The area will be fenced and will be open 7 days each week. Adrian Escamilla reviewed the community gardens layout and what types of materials would be used. The project should be complete by mid-December 2020.

**M/S (OVITT/RILEY) TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL TO MOVE FORWARD WITH PLANS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMUNITY GARDEN AT THE ANTHONY MUNOZ PARK. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES RETIREE TRIBUTE** – Nicholas Gonzalez, Recreation & Community Services Director shared a PowerPoint honoring those from the Recreation and Community Services Department that will be retiring due to the Early Retirement Incentive Program offered to qualifying employees. Ruth Marthe – 15 years, Karen Fazlurrehman - 19 years, Ramona Almendarez - 22 years, Christina Munoz -23 years, Elta Braga - 31 years and Margaret Camacho-Estrada - 41 years. We thank them for their many years of service and wish them all the best.

### **COMMENTS:**

**VALENCIA:** “I would like to thank all of the retirees for their dedication and the time they gave to our residents I appreciate all that you’ve done. I look forward to hearing your stories of you conquering mountain tops! I would also like to thank our staff. They are doing a great job in everything they are tasked with during this time of COVID-19. It means a lot to me to see our staff as they are out delivering the senior meals. I have a neighbor who receives the meals and she really appreciates all we have been offering. Stay safe. Our numbers keep going up and down, hopefully we get to enjoy each other’s company in person soon. Hang in there!”

**MCALARY:** “I’d like to thank Council Member Valencia, the City Council and the City Manager for the early retirement separation incentive. This has been a challenging process to go through and I am grateful for their vision to bring it forth. It puts us in a position so that we will not have an even more

difficult budget situation to face. We are losing some wonderful people who will be missed very much. We are grateful we have Nick as the department leader and staff who are ready to move forward and be strong because that is who we are! Thank you to the Commission for all of your support too!”

**OVITT:** “Thank you to our retirees for all that you’ve done over the many years you served this community. Thank you to all the remaining staff as you keep coming up with so many innovative ideas to get us through and stay connected during this challenging time. We wish you all a good month and look forward to seeing you again soon!”

**NELSEN:** “Nick you mentioned how creative the staff is and I can clearly see that! The Dorothy A. Quesada Community Center came up with the idea of the *Family Movie Trivia Night* and handing out the popcorn buckets for anyone who wanted to stop by and pick one up. I love what T.A.C. is doing to stay in touch with each other and keeping that group strong. They are making a positive impact. The *Senior Lunch Program* is going so well. I am very impressed that over 350 seniors were provided meals each day. The staff of 12 who deliver the meals are doing an amazing job. I am impressed with Adrian’s presentation on the Grove Trail at James Galanis Park project and the Anthony Munoz community garden. It is going to be a beacon in our city. To Nick and your staff, you are doing a wonderful job. I thank you for all you do.”

**TRINIDAD:** “Thank you all for your service and help during this time. I had the pleasure to tour the Huerta del Valle community garden in January. The pride in ownership and education that goes in it to promote healthy living for children and their families is amazing. It even had a banana tree which really impressed my kids who loved it. On another note, how do we go about controlling the people who are using the fields at our parks who are not authorized to use them during this time of COVID-19?”

**GONZALEZ:** “We are currently working on coming up with policies on how to address. We are considering issuing a red card to any user group that is seen using the fields without official authorization. Receiving a red card could hurt their chances as they apply to participate in our field allocation process in the future. Currently, we do not have a lot of staffing capacity to handle that kind of enforcement. We are working on a whole new approach on how to manage our fields. We hope to have a policy created and implemented within the next few weeks. Anyone who notices any large gatherings in the City of Ontario’s parks, please notify us.”

**BINNEY:** “To our Retirees, I have been volunteering at the Ontario Senior Center for about 20 years. When I came on board, I had no idea how things worked within the department. Our retirees were my mentors. Thank you for your dedication to your job and to all of the participants and volunteers over the years, you have helped make this city a better place.”

**SAUCEDO:** “Thank you to the retirees for your years of service. I wish you all the best in your life’s adventures. Nick and staff, even though you will have your work cut out

filling in for the vacancies from those that are leaving, you will succeed as you always step up and think out of the box and overcome these unpredictable challenges. Thank you to our staff and Adrian thank you for your presentation!”

**ESCOBOSA:** “I am thankful I have T.A.C. and for being on the commission to help keep me busy and productive. Everything now is through distance learning now I cannot see my friends. Being involved in these opportunities really helps me. Movie nights and painting on Zoom is so much fun!”

**RILEY:** “I am so glad the cooling centers have been available for all ages. I am sure families have made use of it. I drove by the Anthony Munoz Park yesterday. It seems like a week ago it was flat and empty. It is very interesting and fun to watch grow. Congratulations to all the retirees. I know in my long career at OMSD, I wondered what I would do when it was time to retire. There are volunteer opportunities for people like you and they will find you! I am wondering about the annual Halloween costume contest. Also, is there a status of trick-or-treating in Ontario?”

**MCALARY:** “The City has not put out any guidelines yet regarding Halloween trick-or-treating. The CDC has not put out an official health order yet.”

**GONZALEZ:** “We have cancelled Halloween parade and contest for this year. As an alternative, we are having a *Monsters Mash and Dash* event. Families are invited to drive through a designated area at each community center, library and museum parking lots dressed in costume as our staff hand out trick-or-treat filled bags. Also, the city will host *Home Is Where the Haunt Is* house decorating contest. Announcements will be posted on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter on how to register. The first 100 participants to register will receive a participation yard sign. The contest winner will be announced on October 28!”

**DEAN:** “To the Retirees congratulations! Some of my most enjoyable and cherished moments I have had over the years were with them. The van trip to CPRS Conference in Long Beach, the one on one meetings, it has been an amazing experience over the years and really lets me know what kind of people we have working in the department. The *Battle of the Bands* contest worked out well! I am also looking forward to the *Ontario On the Go* program and watching it grow.”

**ALMENDAREZ:** “Thank you! I have met a lot of great people who have mentored me over the years. I have made some long-lasting friendships and I appreciate it and everything that has come my way. I will miss it!”

**MARTHE:** “Thanks for the memories!”

**NEXT RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE HELD ON OCTOBER 26, 2020 AT 6:00 PM:**


**M/S (BINNEY/TRINIDAD) TO ADJOURN.**

**ADJOURNMENT: 7:04 PM**



Ann Huisman, Recording Secretary

**APPROVED:**



Kenneth Dean, Chairperson