



Luis O. Mendoza
District Administrator

Calwa Recreation & Park District

4545 E. Church Avenue, Fresno, CA 93725 • Phone: (559) 264-6867

Mary L. Rosales	Raul Guerra	Sandra Celedon	Paul Garcia	Felicia Salcido
Board Member Chair	Board Member Vice-Chair	Board Member Secretary	Board Member	Board Member

REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 20, 2014

(approved December 18, 2014)

6:30 PM

The Calwa Recreation and Park District Board of Directors welcomes you to its meetings and encourages you to participate. This agenda contains a brief general description of each item that will be considered by the Board.

Disclaimer: This agenda includes proposed actions and activities with respect to each agenda item as of the date of posting. As such, it does not preclude the Board from taking other actions on any item on the agenda that is different or in addition to what may have been recommended.

CALL TO ORDER

PRAYER

Board Member Garcia led the prayer

FLAG SALUTE

1. ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Chairwoman M. L. Rosales, Vice Chairman R. Guerra, Secretary S. Celedon, P. Garcia, F. Salcido

Also present was District Counsel P. Pimentel and District Administrator L. Mendoza

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Announce New District Administrator

Chairwoman Rosales announced that Luis Mendoza was hired as the new District Administrator. Board Members Celedon and Salcido asked several questions about the process followed that led to Mr. Mendoza's hiring, including the scheduling of Special Board Meetings; the legitimacy of votes during those meetings; whether the full board should have voted on his hiring; the decision to offer the position to a specific candidate and not an order by which to make subsequent offers. Board Members Rosales and Guerra and Counsel Pimentel responded by describing the sequence of events, the rejection of job offers by other potential candidates and the significance of decisions made at Special Meetings.

Several members of the audience spoke about their belief that certain circumstances were required of Special Meetings, their belief that board members and District counsel have nothing to do with park management; questioned the origin and subject matter of agendas developed for Special Meetings; their connections to Calwa Park; their

disappointment in the decision-making process. Chairwoman Rosales made several attempts to focus audience comments on the agenda item at hand.

B. Debit Card Access

District Administrator Mendoza gave an overview of the three bank accounts currently used by the District, including a Fresno County account to which property taxes are deposited, a Bank of the West account used for payroll and a Bank of America account where user fees, lease payments and donations are deposited. He stated that all five board members currently have access to the Bank of the West account but no staff members could access information or funds there. He described the need for board members currently on the Bank of America and Bank of the West accounts to present themselves at the bank to add or remove a new authorized user, such as the District Administrator. After questioning by Board Member Celedon, Counsel Pimentel and Mr. Mendoza indicated that the board did not have to take action to change the already established process for adding/removing signers to the accounts.

Board Member Celedon also suggested that all five board members be added as signers to the Bank of America account and that only the District Administrator be authorized to use the debit card issued for the account. She also didn't see a need to authorize individual access to financial information since the general public has a right to it. She did not see a need for the agenda item because the board has already determined the policy for who accesses financial information and who is authorized to use bank debit cards, namely, the District Administrator.

Counsel Pimentel concurred with Board Member Celedon that no action was needed because no one was asking for a change in the policy – that the District Administrator is authorized to make financial transactions on District bank accounts.

Members of the audience asked where the debit card was, whether it had been used since the last administrator ended her service with the district and whether board members had used it. Mr. Mendoza indicated that the card was in the office and had not used it since the previous administrator turned it in.

3. COMMENTS

A. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members of the public raised concerns about the lack of activities for youth in the area; the use of the park by people who don't live in the area; some made allegations of board members asking for rides, employee time cards being corrected by board members, parking spots designated for board members; the absence of financial information for the meeting; questioned why the last interim administrator was terminated.

Counsel Pimentel addressed several of the questions raised by stating that he developed the agenda for the meeting and did not intend to omit financial reports; discussed the importance of privacy rights for former employees; and emphasized the legitimacy of Special Board Meetings – that their subject matter does not have limitations. He also indicated that an announcement was made at the close of the last special meeting with the decision made in the closed session.

A member of the audience questioned the legitimacy of a majority of the board making decisions and the need for a district administrator. He stated that previous administrators were doing good things for the community. Audience member Mike Flores questioned why staff members in interim positions were not returned to their previous jobs and his belief that some meeting participants were avoiding answers to questions.

B. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Board Member Celedon expressed her concern that board members were overstepping their authority, micromanaging employees and patterns she sees in the behavior of the board. She was also concerned that the board made statements to LAFCo about their willingness to comply with their recommendations without a plan of action or set of policies to execute them. She also expressed concern about the excess use of Special Board meetings and phone calls she received from the District Auditor, Michael Cuttone, about the responsiveness of office staff and the board when he couldn't get the information he needed to complete his audit. Finally she asked that a personnel matter be discussed at the next board meeting – namely why the former interim district administrator was not returned to the position she held prior, once the new administrator was hired.

Board Member Salcido expressed her concern about the cohesiveness of the board and the lack of information the board has received about several situations she felt the board should have been kept abreast of.

Board Member Garcia recommended that all board members complete ethics training.

4. CLOSED DOOR SESSION

No Closed Door Session was scheduled

Minutes were approved by the Board at its meeting on December 18, 2014.