

Director's Highlights

Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services

January 2023 Highlights

Prepared by Director Brent Dennis

1. Happy New Year! 2023 was ushered in with gushes of severe weather events greatly impacting the Long Beach coastal areas and peninsula beachfront. Intense, focused efforts by the Marine Bureau beach maintenance team in fortifying and constantly reinforcing the protective sand berms that were battered by high tides and elevated wave action were greatly appreciated by the community. Forecasts suggest continued severe rain events throughout the month. PRM has coordinated support from other City departments in these important efforts that included Public Works, the Water Department, and the Port of Long Beach crews and equipment. One City...One Team!
2. Mayor Richardson's State of the City Address, presented on Tuesday, January 10th also featured representatives of various City departments. Parks, Recreation, Marine, and Animal Care Services was represented by Parks Maintenance Operations Bureau's own Omar Barboza, a great, distinctive honor.
3. The City of Long Beach developed a declaration of emergency, like that of the City of Los Angeles, to address conditions of the unhoused and create action plans to provide shelter spaces. Our department will be doing our part in support for the citywide efforts that could include staffing assistance and the provision of temporary shelters. More details will be forthcoming after the official declaration.
4. Congratulations to Long Beach Animal Care Services team for setting a new annual record for successful adoptions of animals into loving homes. Nearly 2,000 furry friends found a new place to call home during the past year. We are greatly encouraged by the addition of new professional staff and expanded volunteerism at LBACS as they work daily in fulfilling their Compassion Saves model. Capital improvements are underway at LBACS to repave the approach drive following the repavement and striping of the main parking lot. New directional signage will also be installed as part of this highly visible improvement project.
5. Our Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services team will be utilizing our January Councilmember briefings to provide an overview and 2023 outlook of our Department to newly elected District 3 Councilwoman Kristina Duggan, District 5 Councilwoman Megan Kerr, and District 9 Councilwoman Dr. Joni Ricks-Oddie. February briefings will focus on vision plans and CIP projects in each Council District in 2023.

6. The Winter Season for Hoops After Dark has relocated for the remainder of the Winter season to the Salvation Army gymnasium with the season scheduled to conclude there on January 28th. We greatly appreciated the partnership with the Boys and Girls Club in support of Hoops After Dark by hosting the first half of the Winter season at their Del Amo facility. The program was funded by the Long Beach Recovery Act, the Port of Long Beach, and Partners of Parks.
7. Pool Maintenance Work Completed: Important annual maintenance scheduled for our three public pools was accomplished and the pools were reopened for community enjoyment.
8. Gumbiner Park is undergoing some major repair work and improvements and the park will be temporarily closed for the next two months until this work is completed. A perimeter construction fence was installed with project information at the end of December.
9. The Management Team of Parks, Recreation, Marine, and Animal Care Services will be conducting a Strategic Planning Retreat on Monday, January 30th. City Manager Tom Modica is slated to help open the retreat with some acknowledgments and words of encouragement as our Department's Strategic Plan is in alignment with many other City of Long Beach plans and initiatives.
10. Mayoral appointment to the Parks and Recreation Commission, Sylvester "Duke" Givens, has withdrawn his interest. Mayor Richardson will have the opportunity to make a new appointment this year. Once the full seven Commission positions are filled, then an extensive orientation program will ensue.
11. Here's to a great 2023 with greater expectations for Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Service in the New Year.