

Director's Holiday Message

Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services

December 2021

Prepared by Director Brent Dennis

This is my second December here in Long Beach leading the amazing Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services team. The holiday season this year and last have certainly been quite different thanks to the COVID Grinch that surprised us with many things worse than coal in our stockings. Health protocols and behavioral changes took some of the festive spirit from our celebrations. And on a sadder note, we said goodbye to four of our beloved co-workers who passed away much too soon. But I am encouraged by the more positive spirit of optimism and creativity that continues to bubble up within our PRM team.

In all honesty, I have already received what must be my best Christmas present this season. Although delivered a few months earlier than December 25th, the birth of my first grandchild was one joy-filled gift. I was able to finally meet and hold her during the first weekend of this month when I traveled back to snowy Michigan. A long overdue family reunion to celebrate our four-month old granddaughter, wrapped with the symbolic meaningfulness of the holiday season, helped create some wonderful memories.

I have found myself very thankful for the friendly, welcoming nature of Long Beach over the past 18 months since I moved here from Tucson to join the PRM team. It has been an additional professional honor to have developed such great collegial friendships with Mayor Garcia, Long Beach City Councilmembers, my fellow Department Directors, our Parks and Recreation Commissioners and Partners of Parks board members. Together we have accomplished some significant things this past year.

As our December holiday celebrations conclude and we usher in 2022, we will discover many exciting opportunities for our PRM team to serve the Long Beach community. Some of the things I look forward to in the new year will include settling into the newly defined Council districts, the approval of our department's strategic plan, the dedication of the new downtown flagship Lincoln Park, and an impressive array of amazing park capital improvement projects!

I wish all of you a very joyous holiday season! Here's to a happy, healthy and fun-filled New Year! Let's all make 2022 a remarkable year to remember! Cheers!