

6

Director's Highlights

Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services

July 2021 Highlights

Prepared by Director Brent Dennis

1. July is “Parks Make Life Better” month and on July 20th our DRAFT Strategic Plan will be presented to City Council. Tuesday, July 6th marked the reopening of City Hall and the first in-person, public meeting of City Council that allowed for public comment. This opportunity remains moving forward for all City Council meetings. The Strategic Plan is currently open for public review and input comments through the end of July. We plan to bring the Strategic Plan back to the Parks and Recreation Commission in August and City Council in September, so an approved plan is in place before the new fiscal year beginning October 1, 2021.
2. The Independence Day holiday weekend played out extremely well across all our parks, beach, and marina areas. I credit our parks and marine maintenance teams for excellent planning and preparation steps in advance of the holiday for citywide.
3. July 6th marked the full reopening of our Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care.
4. Services, facilities and programs. Movies in the Parks returned with a warm welcome from the community with rave reviews. Summer concerts are also resuming. An announcement as to the new Muni Band conductor is expected in the coming weeks. A Muni Band concert season schedule will be announced once the conductor is in place and band reassembled.
5. Efforts were made by PRM to help mediate an improved agreement for access and shared use between the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts at Sea Scout Base. Ongoing health protocols that need to be maintained due to the nature of unvaccinated youth involved in the summer camps is a primary issue affecting the historic shared use of the beach at this facility. An in-person meeting hosted by Director Dennis and Marine Bureau Manager Elvira Hallinan proved to be very effective in getting both scouting organizations working towards an acceptable licensing agreement that will address the shared, scheduled use of the beach through the conclusion of this summer's camp programs at the end of August.
6. A failed tree at Whaley Park in CD 4 that fell recently upon a group of six park patrons and causing one individual to be in need of medical attention has resulted in an increased allocation of funds for tree trimming and dead tree removal for Public Works and PRM. Parks Maintenance has identified several trees that are also in need of timely attention for removal. The combination of heat and the ongoing impact upon trees from periods of drought has created a concern for more tree failure.
7. Holiday weekend saw a negative cloud over the positive nature Independence Day in Martin Luther King Jr. Park with the defacement of the MLK statue. Our department is working with LBPD and Technology & Innovation to address the issues relating to inoperable surveillance

cameras in the park. To date most cameras are not operational. The incident is still under investigation.

8. Several California's FY/22 budget earmarks to fund important capital improvement projects for Long Beach Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department parks and facilities is pending the Governor's approval and signature. Some of the proposed significant earmarks include: \$8.5 million to complete the vision plan development of MacArthur Park, \$1.5 million for El Dorado Park ballfield improvements, and \$850,000 for various improvements at Bixby Park.
9. With the lifting of COVID gathering limitations, we are pleased to be planning an in-person celebration of the opening of the Cherry Park Playground for July 24th at 10am.