

**SOLANO COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
FEBRUARY 23, 2012**

**675 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA, and
Field Trip by Van to Suisun Marsh
10:00 a.m.**

Members Present:	Commissioners Whited, Alvarez and Leong
Members Excused:	Commissioners Riddle and Hermsmeyer
Staff Present:	Dan Sykes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice-Chair Whited called the meeting to order. A quorum was confirmed.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of January 18, 2012 were approved as prepared.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved.

4. Chair and Commissioner Comments

There were no Commissioner comments.

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

6. Elect Chair and Vice-Chair for 2012

This item was continued to the next regularly scheduled meeting on May 10, so that additional commissioners could be present for the election.

7. Approve staff recommendation for fee changes for fiscal year 2012/2013

Mr. Sykes presented 4 fee modifications: an increase in the boat launch fee from \$2 to \$5 per launch; a bicycle camping (new) fee of \$5/cyclist/night at Lake Solano Park; and 2 (new) fees for use of the patio (\$25/event) and the outdoor education circle (\$50/event) at the Lake Solano Nature Center during scheduled events. The boat launch and bicycle camping fees are proposed based on a survey of fees charged by 14 comparable county and city park agencies and other public and private recreation providers. The proposed Solano County fees would be within the range of current market rates for these services, and would be competitive because they are at or below the median fees charged by the other providers in the survey. The use fees for the patio and outdoor education circle are proposed to recover the County labor cost required to maintain and clean these areas.

Motion to approve the staff recommendation (Alvarez), with second (Leong). Approved unanimously.

8. Inspection of Project Sites funded by grants from the Suisun Marsh Specific Fund and Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund

Steve Chappell, Executive Director of the Suisun Resource Conservation District, and Robert Eddings, Project Manager for the California Waterfowl Association led the Commissioners and staff on a van tour of 3 grant-funded projects. At the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, the Commissioners toured and discussed the site of a habitat enhancement project that is now providing increased bird nesting success. The project also tested the use of 3 different seed mixes planted on the project site, and is monitoring which mix provides vegetation that is the optimal nesting habitat. This project was a good example of how County grant funds were leveraged with state grant funds to create a larger scale project than otherwise would have been possible.

At the Grizzly Ranch, the Commissioners toured and discussed a future project site that was recently awarded a grant in the FY2011/12 SMSF grant cycle. The proposed project at Grizzly Ranch will replace rusted-out culverts and install water control gates that will allow the property to provide enhanced water flows across the property (and onto neighboring properties). This will allow the landowners to better reduce soil salinity and allow the propagation of improved vegetative cover and forage for waterfowl. This project also demonstrates how the improvement at one project site can provide wide-ranging benefits across many properties due to the interconnectedness of the water channels in the marsh, and how the use of long-lasting, corrosion resistant materials such as plastic and stainless steel will provide long-term sustainability for the new water control structures.

At the Volanti Duck Club, the Commissioners inspected and discussed a newly installed pipe and gate structure in a levee, which now provides superior water control of the club's ponds, and that of the neighboring Joice Island Mallard Farm. This new gate structure allows the landowners to very efficiently control the flooding and draining regimes of their ponds, to provide optimal waterfowl habitat and the ability to leach out saline soils with active flushing. Reducing the salinity of the soil promotes vegetative growth.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Chappell and Mr. Eddings for their time and effort in providing them the tour and their knowledgeable explanations of the water regime in the marsh and the habitat benefits of the projects.

9. Return to County Government Center and Adjournment

The Commissioners returned by van to the County Government Center and confirmed the next regular meeting date of May 10, 2012 at 5:30 pm. Vice-Chair Whited adjourned the meeting at 1:35 pm.