MEETING DATE: March 18, 2015

AGENDA ITEM: Provide Comments to the City Council on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2015/2016 PRCS Department Budget and Work Plans.

ATTACHMENTS

PRCS Commission Members' Comments Regarding the Proposed Fiscal Year 2015/16 PRCS Department Budget and Work Plans as Submitted Via Email

LAURA STUART'S DRAFT OF LETTER TO COUNCIL

DEAR CITY COUNCILMEMBERS:

We have been invited to send recommendations to the Council on funding for new programs for the Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department (PRCS).

We believe that the PRCS is and should be considered as part of the core services that create the "quality of life in Culver City". The PRCS should be treated equally in funding and attention as the Public Works, Community Development, Police and Fire departments.

PRCS facilities and programs are available to, and used by, every citizen (and the communities surrounding us), from infants to seniors, and are used by everyone, whether in a passive or active manner. The services and facilities provided give opportunity and, many times, a safe place to go, for many of our citizens. We have programs that mentor our children and give them insight into their futures. Without these programs, these kids may be latchkey or on the streets getting into trouble. In fact, our programs need to be expanded. Kids that are in PRCS programs are not committing crimes, but rather, are planning their futures.

We believe that the issues of funding any new programs cannot be solved until the issues with Operations is solved. Without proper staffing and updated tools, any new programs are merely wish list items that cannot be implemented. We were not provided with a Work Plan nor a Budget that compares line item income to expense, so we are working in a vacuum when it comes to Programs, their value, their continued feasibility, or what we would recommend to Council with regard to future arrangements with the operators of such programs.

We would like to recommend the following with regard to Operations:

1. Our PRCS staff is stretched beyond its limit. It is clear from looking at the parks, Downtown and other areas that the PRCS staff is in charge of maintaining, that we are incredibly shorthanded. We would recommend to Council that the Department that does maintenance and implements capital improvement projects add the following full time staff, either by direct hire or contract hire:

   1 Irrigation Staffer – someone to maintain all of the irrigation lines and water supplies to our parks. Right now, we have 1 person who spends the majority of his time salvaging the irrigation at Culver City Park, especially for the hilltop playing fields due to the daily and constant land shift.

   Promote the 1 Irrigation Staff we have to crew leader, to allow for a smoother operation of these tasks.

   1-2 Facility Maintenance staffers – These are the people who maintain playgrounds and facilities We have 1 person who does all of this work for all of our playgrounds and facilities – this staffer needs to be promoted to crew leader and needs help immediately.

1-2 Grounds Maintenance Workers

1 Full time Administrative person with landscape architecture background to oversee capital improvement projects.

We see that with this additional staff, many Work Plan projects will be able to be fulfilled in a manner that fits the time frame the Department needs to complete these projects - Projects such as refurbishing the fields, downtown mediums, and playgrounds to name a few.

2. We are also recommending the City hire a Grant Writer (perhaps share with 1-2 other Departments) either by direct hire or contract. As you know, grant writing is very highly specialized and we need full time people working on looking for appropriate grants, and writing grant applications. The value of a grant writer cannot be overly stated. As a small city, we are competing with much larger municipalities who spend the time it takes to obtain Grant funding. We need to be better and faster.

3. We are also recommending that the Council hire several full and part time staffers for our recreation programs. The summer camps, teen center, and after school programs are all at capacity and cannot be expanded due to a lack of staff. The need for these programs far outdistances our staffing.

We would like to recommend the following with regard to Contracts and MOUs:

1. There must be an immediate review of all PRCS Contracts and MOUs to determine the cost/benefits of each of these programs and whether we need to eliminate, enhance, reduce or increase the fees. An excellent example is the Baseball and AYSO Leagues. Unlike surrounding cities, Culver City does not charge these leagues the value of the use of the fields – i.e., the cost of maintenance, staffing, upgrading, and replacement of fields and facilities damaged by the users. The City needs to update all MOUs and contracts to make sure that these users are paying a fair share for field maintenance, lights, and actual costs. These organizations (and especially the for profit organizations) should be required to provide Council with their actual income/expense statements so that Council is able to determine if they can or cannot bear the true costs, and what they should be paying.

   We recommend this because we believe there are many programs that could be added, that the areas currently being used could be used by more people, should we have both staff to maintain them, and the users paying their fair share of the cost of use.

We would also recommend to the Council that the following projects be implemented and funded. These projects cannot be done without adequate staffing, and our staffing recommendations would need to be met for most of these projects, not only for implementation, but long term maintenance. For many of these programs we can use contractors to implement, but we use staff to maintain:

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1. 6 of our playgrounds are in dire need of equipment replacement – the cost would be approximately $300,000 each. Staff can recommend the order in which they need to be replaced – this order being based on safety concerns and use.

2. There are 2 passive use areas in Culver City Park that have been on the "list" for over 5 years. These areas are located near the Dog Park. Both of these areas were visioned as picnic resting areas for users of the park and the hiking trails. They have become wastelands due to the lack of funding. These areas are important to the community and should be completed. As an example of an unused area in this park that, because the Staff dug in their heels and made it happen, we now have a huge picnic area at the entrance to the park, which generates income from reservations. This is a perfect example of spending money to make money.

3. A 2nd Community Garden. We haven't seen such passion for a project since the Friends of the Culver City Dog Park. We need to find space to put a 2nd community garden. Even if this space is land belonging to the City, the City of Los Angeles, or to the College, we recommend you create a sub-committee to work with interfacing with landowners in and out of Culver City to create this Garden.

4. The PRCS needs additional fields to accommodate the increasing needs for sports. As you are aware, the demand for, and use by, organizations such as AYSO outdistance what we have. There has been requests that certain Parks have lighting either turned on at night or installed. While we wish to respect the needs of a neighborhood, these Parks should be able to be used to their fullest potential. Obviously the cost of staffing and lighting will have to be factored into the fees for the usage, but we believe it's a subject that needs attention.

5. LEAVE OPEN FOR ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

6.

7.

8.

9.

Very truly yours,

Laura Stuart, Chair

ON BEHALF OF THE PARKS, RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION

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COMMISSIONER KAY HEINEMAN

There are two areas that I feel need to be looked into further:

1. In the area of Projected Proposed Budget there was a proposed increase to have a part time staff of a Senior Center Security Guard (contracted) With almost 4,000 members there is a **greater need** for a part time Social Counselor who could be available for members daily. The security guard I feel is unnecessary.

2. Remodeling the Senior Center Patio: Eight years ago the Paetzold donation was left to the Center for remodeling the patio. Recently a proposed project at a total cost of approximately $300,000 dollars was told to the Commissioners during our Park tour. The CCSCA Board of Directors recently met and they are suggesting that not all of the City's remodeling is necessary. For example: a portable performance stage is not needed nor the expense to move the water fountain/pool. What the Seniors need is more useable space. If the large tree and cement planter in the middle of the patio were removed more space could be used for outside classes. The Board of Directors are willing to put a large amount of money into this project if the City is willing to equal that amount. Along with the Paetzold funds this project should be completed.

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COMMISSIONER KELLY KENT MARIN

My proposed budget ideas are as follows (in this priority order):

1. Land purchase or lease for community gardens

2. Upgraded and/or installed lighting for youth sport use on multiple park fields.

3. Reallocating baseball diamonds to soccer field use as is appropriate for current use.

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Fiscal Year 2015 / 2016

- **Total Budget ≥ $7,635,172**
  - Similar to FY 2014/2015 Budget
  - @ 7.6% of City's General Fund expenditure
  - 32.59 Regular Positions
  - 77,823 Casual Part-Time Hours
  - Proposed Increases to Part-Time Staff:
    - + 3 Senior Recreation Leaders
    - + 3 Fitness Center Managers
    - + Senior Center Security Guard (contracted)

Parks Recreation & Community Services Department

Parks Make Life Better!

Projected Proposed Budget

Fiscal Year 2015 / 2016

	% of Total
Administration	7.6%
Facilities	14.2%
Recreation	27.7%
Parks	32.1%
Sr. Social Services/RSVP	12.8%
Operating Grants	5.7%

Parks Recreation & Community Services Department

Parks Make Life Better!

Projected Expenditures

Fiscal Year 2015 / 2016

	% of Total
General Revenues	62.4%
Operating Grants	4.6%
Recreation	17.1%
Permits	2.0%
VMC Rentals	12.0%
Miscellaneous Revenue	0.5%
Donations	1.5%

Projected Revenues

Current Projects

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Syd Kronenthal Park	New Playground & Surfacing
Fox Hills Park	Install Shade Structure
Downtown	Re-landscape Restaurant Row and Downtown Plaza
Multiple Sites	Water Audits to Certify Backflow Devices
Senior Center	14 Large Boulders as Barricade

Capital Improvements

Current / Upcoming Projects

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Studio Estates	Re-landscape Portions of the Right of Way
CC Park Nature Trail	Rehabilitation/Potential BHC Grant
Dog Park	Retaining Wall Repair/Refurbishment
CWA Park	Paddle Tennis Court Re-surfacing
Multiple Sites	Irrigation Upgrades per AB-1881

Capital Improvements

Projected Future Projects

- Upgrade Playground Equipment
  - Blair Hills Park
  - Lindberg Park
  - Tellefson Park
  - El Marino Park
  - Culver West Alexander Park
- Turf Renovation
  - Syd Kronenthal Park
  - Veterans Memorial Park
- Remodel to Create More Usable Space
  - Senior Center Courtyard

Unfunded / Underfunded