



MINUTES  
Recreation and Community Services Commission  
Adjourned Regular Meeting  
October 8, 2025

---

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6 p.m. by Chairperson Anitza Valles

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Veronica Lucio.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT:   Chairperson Anitza Valles  
                                  Vice Chairperson Dave Allen  
                                  Commissioner Veronica Lucio  
                                  Commissioner Ted Spaseff

ABSENT:       Commissioner Kristie Larison

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of September 10, 2025. A motion was made by Commissioner Ted Spaseff and seconded by Commissioner Veronica Lucio to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 10, 2025. Minutes were approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Assistant Director Kevin Bright reported that on Tuesday, September 30, the Park Development Committee met and received three reports from staff. The first highlighted the state of Lakewood's two pools. It was said that the report demonstrated several of the necessary infrastructure upgrades each pool would soon require to remain open for use. Mr. Bright informed the commission that costs were equal to a significant sum of around \$10 million dollars in total to bring the two pools to optimum functionality and up to code. It was said that the report served as an update and was received and filed by the committee. The commission was informed that staff would work alongside the CIP Committee and ultimately the full council to identify a course of action. He noted that while no specific direction was given, the committee urged staff to seek funding from grants and other sources to offset impacts to the general fund. Mr. Bright shared that the second report highlighted annual Halloween Carnivals. He noted that the report detailed the need for a moderate amount of funding to modernize two games at each park, while also addressing some of the ongoing sign and backdrop needs to make the carnivals uniform and professional-looking for attendees. It was said that the committee had appropriated \$10,000 for the 2025 event to achieve these objectives. Mr. Bright informed the commission that the final report was regarding the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Long Range Plan. He shared that the report summarized several of the key objectives laid out by the plan and brought the lengthy document into a more digestible report for the committee. Eight achievable goals were identified by the director in the report and staff received direction to provide quarterly reports to the Park Development Committee on progress, needs and objectives set forth by the report. Mr. Bright noted that these ongoing community. It was said that the event was in the final preparation stages and was complete with a full slate of cultural performances and bands, a multicultural food court, the children's cultural booth, community booths and vendors. He shared that the family fun zone would again be free of charge for participants, and noted that the event would kick off at 2 p.m. and continue until 8 p.m.

Mr. Bright shared that Halloween would fall on a Friday in 2025, and as is tradition, eight Lakewood parks would host Halloween Carnivals. He shared that residents were invited to celebrate safely on park game courts or ball fields with carnival games and contests and noted that the popular costume contest would take place at 7 p.m. at each park. Mr. Bright mentioned that Mayfair Park would also have inflatable attractions for a small fee and noted that scary haunted houses would be erected at Bolivar, Del Valle, San Martin and Palms parks. It was said that all carnivals open at 6 p.m. and conclude at 8:30 p.m.

Finally, Mr. Bright reported that the west bridge at Rynerson Park was closed three weeks prior, to address much needed repairs. Public Works staff noted the wood decking was wearing and began to remove the planks to repair them. Rust and deterioration were discovered on the steel supports when the beams were removed. It was then determined that repairs also needed to be done to the support structure. Mr. Bright shared that the work has been done utilizing in-house skilled trades staff in Public Works, welding and repairing the steel and is now in the final stages of re-setting the planks with Trex Decking; a plastic composite to ensure a long life. With the repairs, it was said that the bridge should last a minimum of 20 years. Mr. Bright noted that work was scheduled to be completed in the coming week.

Parks Superintendent Abel Andrade reported that on Tuesday, October 14, ERD crews would begin improvements to the Los Coyotes Diagonal entrance to Phase I of The Nature Trail. He shared that the work would require a temporary closure of the entrance through Friday, October 17. It was said that this project would include the installation of metal gopher mesh and grading. Once the mesh is installed, decomposed granite will be added, leveled compacted, and watered to ensure a firm and stable surface for trail users to enjoy. He noted that the entrance was expected to be reopened to the public on Saturday, October 18.

Commissioner Ted Spaseff shared that he attended the Special Olympics Fundraiser event and mentioned that it was a great time as always. He also mentioned attending the annual Patriot Day Ceremony and commended staff for a job well done. He shared that he attended the Annual Fall Craft Show at the Weingart Senior Center, noting that it was well attended. Lastly, he shared that he attended the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce's 27th Annual Summer Stampede Car Show, noting that Mayfair Park looked great.

## REPORTS:

### **1. Park Maintenance Annual Report**

Environmental Resources Division Supervisor Mike Cracium displayed slides and provided the commission with an update on park maintenance activities in 2025. Mr. Cracium informed the commission that the park maintenance branch was one of the largest work groups in the city. He proceeded to list the many responsibilities of park maintenance staff as noted in the written report.

Mr. Cracium provided information regarding Park Maintenance projects completed 2025, including the planting of 75 Tacoma trees along the west side of Biscailuz Park and landscape improvements to the entrance signs at Rynerson Park.

Mr. Andrade introduced to the commission the frontline Park Maintenance staff who were in the audience, including Park Maintenance Workers Todd Bennington, Marcos Ibarra and Geoff Yates, and Senior Park Maintenance Workers Aaron Ford, Jim Piacenti and Joe Stranges.

Vice Chairperson Dave Allen gave kudos to Park Maintenance staff for their hard work and efforts throughout the year. Mr. Cracium informed Vice Chairperson Allen that staff was hoping for as much rain as possible during the winter season, however, he noted that most of the turf in the city goes dormant during the winter, and as such it requires less water. Mr. Andrade added that one bonus was that three parks had smart-irrigation controllers installed, which is expected to help adjust water needs throughout the year.

Commissioner Spaseff thanked Mr. Cracium and the Park Maintenance staff for doing a beautiful job maintaining Lakewood parks. He mentioned that visitors often compliment how well-maintained the parks are.

Chairperson Anitza Valles echoed Commissioner Spaseff's sentiments regarding Lakewood parks. She shared her appreciation for the Park Maintenance staff, noting that they are always proactive in ensuring that the parks stay clean and beautiful.

The commission received and filed the annual report on Park Maintenance.

## **2. Adaptive Recreation and Special Olympics Annual Report**

Community Services Supervisor Noel Munoz displayed slides and provided information on the Adaptive Recreation Program (ARP) and Special Olympics programs during 2025. Mr. Munoz provided details on both programs as noted in the written report.

Mr. Munoz informed the commission that 2025 was a remarkable one for the ARP and Special Olympics programs. He shared that both have witnessed significant growth in terms of participant engagement and have made a positive impact on the lives of the participants they serve.

Mr. Munoz reported on ARP special events held in 2025. He shared that events such as ARP dances attracted enthusiastic participants, while destination events, such as Long Beach State sports nights, cosmic bowling, and ARP dinner and a movie, maintained a steady participation rate of individuals. The highlight of the summer season was said to be the SOSC Bowling Championship held in Lakewood, where several athletes earned medals, further affirming their commitment to excellence. Moreover, it was said that Special Olympics athletes had displayed commendable commitment and involvement. The bowling program welcomed 10 new athletes, bringing the total to 38 enthusiastic bowlers.

Next, Mr. Munoz informed the commission that in 2025, RCS proudly launched the new Adaptive Pee Wee Sports Program for children ages 3 to 8. It was said that the program was designed to provide inclusive and accessible athletic opportunities for young children with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

Commissioner Spaseff commended Mr. Munoz and staff for providing such a great program. He noted that the program brings joy to not only the participants and their parents, but also to all who are involved. Chairperson Valles echoed Commissioner Spaseff's comments and mentioned she was grateful Lakewood offers both amazing programs.

The commission received and filed the annual report on Adaptive Recreation and Special Olympics.

**3. Commission Newsletter No. 4**

A written report of the Recreation and Community Services Department programs, events, services and maintenance activities for the month of September and a listing of upcoming activities for November 2025.

The commission received and filed the report.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

1. Letter to Alik Amoranto and Julie Magana, Co-Employees of the Month for August 2025.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Valles adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m. to Wednesday, November 12 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary  
Recreation and Community Services Commission