



City of Lakewood

Recreation and Community Services Commission

MINUTES

Adjourned Regular Meeting Held

September 9, 2026

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6 p.m. by Chairperson Dave Allen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Commissioner Jessica Allen.

ROLL CALL

Present

Chairperson Dave Allen

Vice Chairperson Bert Johnson

Commissioner Jessica Allen

Commissioner Dr. Shanetta Weatherspoon

Absent

Commissioner Eddie Witt

ROUTINE ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

Meeting of August 19, 2026.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dr. Shanetta Weatherspoon and seconded by Commissioner Jessica Allen to approve the minutes of August 19, 2026. Minutes were approved as submitted.

Announcements and Presentations

Director Valarie Frost began her announcements by informing the commission that the next Park Development Committee meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 15 at 8:30 a.m. in the Executive Board Room. It was said that there would be two reports on the agenda, including an update on the Del Valle Park Tot-Lot Playground Replacement Project and a progress update on facility amenity replacements and capital improvement projects at recreation facilities.

Next, Ms. Frost shared that the Cherry Cove Playground Improvements Project was nearing completion. She noted that the city was awaiting the installation of additional playground bracing recommended by the manufacture, and noted that once that was completed, the remaining paint touch-ups and final safety inspection would take place. It was said that the improvements included new playground equipment for ages 2 to 12, new benches, turf, an accessible walkway and new landscaping at the park entrance. The commission was informed that a dedication ceremony would soon be scheduled, with the date still being finalized based on City Council availability.

Ms. Frost reported that the Rotary Club of Lakewood and the Lakewood Family YMCA, in partnership with the City of Lakewood, were bringing the Summer Stampede Car Show to Mayfair Park on Saturday, September 19, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. It was said that this longtime community favorite, previously hosted by the Greater Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, would feature an incredible display of classic cars, hot rods, custom cars, muscle cars and specialty vehicles. In addition to the cars, there will be awards, opportunity drawings, kids' activities, live entertainment, food trucks, vendors and community booths.

Ms. Frost informed the commission that Recreation staff would support the Public Safety Department team with personnel and equipment for the city's annual Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Expo which will be held on Saturday, September 26, from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Civic Center parking lot at Del Amo and Clark Avenue. She shared that the event was a free, family-friendly event where residents can meet local first responders and learn how to better prepare their homes and families for an emergency. The event was said to feature a family fun zone, fire trucks and sheriff's patrol vehicles and an opportunity to meet the pilot and see Lakewood's Sky Knight helicopter. There will also be information on emergency preparedness, crime prevention and ways to protect your home, vehicle and pets.

Lastly, Ms. Frost reported that the City of Lakewood and EDCO Waste Services were teaming up again for a free shredding and e-waste recycling event scheduled for Saturday, October 3 from 9 a.m. to noon in the parking lot behind City Hall and the Iacoboni Library. It was said that Lakewood residents could take advantage of convenient drive-through service to securely shred sensitive documents and safely dispose of unwanted electronic waste.

Parks Superintendent Abel Andrade reported that, in response to recent high temperatures, Environmental Resources Division (ERD) crews implemented additional safety precautions for outdoor work, including more frequent water breaks. He noted that supervisors are actively monitoring conditions and adjusting work schedules as

necessary to safeguard employee well-being while maintaining city parks, facilities, medians and landscaped areas.

Additionally, Mr. Andrade informed the commission that recent rainfall served as a reminder that the rainy season is approaching. He shared that ERD staff were proactively preparing parks, facilities and landscaped areas for shifting weather conditions by inspecting and monitoring drainage systems, trees, irrigation networks and other potential impact zones.

Finally, Mr. Andrade provided an update on a Proposition 84 grant-funded project originally completed in 2023 across Boyar, Del Valle and San Martin parks. He shared that the city received a grant reimbursement from the Central Basin Municipal Water District for upgrading smart irrigation controllers at all three locations. It was said that the \$105,000 project was executed entirely in-house by city staff at a fraction of the cost of outside contracting. The commission was informed that these upgrades enable staff to optimize irrigation management, adapt swiftly to varying weather patterns and significantly reduce unnecessary water consumption.

Assistant Director Kevin Bright began his announcements by reporting that through coordination with the Long Beach Unified School District, the department had secured the Bancroft Middle School gym for the 2026 Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) volleyball season. Following the closure of Hoover Middle School at the end of last school year, the LYS program was left without an indoor volleyball home. Staff worked hard with district representatives to obtain Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays for the program, and participants will be well served in the new location. He shared that practices had recently begun and games would commence with the other fall LYS sports of volleyball and flag football on Saturday, September 19.

Next, Mr. Bright provided information on programming and upcoming events. Mr. Bright shared that on Friday, September 11 at 6:30 p.m. the annual Patriot Day Ceremony would take place at The Centre Plaza on the west side of the civic center. It was said that 200 residents were anticipated to be present for the ceremony which remembers those lost in the attacks of September 11, 2001 and those who have served to fight in the days since, against terrorist actions. The commission was asked to please inform their secretary of their attendance.

Next, Mr. Bright shared with the commission that the fifth annual Fest-Of-All would once again take place at Palms Park on Saturday, October 10. It was said that the event would be held from 3 to 7 p.m. and that staff look forward to celebrating the diverse and inclusive community Lakewood has to offer through performances, food and camaraderie.

The commission was informed that on Tuesday, October 13, the annual College Fair would take place at The Centre in the Ballroom from 6 to 8 p.m. Mr. Bright shared that

the event was a great opportunity for parents and high schoolers to gain information on the many universities, trade schools and military academies to which they have access following graduation.

Finally, Mr. Bright reported that a new event had been added to the RCS calendar in 2026. The commission was informed that the first of a five-part series called Mosey with the Mayor would take place on Saturday, October 3. He shared that residents were invited to Del Valle Park from 9 to 11 a.m. where activities would begin with a vendor fair and light refreshments provided by Cassidy's Corner. During this time participants may get to know the mayor and City Council members and engage in meaningful conversations. The event will then move to a leisurely walk with the council around the park and surrounding neighborhood. Free giveaways and a kickoff to Lakewood's Street Sign Program will be provided. The commission was informed that a flyer highlighting event elements and particulars was placed at their seats on the dais for more information. Mr. Bright shared that following this first iteration, four more Mosey with the Mayor events would follow over the coming months; one in each city council district at a park to be determined.

Commissioner Jessica Allen suggested that staff contact the UCLA graduate who spoke at a recent City Council meeting to invite UCLA to participate in the upcoming college fair. Additionally, she expressed appreciation for outdoor city staff working hard through the extreme heat and thanked management for adjusting their schedules accordingly.

Vice Chairperson Bert Johnson shared that he recently enrolled his grandsons in the LYS program. He also noted that he recently helped compile a neighborhood watch captains contact list, with over 70 individuals having provided their information thus far. He encouraged fellow commissioners to share this resource with their neighborhood block captains.

REPORTS

1. Fall/Winter Recreation Programs and Special Events

Community Services Manager Nancy Hitt presented the report for fall and winter recreation programs and special events. She informed the commission that registration for 2025 fall classes began over Labor Day weekend, with classes running from Monday, September 29, through January 2026. The digital catalog launched online on Thursday, August 28, with hard copies mailed to residents and made available in limited quantities at Lakewood parks, community centers and City Hall. Ms. Hitt noted that the catalog cover features upcoming seasonal activities, including the Tree Lighting, LYS flag football, Fest-of-All, and Halloween carnivals.

Regarding after-school supervision, Ms. Hitt reported that adjusted park supervision hours would continue to align with school schedules, providing additional coverage on early dismissal days and school holidays. Additionally, it was said that during the traditional two-week winter holiday recess, winter excursions departing from Mayfair Park would be offered, with full details provided in the written report.

On the topic of teen programming, Ms. Hitt announced that the Lakewood Teen Action Committee would resume in the fall, focusing on community service with meetings beginning Saturday, September 27, at the Youth Center. Furthermore, it was said that the annual College Fair would return to The Centre on Tuesday, October 14, anticipating over 50 nationwide college booths and more than 300 student and caregiver attendees.

Ms. Hitt then reported that the Lakewood Youth Sports (LYS) fall season runs from September 1 through November 15, offering flag football, volleyball and volleytennis. Specific divisions, practice schedules and game days were outlined as noted in the written report.

For older adult programming, Ms. Hitt highlighted a robust schedule of fall classes and events designed to keep Lakewood's senior population active, with programming offered at both the Burns Community Center and the Weingart Senior Center—temporarily operating at Mayfair Park during the Weingart Senior Center Renovation Project—as detailed in the written report.

The commission also received information regarding upcoming fall special events, including Patriot Day, Fest-of-All, the Play at Palms series, Lollipop Lane, and Halloween carnivals hosted at city parks.

Lastly, Ms. Hitt reported on the Project Shepherd Holiday Program, noting that registration for the annual program begins Monday, November 3, at the Burns Community Center and Palms Park, with gift and food distribution scheduled for December 12 and 13.

Vice Chairperson Johnson commended staff for hosting events that are not only entertaining, but also practical and beneficial to the community.

Chairperson Dave Allen thanked staff for their dedication and hard work on every event, praising the department as a gold standard and expressing his appreciation for their high level of passion.

Community Services Supervisor Brianna Tavera confirmed to Commissioner Dr. Shanetta Weatherspoon that Pepperdine University had not RSVP'd for the upcoming College Fair and agreed to provide her with the college fair invitation so she could follow up regarding their attendance.

The commission received and filed the report on Fall/Winter Programs and Special Events.

2. Human and Senior Services Programs Annual Report

Community Services Supervisor Sabrina Junkin presented the report for human and senior programs for 2025–2026, reminding the commission of the city's various offerings and community partnerships aimed at assisting residents in need. She shared that a vast array of human and senior service programs are hosted at the Burns Community Center and the Weingart Senior Center, with offerings provided directly by city staff alongside partner agencies. Ms. Junkin reminded the commission that programs and services normally housed at the Weingart Senior Center were temporarily operating out of Mayfair Park during the center's renovation.

Reporting on the Project Shepherd Extension Program at the Burns Community Center and Palms Park, Ms. Junkin stated that the program assisted 330 families and 1,086 individuals, representing a ten percent increase from 2024. For the 2025 calendar year, 735 boxes of food were distributed, 51 families received utility bill assistance, and 42 families received grocery store gift cards. Additionally, the Holiday Assistance Program supported 437 families—a slight increase from the previous year—while the annual Backpack Program successfully secured donations of school supplies and backpacks for 449 children.

Ms. Junkin also detailed the various Active+ classes offered at the Burns Community Center, which range from fitness and art classes to educational seminars designed to keep active older adults mentally and physically sharp.

Finally, Ms. Junkin outlined the free and low-cost services provided through the Weingart Senior Center. She noted that the city also allocates Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to support four local non-profit social service agencies: Community Family Guidance Center, Meals on Wheels of Long Beach, Pathways Volunteer Hospice, and Human Services Association.

Ms. Frost informed Commissioner Jessica Allen that Project Shepherd operates as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. She explained that staff secure funding for the program's offerings year-round through ongoing fundraising

efforts, resident donations, corporate sponsorships from local businesses and grant applications.

Ms. Junkin confirmed to Vice Chairperson Johnson that many of the programs referenced in the report are included in the Community Assistance Directory. In response to Vice Chairperson Johnson's request for copies to keep on hand, Ms. Junkin agreed to provide them to him.

Commissioner Dr. Weatherspoon shared that she attended Volunteer Day twice in recent years, describing it as a great and highly impactful event, and praised staff for organizing such a meaningful experience for the community. She also commended Ms. Junkin for successfully maintaining Weingart Senior Center activities at Mayfair Park during the renovation project. Additionally, she recommended that staff track not only numerical program data but also the tangible impact the program has on the families it assists.

The commission received and filed the annual report on Human and Senior Services Programs.

3. Day Camp Program and Holiday Vacation Camp Annual Report

Community Services Supervisor Brianna Tavera presented a review of Lakewood's 2026 Day Camp and 2025 Holiday Vacation Camp programs. Ms. Tavera provided an overview of the Day Camp operations, sharing details regarding staff personnel, the Junior Counselor Program, Day Camp excursions, weekly themes and special events. Furthermore, she outlined the program's registration, budget and revenues, alongside a report on the Holiday Vacation Camp, as noted in the written report.

Ms. Tavera confirmed to Vice Chairperson Johnson that the camp program serves ages 6-12.

Commissioner Jessica Allen expressed admiration for the variety of teen programs available in Lakewood, and Ms. Tavera confirmed that staff will sign off on Junior Counselor Program hours if approved by the participants' schools for volunteer credit. Ms. Tavera also confirmed for Commissioner Allen that information regarding the Junior Counselor Program would be provided at the Lakewood Teen Action Committee kickoff meeting.

The commission received and filed the annual report on Day Camp Program and Holiday Vacation Camp.

4. Activities and Maintenance Report No. 3

A written report and discussion of the Recreation and Community Services Department Programs, Services and Maintenance Activities for the month of August and a listing of upcoming activities for October 2026.

The commission received and filed the report.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letters to Jenna Von Arx and Martin Macias, Co-Employees of the Month for July 2026.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business brought before the Recreation and Community Services Commission, Chairperson Dave Allen adjourned the meeting at 7 p.m. to Wednesday, October 14 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Michelle Williams, Administrative Secretary
Recreation and Community Services Commission