

**CARMICHAEL RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
MINUTES: ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS - SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 20, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER

Call to order: The special meeting of the Carmichael Recreation and Park District Advisory Board of Directors was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Safford. She explained that testimony would be limited to the matters on the agenda - whether an exploration or study of some type of consolidation with Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District (MORPD) is advantageous or desirable at this time.

Roll Call:

CRPD Directors present: Berns, Dover, and Safford
 CRPD Directors absent: Tateishi
 CRPD Staff present: Harrison, Maddison, and Murray
 MORPD Directors present: Bolland, Meyer, Molinari, Skoien, Taylor
 MORPD Staff present: Walker, Koller, Morrison, Paredes-Banville
 Guest: Michael Alacalay

INTRODUCTIONS

The directors and staff members of both Districts introduced themselves.

OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF CONSIDERING CONSOLIDATION

Harrison explained that there had been informal consolidation discussions among the District's staffs since 1996. The subject of studying consolidation received support in the study developed by the County of Sacramento for the Carmichael Community Action Plan. In September 2003, then CRPD Advisory Board Chair, Peter Tateishi, sent a letter to MORPD requesting open discussions on the concept of possible consolidation of the districts. On behalf of the MORPD Board, then MORPD Director, Chuck Davis, responded that the District was not in a position at that time to explore consolidation and requested the subject be deferred. In July 2005, CRPD commissioned a "Preliminary Study on Potential Cost Savings of Consolidation" prepared by Paul Lake, Special Projects Officer, Sacramento County Department of Economic Development and Intergovernmental Affairs in the County Executive's Office. The report stated that, with a number of caveats, there could be a potential for savings in administrative support position salaries if the two districts consolidated.

CRPD has a population of approximately 45,000 and MORPD has a population of approximately 62,500.

Safford stated that the CRPD Advisory Board would now like to know whether MORPD believes the idea of consolidation should be off the table or moved forward.

OPINIONS REGARDING THE PROS AND CONS OF CONSOLIDATION

The following information regarding consolidation were discussed:

1. Residents in the Carmichael area support the study of consolidation (41.1%) in the Carmichael Community Action Plan Study.
2. It may be an optimal opportunity to consider consolidation, as there currently are two vacancies in full-time administrative positions with CRPD, including the District Administrator and Manager of Facilities and Park Services.
3. The two Districts already cosponsor many events with each District providing their own advertising.
4. Staff members consider themselves allies, with very good working relationships in the recreation and park divisions.
5. The two Districts are dependent special districts of the County of Sacramento.
6. Camaraderie and mutual respect exist between the staffs.
7. The two Districts already pursue many cosponsored programs and activities.
8. There is a culture of joint use of facilities, with MORPD cosponsoring programs, including adult sports at the La Sierra Community Center.
9. CRPD has facility opportunities at Carmichael Park and La Sierra Community Center.
10. CRPD's Advisory Board has approved staff proceeding with an update of its Master Plan, which could include the study of consolidation in the District's future, or an adjustment of the 95608 boundaries.
11. Many Carmichael residents do not differentiate between the two Districts and are not aware of the District boundaries.
12. Residents are not always aware and may have no concept of which District is sponsoring a particular program.
13. La Sierra Community Center is a regional-type facility and is available for use

community-wide.

14. The management structure could be merged without much disruption.
15. CRPD has, as its asset, more land than it currently requires, which could be declared surplus and sold to fund a Capital Improvement Program.
16. The two Districts enjoy facilities that are, for all intents and purposes, contiguous - Mission North Park, Gibbons Park, and Mission Oaks Community Center in MORPD and Carmichael Park and La Sierra Community Center in CRPD.
17. MORPD, in campaigning for its recent, successful assessment district, made assurance to its residents that the quality of programs and facilities would continue to be enhanced or maintained. They question whether it would be beneficial to test the level of support of their residents at this time.
18. MORPD would have determine whether consolidation would make them stronger or better.
19. MORPD residents enjoy the benefits of CRPD facilities, while CRPD enjoys the benefits of enhanced numbers of program participants from MORPD.
20. There is, in some minds, the perception that there would be less control and less responsiveness from a larger agency, which might be difficult to overcome.
21. There is concern that MORPD's operations is at its prime, with a successful assessment to bring in much needed revenue for maintaining and enhancing its parks, facilities, and programs in addition to the means to retain quality staff.
22. A larger agency might stretch its resources, both financial and staffing, which could lower the standards for both Districts.
23. It would be an entirely new and different environment for the new board and staff, with a new constituency to educate, inform, and satisfy.
24. There is potential for loss of staff to larger agencies that offer larger salaries and benefits for the same job responsibilities required by the two districts, and consolidation might lessen this concern.
25. A consolidated district may be able to offer enhanced programming opportunities.
26. The greater park acreage in CRPD offers better prospects for expansion, while there are limits to such opportunities in MORPD.

27. Need to study cost effectiveness and efficiencies that may be realized by contracted maintenance of facilities (MORPD) versus in-house staffing (CRPD).
28. There are philosophical concerns relative to administrative issues that would need to be resolved.
29. The two Districts enjoy many areas of functional consolidation, which could be expanded.

Mr. Alacalay stated that he is proponent of consolidation when it makes sense, and he believes there are already so many opportunities to consolidate or partner. There appear to be some financial uncertainties with CRPD, which it appears the Advisory Board and staff are addressing. There would have to be a plan so that the detrimental issues of one district would not be transferred to the other.

Bolland stated that there has been success with the merger of small water districts, such as Arcade and Northridge. The problems encountered after the consolidation were due to not recognizing and addressing aspects such as their cultures, staffing procedures, and policies.

The boards discussed the advantages and disadvantages of maintenance of facilities. Maddison stated that it is true La Sierra Community Center requires a lot of CRPD's resources. CRPD recently has been able to add three previously unfunded positions and should be able to work on its deferred maintenance projects. He explained that the center is a 50 year old facility and Carmichael Park is 60 years old.

While CRPD is in a better financial position at this time than in the recent past, it is important for them to concentrate on investing in improving the infrastructure of its facilities.

DISCUSSION OF THE FUTURE OF CONSOLIDATION

The MORPD board agreed that before considering consolidation, it would like to see the results of CRPD's proposed Master Plan and financial plan, in addition to a polling of residents; improve its staffing to required levels; and the results of its proposed assessment election. The MORPD board urged CRPD to call on individual board and staff members in these efforts. Walker stated that the recreation and park profession is proud of its culture of sharing.

The consensus of the MORPD board was that the question of consolidation is premature.

The two boards agreed that it might be a good plan to meet, as boards and/or staff, semi-annually or annually to look at the direction the districts are going.

Adjournment: The Advisory Board adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM.

APPROVED BY:

ATTESTED BY:

BARBARA SAFFORD
CHAIRMAN TO THE BOARD

INGRID S. PENNEY
CLERK OF THE BOARD