



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT**

**AGENDA DATE:** June 24, 2020  
**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission  
**FROM:** Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department  
**SUBJECT:** Director's Report

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Commission receive a presentation on the status of various Parks and Recreation Department (Department) initiatives and activities.

**DISCUSSION:**

Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Update

During the months of May and June, the Santa Barbara City Council completed departmental budget hearings and held a special meeting on June 15 to provide final direction on the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. The budget is scheduled for adoption on June 23. The proposed budgets for the Parks and Recreation Department, including the General Fund, Golf Fund, and Creeks Fund, including the reductions presented to the Commission, have not changed since the Commission's budget hearing on May 13, 2020. Although there is still a lot of uncertainty about the ongoing economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, staff is focusing on creative approaches to park maintenance and providing programs and services, while minimizing expenditures. Some hourly staff that support park maintenance and summer recreation programs are returning to work.

Facility Reopening Plans

Along with a tremendous focus on maintaining access to parks and open spaces during the Governor's stay-at-home order, as well as gearing up for a modified summer recreation season, the Department developed a series of plans for phased facility reopening. Although it is not yet known when City public counters will reopen, work spaces are modified to maintain social distancing and minimize the potential to spread the coronavirus. When we are able to conduct some business in person, reception areas will have protective screens and hand sanitizer, staff and patrons will be required to wear masks, maintain a distance of 6 feet whenever feasible, and congregating in common spaces will be discouraged. Larger in-person meetings will not be permitted until allowed by the Santa Barbara County Health

Officer. We anticipate that we will continue to do a significant amount of business over the telephone and via email and online.

### Santa Barbara Golf Club Update

Following the statewide stay-at-home order issued on March 19 to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Santa Barbara Golf Club closed for business on March 20. After receiving the needed approvals and in consultation with City staff, CourseCo worked quickly and diligently to return the course to operational conditions, even while significantly down-staffed. The golf course reopened its doors on April 25 and has since operated in compliance with evolving County Health Orders and social distancing guidelines. During the five-week closure, the course lost an estimated \$300,000 in revenue and was projected to end the fiscal year well below budget and behind last year's performance.

However, despite ongoing restrictions to operations that preclude fully capturing certain revenue streams, play has been at record levels since the course reopened. In May, the course recorded 7,578 paid rounds, an increase of 2,891 rounds (61%) over May 2019. While increased play has been partially driven by diminished local competition and will likely level off as more courses reopen, performance in June continues to be strong. As of June 15, paid rounds month-to-date are 3,580, and total revenue is 24% ahead of the mid-month target. Year-to-date as of May 31, revenue and rounds, respectively, are only 1% and 2% behind last year and 9% and 10% behind budget, despite the five-week closure. It is now estimated the golf course may end the year \$150,000-\$250,000 below revenue budget—with corresponding operational savings—which would still provide a modest increase over the prior year (FY19) revenues. Additionally, the golf course received \$197,000 in Payroll Protection Program funds, which will be used to supplement revenue deficits should this 24-week loan ultimately be forgiven.

Overall, feedback from golfers has been positive and appreciative, and the golf course has successfully accommodated dramatically increased demands in play after the closure, while implementing and enforcing social distancing protocols.

### Tentative Items for Future Commission Meetings

Department staff has been working on a number of initiatives that will be ready for Commission review and discussion in the coming months. These include revisions to the special event policy and procedures, preliminary design plans for Ortega Park, options for fall recreation programs, and a status report on capital improvement projects. The Community Development Department also plans to restart public discussion about the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan.

**PREPARED BY:** Jill E. Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director