

**THE TOWN OF APPLE VALLEY  
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
AND THE  
EQUESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
JOINT SPECIAL MEETING  
MINUTES  
May 8, 2008**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Vice-Chairman Lyons and Chairperson Sullivan called the joint special meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission and the Equestrian Advisory Committee of the Town of Apple Valley to order at 6:12 p.m. in the Posse Building at Horsemen's Center.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll call was taken with the following members present: Vice-Chairman Patrick Lyons, Commissioners Michael Hinkle, Michael Martin and Richard Turnbull; Chairperson Lovella Sullivan, Vice-Chairperson Sherry Regner, Committee Members John Ryan and Gail Nunn-Henderson. Chairman Larry Cusack joined the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Absent: Committee Member Earl Graham

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**BUSINESS ITEMS**

**1. Field Trip to discuss Recreation and Equestrian Programming at Horsemen's Center**

Chairperson Sullivan wanted to discuss improvements to the facility. In particular, Chairperson Sullivan noted the condition of the footing in the Rodeo Arena, stating the footing is not conducive to holding premier horsing events. Committee Member Ryan stated that soil structure has a great deal to do with whether arenas will compact too fast and that the soil structure in the Rodeo Arena consists of less sand than the Show Arena and therefore compacts much faster to a harder consistency. He also suggested that it is the responsibility of the user to prepare the footing because the requirements differ depending on the type of event that is scheduled to be held. Lastly, Mr. Ryan stated that the overall condition of Horsemen's Center has never been better and that the Parks staff should be commended. Chairperson Sullivan understood and agreed that the user was ultimately responsible to ensure that the facility was prepared according to their needs and that perhaps a fee would have to be charged to better prepare the arena for a user that didn't want to prepare the facility.

Vice-Chairperson Regner stated that she would love to see more shade or shade structures in Horsemen's Center. Committee Member Ryan suggested some minor maintenance be done to the facility. Vice-Chairman Lyons suggested that any maintenance items can and should be taken care of by the Parks staff as part of their general duties. He also stated the facility looks great and advised the Committee that they just recommended over \$600,000 in cuts at their last meeting. Director of Public Services, Dennis Cron, stated issues regarding the maintenance of the facility are dealt with as they

come up. Mr. Cron also stated that facilities such as Horsemen's have often been built, developed and maintained by user groups that no longer maintain them. This has a large impact on the Park's staff and their available time to do their ongoing maintenance duties.

Chairperson Sullivan informed the Park and Recreation Commission of the Equine Extravaganza, a September event mirrored after the Equine Affair but on a smaller scale. She described the Equine Extravaganza an offering of events and exhibits for many disciplines in the horse industry. She also stated that she would like to promote Horsemen's Center as a destination and that this is the first of many events that she would like to see offered at Horsemen's Center.

Commissioner Hinkle inquired about the Equine Extravaganza replacing Round-Up Days. Patty Saady, Deputy Town Manager, explained the Equine Extravaganza as well as the prospective Fall Festival are both planned to fill the void left in the schedule by the elimination of Round-Up Days. She also stated that a great deal of effort had been made to increase participation in Round Up Days prior to the decision to eliminate the event.

Chairperson Sullivan stated that in addition to the minor changes to the facility, major improvements were also needed if the goal was to attract the PRC rodeo and similar groups. Commissioner Hinkle stated that there has been over \$1,000,000 used to improve the facility and while he agrees that the facility has never looked better, he felt that to justify any capital outlay for the facility would require a large increase in the participation at the facility. Chairman Cusack agreed and suggested that rather than invest a large amount of capital in the facility prior to seeing how many people would attend annual events, users and the Town should initially use rental equipment at the facility. Committee Member Ryan stated that the Rodeo Arena was a great practice arena but to make the arena more suitable for an actual rodeo would entail major restructuring or replacement of the Rodeo Arena.

Chairman Cusack stated that there is currently no money in the Park and Recreation Budget to make large improvements and inquired of Ms. Saady the possibility of acquiring grants for the proposed improvements. Ms. Saady stated that the Town is always looking for leads to prospective funding sources and that the Town's Grant Specialist, Lylith Cook, is continuously looking for potential grants that would be applicable for the Town. However, in the current economy, resources are becoming scarcer.

Committee Member Ryan stated that as a day use facility, Horsemen's is as good as it gets. It is not feasible to make Horsemen's more than a day use site when other Cities are closing down their sites. He stated that major changes to the bucking shoots and the design of the arena would be needed as well as the installation of over 100 stalls that would cost approximately \$2,000 each. That kind of capital outlay would not have a significant return on investment in increased participation or revenue streams.

Vice Chairperson Regner stated that the Town should investigate how other facilities such as those in Chino, Norco, Ridgecrest and Covina are able to successfully offer more than a day use facility. Committee Member Ryan responded that those facilities have more equestrian people within a few miles. Committee Member Nunn-Henderson stated that Horsemen's Center is better than many other successful Southern California facilities and believes the goal should be to develop creative ways to promote the facility. Commissioner Turnbull stated that the Town was established as a horse community. Commissioner Hinkle stated that while a large percentage of residents may have been equestrian minded, the percentage of residents involved in equestrian activities has

diminished as the Town has grown. Additionally, Mr. Hinkle stated that the cost of getting into horse activities is a significant barrier to entry.

Commissioner Turnbull stated that he felt the facility should be renamed The Roy Rogers Horsemen's Center. Chairperson Sullivan inquired as to whether the Roger's family should donate funds for this change. Commissioner Turnbull stated they should not. Commissioner Hinkle stated that the Roy Rogers name does not carry the same weight with the younger generations and the current Horsemen's Center name is appropriate. Committee Member Ryan stated that all horse activities are not western style and the current name of Horsemen's Center was more proper for the facility.

Vice-Chairman Regner stated that she believes we need to program more activities and that participation at the facility could grow if the Town marketed to the correct people. She stated that events like the Equine Extravaganza would put the park on the map. Recreation Supervisor, Lena Quinonez introduced herself and discussed her role in programming activities at the facility. She listed numerous attempts to program equestrian activities that had as of yet not been successful as well as her more recent efforts to promote other activities such as camping and picnicking. Ms. Quinonez stated there is a Family Campout scheduled for June 26-27 and if anyone had ideas of possible programs or activities, to please give her a call.

Commissioner Turnbull suggested we have an attendant on site and could then offer programs daily to school children.

Chairperson Sullivan thanked everyone for attending and stated that she believed this meeting was beneficial to discuss and coordinate future programming and use of the facility.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Vice-Chairman Lyons, seconded by Commissioner Hinkle to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN – Park and Recreation Commission

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CHAIRPERSON – Equestrian Advisory Committee

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TOWN CLERK