



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: September 28, 2022
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:

SB Beautiful Awards

Santa Barbara Beautiful recognized both the Cabrillo Pavilion and Cabrillo Ball Field at their 58th Annual Awards Gala on September 18. The recently renovated Cabrillo Pavilion received the President's Award for the restoration's balance of historic preservation, enhanced architectural and artistic detail, modernization of outdated structural and materials, and incorporation of environmental sustainability elements. The Cabrillo Ball Park received the Santa Barbara Commons – Public Open Space Award for its ADA accessible site improvements and integration of Santa Barbara native landscaping.

National Public Lands Day

On Saturday September 24, the Parks Division will host a National Public Lands Day trail work event in conjunction with the Los Padres Forest Association and the County of Santa Barbara. Work will be done on the San Ysidro and McMenemy Trails, and will focus on cleaning and clearing the trail corridor of loose debris and rock and stabilizing any areas eroding or washing away. Volunteers will also be scraping and cleaning all possible WDFs (water diversion features), and performing light pruning or removing plants to keep the trail and trail corridor clear enough to meet standards for safe use of equestrians, hikers, runners, and bikers. Work of all skills levels is available to include as many trail user groups as can attend.

Regional and National Professional and Junior Lifesaving Competition Results

The United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) and the corresponding local regions host annual Regional and National Championships for Junior Lifeguards and Professional

Lifeguards. These competitions see participants from lifeguard agencies from across the state and country to come together and crown individual event, agency, and regional champions. These competitions are also used to select participants on the national teams that will represent the United States of America at the World Lifesaving Championships.

Lifesaving Sport events require competency in multiple disciplines to compete and succeed. The events involve beach runs, ocean swimming, navigating the surf on a variety of vessels, and teamwork. Lifeguard agencies and junior lifeguard programs train extensively for these competitions and push themselves to exceed their expectations. Though not everyone may receive a medal or a trophy, these competitions build self-confidence, friendships, and teamwork, and create lasting memories.

City of Santa Barbara lifeguards and junior lifeguards have a long tradition of success at these events, and have fostered many champions at both the junior and professional lifeguard levels. In 2022, this tradition continued, with 20 entrants from the Department participating in the Regional and National Championship competitions.

This year, there were 27 agencies and 866 junior and professional (adult) lifeguard competitors at the Regionals/State Championships, and 44 agencies with 1,095 junior and professional (adult) lifeguard competitors at the National Championships.

Department lifeguards and junior lifeguards finished 9th overall at the State Championships and 11th overall at the National Championships, and collected 40 medals/trophies. All of them put forth a great effort and created lifelong memories. Some of the standout performances were: Zane Booth, Junior Lifeguard Program Director; Roman Higgins, Lifeguard / JG Instructor (age 16); and the C-Group competitors (age 11). Charlotte Nueshul, Lucy Watson, and Josie Drabik competed in 6 of 8 events at the National Championships, and between the 3 of them, took home 14 medals.

Roman Higgins had a standout year. As a 16 year-old, he is able to compete at two levels, the U19 (ages 17-18) and the Open Professional level (ages 16-29). Roman participated in both the Regional and National Championships and proved that he is a fierce competitor. At the U19 level, he placed 6th in the Paddleboard Race at both the Regional and National Championships and 10th in Beach Flags at the National Championships. In the Open Professional level, he was able to claim the top spot as the 2022 Regional Beach Flag Champion. Due to his overall performance at these competitions, as well as at our local competitions, Roman was selected as a member of the United States U19 National Team that was set to compete at the Lifesaving World Championships in Riccione, Italy this fall. Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions and concerns, the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) decided not to send a U19 Team to this competition. Roman is disappointed in this decision but is already training for the 2023 season.

Zane Booth had another stellar competition season and has been selected to participate in his fourth US National Team (US U19 National Team 2018 & 2019 and the US National

Team in 2021). Zane will represent the USA and Santa Barbara at the World Lifesaving Championships in Riccione, Italy. Due to his performance at the Regional and National levels, his selection to the National Team was no surprise. At the Regional Championships, Zane competed in seven events and took home three 2nd place (Ironman, Paddleboard, Taplin Relay) medals and one 1st place (Paddleboard Relay) medal. During the National Championships, he competed in six events, took home two 3rd place medals (Ironman, Paddleboard Relay), and was crowned the 2022 National Board Race Champion for his 1st place finish.

The Parks and Recreation Department proudly recognizes all of the local junior lifeguard and lifeguard competitors: Josie Drabik (11), Lucy (11) Watson, Charlotte Neushul (11), Juliana Horton (12), Talia Marshall (12), Kellen Merkey (10), Caden Merkey (12), Lucas Nueshul (13), Cole Racich (13), Logan Sholl (12), Margaret Watson (14), Bethany King (14), Alina King (15), Sam Walker(14), John Bish (17), Dino Ise (17), Andrea Bish (18), Brittney Gamble (18), Roman Higgins (16), Zane Booth (21), and Tony Sholl.

Future Tentative Commission Agenda Items

In addition to regular business items, the Department anticipates that the following items will be presented to the Commission at upcoming regular meetings:

October – Urban Forest Community Outreach and Commercial Activities in Parks

November – Capital Projects Update and the Proposed FY 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Program

December – Advisory Committee Appointments

APPROVED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Parks and Recreation Director