



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

"Parks Make Life Better!"

Norma E. García-González, Director

Alina Bokde, Chief Deputy Director

October 24, 2022

TO: Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis Supervisor
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Norma E. García-González, Director

Dr. Lori Bettison-Varga, Director
Museum of Natural History

SUBJECT: **REPORT BACK ON INITIATE NEGOTIATIONS FOR PROPOSED TRANSFER OF WILLIAM S. HART PARK TO CITY OF SANTA CLARITA, ITEM NO. 7, AGENDA OF JULY 12, 2022 – MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER**

As requested by the Board per the Motion set forth by Supervisor Kathryn Barger on July 12, 2022, the following is a report submitted on October 24, 2022, regarding efforts to negotiate a lease-back option for currently occupied operations space at William S. Hart Regional Park (Hart Park), as a precursor to the pending transfer of Hart Park to the City of Santa Clarita (City).

The City of Santa Clarita has requested to take ownership and assume the role of operator and trustee of the William S. Hart Park estate, Collection and Museum. The Motion directed the Director of the Museum of Natural History (Museum) to initiate negotiations with the City for the proposed transfer of William S. Hart Park Collection and personal property associated with the Hart Collection and Museum and report back to the Board in writing within ninety (90) days.

The Motion further directed the Director of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to initiate negotiations with the City for the proposed transfer of Hart Park, the adjacent park property, the personal property associated with Hart Park and the trust fund for Hart Park to the City and report back to the Board in writing within ninety (90) days.

Finally, the Motion directed the Director and Chief Executive Office to also report back to the Board in writing within ninety (90) days on the relocation of the DPR offices and operations that support area operations from Hart Park to provide seamless relocation of DPR's North and Regional Agency operations. The Motion also authorized DPR to negotiate a gratis lease to temporarily lease-back a portion of Hart Park for DPR's continued North and Regional Agency operations.

The County has requested a gratis lease-back for a continued presence at Hart Park for Parks' North and Regional Agency operations field office for a term of five (5) years. Both City and

County are researching options for a replacement site. DPR roughly estimates that the cost associated with the relocation of the DPR North and Regional Agency operations field office, which currently utilizes Hart Park and the Senior Center parcels adjacent to Hart Park to be an estimated \$2.1 million. DPR would like to consider co-location at the former Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff Station that is currently being analyzed for the feasibility of re-use.

The Museum and City employees have successfully met both virtually and in-person to begin discussion and sharing of information related to the collection items. The on-site meeting took place at the Hart Mansion, including a tour of the mansion, distribution of the mansion building site plans, and discussion of on-site collection items care and preservation practices.

The Museum has been gathering documentation and information requested by the City in August 2022. The Museum is providing requested information, the week of October 24, to the City detailing the collection inventory, location and insurance information, emergency evacuation plan, collection item care and preservation guidelines, annual operating expenses, and museum accreditation requirements.

The County expects that the City will continue to host programs and special events in a manner that meets or exceeds the levels and standards established by the County. These are the conditions of transfer to the City.

- That the City maintain Hart Park (including the Adjacent Park Property) as a public park for the benefit and use of all residents of the County and the general public with at least the same level of service.
- That the City shall comply with the terms and conditions of the trusts created by the will of William S. Hart for Hart Park and the trust fund.
- That the City assumes any outstanding Prop A or other grant requirements that run with the land.
- The City will not allow or charge differential fees for programming, rentals, or special events based on residency.
- The City will publicly advertise and promote all programming, special events and hours of operations on the website and social media platforms. Hours of operations must not be less than current park operating hours and be posted for high visibility by the public including the website.
- The County reserves the right to use the Hart Park facility for up to ten (10) events/meetings gratis annually.
- The County will be allowed to use office spaces (behind senior center) gratis for trades and aquatics for up to five years until a replacement facility is made available to the DPR.
- The condition that the Property is to be maintained for public recreation, park, historic preservation, or open space purposes only.

- The condition that the Property shall be equally open and available to residents of incorporated and unincorporated territory, and there shall be no discrimination against, or preference, gratuity, bonus, or other benefits given to residents of incorporated area not equally accorded residents of unincorporated territory.

DPR provided a Preliminary Report to the City detailing DPR's annual operating expenses, deferred maintenance, and pending capital projects. After review of the Preliminary Report, the City has requested extensive additional information. DPR is currently in the process of responding to the City's request to provide additional background and detail regarding the management of the facility.

DPR continues to negotiate a temporary lease back for the current facilities required for North and Regional Agency operations field office with the City tentatively for term of five (5) years. DPR will continue updating the Board on the project as they negotiate a lease and search for a new location to permanently relocate the North and Regional Agency operations field office in the vicinity.

The Museum anticipates continued communications and collaboration with the City once they have reviewed the preliminary information, including additional on-site meetings and/or walkthroughs of the three Museum occupied buildings: the Mansion, Bunk House, and Ranch House.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Jill Sourial at (626) 588-5322 or jsourial@parks.lacounty.gov.

NEGG:LBV:dds

Attachments

- c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors (C. Zavala)
County Counsel (R. Allen)
Museum of Natural History (D. McDivitt)
Park Deputies (G. Duran-Medina, L. Muraida, M. Chong-Castillo, D. Gonzalez, S. Nemer)