

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

APPROVED
DEC 14 2011

NO. 11-337

DATE December 14, 2011

BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS

C.D. 1

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: SOLANO CANYON URBAN FARM – AGREEMENT WITH FARMWORKS
LOS ANGELES FOR THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF AN
URBAN FARM ON PARK PROPERTY

R. Adams	_____	K. Regan	_____
H. Fujita	_____	M. Shull	_____
*V. Israel	_____	N. Williams	_____

General Manager

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

1. Approve a proposed three (3) year agreement (Agreement), substantially in the form on file in the Board Office, between the City of Los Angeles and Farmworks Los Angeles, a California non-profit corporation, setting forth the terms and conditions for the operation and maintenance of an urban farm at Solano Canyon, subject to the approval of the Mayor, and of the City Attorney as to form;
2. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit the proposed Agreement to the Mayor in accordance with Executive Directive No. 3, and concurrently to the City Attorney for review and approval as to form;
3. Authorize the Board President and Secretary to execute the Agreement upon receipt of the necessary approvals; and,
4. Direct the Department Chief Accounting Employee to deposit fees and utility and other cost recovery reimbursements received from Farmworks Los Angeles in the account and subaccount established in Fund 302 Dept. 89 for such purpose.

SUMMARY:

On May 4, 2011, the Board approved the Policy on Community Operated Open Spaces, Operating Guidelines for Self-Operated Community Gardens and various recommendations for

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each of the Department's community garden facilities including those community gardens operated by an outside group or organization (Board Report No. 11-121).

On June 15, 2011, the Board approved the establishment of an account and subaccounts in Department 89 Fund 302 for the deposit of annual fees and utility reimbursements received from organizations which operate community gardens independently pursuant to permits or agreements with the Department and in conformance with the Schedule of Rates and Fees (Board Report No. 11-190).

One recommendation included in Report No. 11-121 was to direct staff to transition the outside group or organization to an agreement for the operation and maintenance of the community garden facility in accordance with the Board's Policy on Partnerships and in conformance to the Community Operated Open Space Policy. Another recommendation was to direct staff to return to the Board for final authorization to execute the agreements.

Subsequently, Partnership Division staff initiated discussions with Farmworks Los Angeles (Organization), which currently shares operation of Solano Canyon (Garden) with the Los Angeles Community Garden Council which operates a community garden. Organization operates an urban farm that involves teaching at-risk youth job skills in urban farming, about food production and healthy life styles and eating habits. Organization and the Department have now come to a mutual agreement for the operation and maintenance of a portion of the park property at an urban farm through the proposed Agreement. As instructed by the Board, staff presents to the Board the proposed three-year Agreement with the Organization for final authorization.

The Garden is located at 545 Solano Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012 in Council District 1, on a 5 acre site. The urban farm is at the northern portion of the site. The urban farm contains equivalent of one hundred and seven (107) 10x10 garden plots. In accordance with the Department's Policy on Community Operated Open Space, during the term of the proposed Agreement, Organization shall pay an annual Community Garden Use Fee of \$500.00. An Annual Review, as described in the proposed Agreement will be conducted by RAP to determine the feasibility and benefit of continuing the collaborative relationship with the Organization. The reimbursement of RAP staff costs associated with the Annual Review process is included in the Community Garden Fee.

Organization will also pay for utility and solid waste disposal through an agreement they have worked out with the Los Angeles Community Garden Council, which operates the community garden portion of the property at Solano Canyon.

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Solano Canyon occupies the former site of the Solano Avenue Elementary School, which was torn down in 1935 shortly after construction of the Pasadena Freeway. The freeway runs along side—and under—the garden. Staff and Organization have mutually agreed to the terms and conditions of the proposed Agreement for the operation and maintenance of the urban farm portion of the park property. As part of the proposed Agreement, Organization will be responsible, at its sole cost and expense, for all utility, maintenance, and repair costs related to the operation of the urban farm.

Staff has determined that the execution of the proposed Agreement is for the operation of recreational programming at an existing park facility involving negligible or no expansion of use and, therefore, is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 1 (14) of the City CEQA Guidelines.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The proposed Agreement will have no impact on the Department's General Fund as Program costs will be paid for by Organization, at no cost to the City.

This report was prepared by Deanne A. Dedmon, Recreation Supervisor, Partnership Division.