



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 10, 2022

DATE: April 14, 2022

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Colleen Wallace Barnum, Park Operations Superintendent,
Community Services Department, 328-2181, cwallace@washoecounty.gov

THROUGH: Eric Crump, Division Director, Operations
Community Services Department, 328-2182, ecrump@washoecounty.gov

SUBJECT: Recommendation to approve a Lease Agreement between Washoe County and Polygrarian Institute dba Reno Food Systems, a Nevada 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, for continued use of a five-acre parcel at Betsy Caughlin Donnelly Park (3295 Mayberry Drive, Reno, Nevada/Assessor's Parcel Number 009-742-01) for a 5-year term, with one renewal term of five (5) years, commencing on May 15, 2022, as authorized under Nevada Revised Statute 244.284. (Commission District 1.)

SUMMARY

Washoe County is owner of Betsy Caughlin Donnelly Park located at 3295 Mayberry Drive, Reno, Nevada. Betsy Caughlin Donnelly Park is approximately 30 acres with six developed acres consisting of turf and paved trails. Five acres has been leased to Polygrarian Institute dba Reno Food Systems since 2017 for the creation of an urban farm. The remaining 19 acres is pasture-land currently leased for grass hay production and grazing. Nevada Revised Statutes 244.284, authorizes the Washoe County Board of Commissioners (Board) to lease County owned property that is not needed for the public purposes of the County, to a non-profit agency who commits to using the property for a charitable or civic purpose, under the terms and conditions the Board deems as proper.

The Polygrarian Institute (PI) dba Reno Food Systems is an incorporated, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that began operating in 2016. It is the Institute's mission to cultivate community-based food systems through education, research, and civic engagement.

The proposed Lease Agreement between Washoe County and PI shall be for a five (5) year term and allows for one (1) renewal term of five (5) years. The Agreement will have the standard Funding out Clause, and either party may cancel the Lease Agreement by providing thirty (30) day written notice, without cause or penalty.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Economic Impacts: Support a thriving community.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

PREVIOUS ACTION

On April 5, 2022, the Open Space and Regional Park Commission recommended approval of the lease agreement between Washoe County and Polygrarian Institute dba Reno Food Systems.

On May 9, 2017, the Board approved a lease agreement between Washoe County and Polygrarian Institute.

On April 4, 2017, the Open Space and Regional Park Commission recommended approval of the lease agreement between Washoe County and Polygrarian Institute.

BACKGROUND

Polygrarian Institute is an incorporated, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that began operating in 2016. It is the Institute's mission to cultivate community-based food systems through education, research, and civic engagement.

In close cooperation with Washoe County, the PI intends to accomplish its mission in three ways:

1. Education - PI will provide the opportunity for young adults interested in starting agricultural enterprises to get valuable hands-on experience on a real working farm while benefiting the greater community by serving as a model for environmental stewardship and public wellness.
2. Research – PI will create applied science projects, feasibility and asset mapping, and micro-economic impact studies.
3. Public awareness and outreach campaigns.

Washoe County Regional Parks has a long, successful history of working with local non-profits to provide public services. Currently, Washoe County leases space to Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful, Nevada Land Trust, Great Basin Institute, and Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation. All of these non-profit organizations provide services to the County and the community in lieu of rent. Being located within County-owned property has served to reinforce the strong public/private partnership that benefits the community and makes this area a great place to live and work.

Polygrarian Institute intends to provide benefits to the County and the Community as follows:

- Promote positive lifestyle changes through healthy eating and outdoor activities.
 - PI intends to create a food prescription program in partnership with Renown Health.
- Create new uses and support for Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space.
 - Open invitations on the leased parcel will provide learning opportunities for the community in areas such as how to build irrigation systems and creating semi-permanent structures such as hoop houses, goat/sheep shelters, and compost bins.
 - In parks with historic ranch uses such as Bartley Ranch Park, PI staff will offer workshops for fruit-tree pruning as well as grape vine pruning.
- Celebrate and embrace Nevada history by re-creating agricultural opportunities within our cities. PI will highlight historic uses of the agricultural land and help create a stronger sense of stewardship for public lands.

FISCAL IMPACT

The lease space would be provided at a rental fee of \$215 annually or in-kind services in lieu of payment with prior written consent. Any costs associated with installation of additional water and electrical connections will be the responsibility of the Lessee. Upkeep on the property will be performed by the Lessee on a regular basis. All utility costs associated with the proposed use, including water and electrical, will be the responsibility of Lessee.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners approve a Lease Agreement between Washoe County and Polygrarian Institute dba Reno Food Systems, a Nevada 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, for continued use of a five-acre parcel at Betsy Caughlin Donnelly Park (3295 Mayberry Drive, Reno, Nevada/Assessor's Parcel Number 009-742-01) for a 5-year term, with one renewal term of five (5) years, commencing on May 15, 2022, as authorized under Nevada Revised Statute 244.284.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with the staff recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to approve a Lease Agreement between Washoe County and Polygrarian Institute dba Reno Food Systems, a Nevada 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, for continued use of a five-acre parcel at Betsy Caughlin Donnelly Park (3295 Mayberry Drive, Reno, Nevada/Assessor's Parcel Number 009-742-01) for a 5-year term, with one renewal term of five (5) years, commencing on May 15, 2022, as authorized under Nevada Revised Statute 244.284."