

STAFF REPORT

City Council Consent Item

DATE: February 5, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Merritt Perry, City Manager

SUBJECT: Approve Appointment of Parks and Recreation Director

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the appointment of the Heather Stevens as the Parks and Recreation Director.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Fortuna Municipal Code (FMC) identifies the Parks and Recreation Director as the Department Head for the Parks and Recreation Department which shall have its main purpose, the obligations and duties of operating and maintaining the City's parks, open space, and recreation programs.

The position has been vacant since September 2023, and the City actively recruited from September 22, 2023 through November 11, 2023. The City received applications from numerous candidates, and conducted interviews for the position. The City was fortunate to receive an application from a highly qualified candidate for the position named Heather Stevens.

Ms. Stevens received her Master's degree from Pacific School of Religion and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology/Psychology from California Lutheran University. Among her academic accomplishments are certification in Humboldt County's Loretta Nickolaus Management Academy as well as Humboldt County's Supervisor Academy. Ms. Stevens has over two decades of combined experience in Parks and Recreation including directing for another local agency and supervising the Recreation Division and programs for yet, another municipality.

Most recently, Ms. Stevens worked for the City of Arcata as the Recreation Supervisor and Recreation Division Manager and was responsible for managing all the functions of the division including budget development and administration, annual reports to council, staffing, branding and public outreach among other tasks as the responsible manager.

The Council authorized the City Manager to extend a conditional offer to Ms. Stevens in closed session on November 20, 2023, including compensation at the beginning step of the pay rate schedule for that position. Ms. Stevens accepted the offer and has cleared the necessary background and physical required to be appointed for the position and is expected to start work on February 12, 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total pay and benefits cost of the Parks & Recreation Director contract have been included in the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:

Approve the appointment of Heather Stevens as the Parks and Recreation Director. Consent Agenda vote.