



CITY OF BANNING STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Douglas Schulze, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Ralph Wright, Parks and Recreation Director
Ralph Wright, Parks and Recreation Director

MEETING DATE: June 25, 2024

SUBJECT: Consideration of Resolution 2024-107, Naming the former National Guard Armory Building the Arthur 'Art' L. Welch Community Center

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution 2024-107.

BACKGROUND:

At the Regular meeting of the Banning City Council, held on May 14, 2024, the City Council considered Resolution 2024-60, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Banning, naming the former National Guard Armory Building the, Arthur "Art" L. Welch Community Center." During the Council's review and discussion of this item, the Council determined it would be prudent to have the Parks and Recreation Commission weigh in on the item since the unofficial plan for the Armory building will be for its future use as a community center, and adopted a motion to table the item and refer it to the Parks and Recreation Commission to review and provide a recommendation to the City Council on naming the facility.

On June 6, 2024, the Parks and Recreation Commission held a Special Meeting of the Banning Parks and Recreation Commission and received public input on naming the former National Guard Armory building. After a discussion regarding potential naming options and substantial public input, the Commissioners in attendance unanimously recommended to the Banning City Council to name the former National Guard Armory Building after Arthur "Art" L Welch. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Commission discussed development of other naming and recognition options in the City including a military banner program and potential naming of future Parks and Recreation facilities that they hoped to bring forward to the City Council in the future.

Naming Policy Background:

On April 12, 1994, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 1994-46 establishing a policy for naming City park and recreation facilities. The policy reflects the following criteria:

1. In recognition of the geographic area in which the park or facility is located.
2. In recognition of historical milestones.
3. In honor of individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the community, county, state or nation.
4. In recognition of someone who has donated enough money to build the park or facility.

History of the Armory Building:

When the California National Guard discontinued use of the armory building, located at 2041 W. Nicolet

Street, the building sat mostly unused for several years. Vandalism, homeless activity, and lack of maintenance resulted in complaints from neighbors. However, the City had leased the property for 99 years to the State of California. The term of the lease would not expire until July 27, 2052. In early 2020, the Office of the Commanding General and State of California agreed to an early termination of the lease agreement and transferred the building to the City of Banning.

After transfer back to the City, the plans for the building included remodeling and rehabilitation so it can be used as a multi-purpose community center. In addition, the building will serve as the City's Emergency Operations Center. The City has been notified that they will soon receive a grant award with funding for design and infrastructure improvements for the Armory complex.

Art Welch local and Regional Bio:

Art Welch served on the Banning City Council from 2002 - 2006 and again from 2012 - 2020. During his tenure on the City Council, he served as Mayor from 20023 - 2004 and from 2018 - 2019. For a period of approximately 30 years, Art has served the Pass Area in numerous capacities, including the City Council, Riverside Transit Agency, Sun Lakes HOA Master Board, San Geronio Pass Rotary Club, Banning Chamber of Commerce, and as a representative for assemblymen, senators and Congressman Paul Cook.

JUSTIFICATION:

After review and the receipt of public input, the Banning Parks and Recreation Commission unanimously recommended to name the former Armory building after Arthur Welch. With over 30 years of public service to Banning and the Pass Area, Art Welch appears to have met the criteria to be honored by naming a City park and recreational facility after him based on his outstanding contributions to the community. Since the former armory building has not been named, it would be a facility appropriate to be considered.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Eventual cost of signage for the building as part of the remodel and renovation project(s).

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Adopt Resolution No. 2024-107.
2. Do not adopt Resolution No. 2024-107.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Resolution 2024-107, Armory Welch.docx](#)
2. [CC Resolution No. 1994-046.pdf](#)