



Legislation Text

File #: 20-1561, **Version:** 1

Chief Administrative Office, Parks Division, recommending the Board:

- 1) Accept the recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Commission to not allow motorized scooters to be operated on Class I trails in the unincorporated area of the County; and
- 2) Approve and authorize the Chair to sign the letter to Neutron Holdings, Inc., dba Limebike, requesting geofencing to be implemented at the City of South Lake Tahoe/Unincorporated County boundary line to prevent this activity in the unincorporated portion of the County.

FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

On June 25, 2019 (Legistar #19-1015) the Board of Supervisors requested that the Parks and Recreation Commission explore the feasibility of amending Chapter 10.32-Vehicle Regulations on Trail Facilities of the County ordinance code to permit motorized scooters on County trail facilities.

Motorized scooters are defined by California Vehicle Code section 407.5 as any two-wheeled device that has a motor (electric or otherwise), handlebars, and a floorboard that you can stand on while riding it. Unless prohibited by local laws, they may be driven on a bicycle path, trail, or bikeway with a driver license, but not on a sidewalk, and may not be operated at a speed higher than 15 miles per hour. In addition, riders under the age of 18 must wear a helmet. Scooters are not allowed to operate on any roadway with a speed limit greater than 25 mph, and may operate on adjacent class II & class IV bike paths, but cannot exceed 15 mph.

The Parks Commission developed an adhoc group Committee including Commissioner Arenz and Commissioner Callahan to discuss and make recommendations regarding this issue at their August 15, 2019 meeting. The two commissioners with a member of the public made a trip to South Lake Tahoe to ride the Lime scooters, which are in operation within the City of South Lake Tahoe, and researched their use with agencies. They provided information to the commission at their October 17, 2019 meeting (Legistar #19-1563). The Commission discussed several issues with the scooters, including the dangers associated with their use on multi-modal trails that are often busy with pedestrians and cyclists. The scooters can reach speeds of up to 20 miles per hour, are often rented by novice riders, and most users do not wear helmets.

On March 2, 2020, Commissioner Arenz presented a list of questions to the Commission, and requested that staff relay them to appropriate County departments. Staff sent the questions requested to Risk Management, Air Quality Management District and to the Sheriff's Office for feedback.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Commission did not meet again until June on only pressing issues. At the September 17, 2020 meeting the Commission discussed the information provided by Risk Management and Air Quality Management District. A motion was made to put the item off until the October meeting in order to allow the Sheriff to provide input on this issue.

The Sheriff's Office provided a response they were not interested in participating in the Lime Scooter program, because they would not be responsible for picking up abandoned scooters, enforcing the use of helmets being worn by children, or regulating safe speeds.

At their October 15, 2020, meeting, the Commission recommended that motorized scooters not be allowed on trails within the unincorporated area of the County, and a letter be sent to Lime Scooters requesting geofencing to be imposed in order to prevent scooters from crossing the county/city boundaries.

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

6/25/2019, Item #19-1015

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

City of South Lake Tahoe, Risk Management, Sheriff, Air District

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no material fiscal impact to the County associated with this recommendation. If the Board were to allow the use of motorized scooters it could potentially result in an increased number of customers patronizing businesses in the unincorporated area of South Lake Tahoe, but any fiscal impact associated with this cannot be quantified at this time.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Public Safety

CONTACT

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