

Parks and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular meeting at the Parks and Recreation Administration Office, 100 North Center Street, on September 18, 2003.

Members Present:

Robert Brinton
Russ Gillard
Jeff Kirk
Dina Lopez
Walter "Bud" Page, Jr.
David Peterson
David Richins
John Storment
Robin White

Staff Present:

Joe Holmwood
Andrea Madonna
Terri Palmberg
Kevin Petersen
Diane Rogers
Alfred Smith
Bob White
Mark Woodward

Members Absent:

LeRoy Brady, excused
John Dyer, excused

Others Present:

Greg Baumgarten
Sue Lilly

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Robin White, FY02-03 Chair.

Approval of minutes

Robert Brinton made a motion, David Peterson seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the meeting of May 8, 2003.

Public comments

No public comments.

Election of officers

Robert Brinton made a motion, David Peterson seconded, and it was unanimously carried to elect Robin White as Chair for FY03-04.

At this point, White took over the meeting as Chair and asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

David Peterson made a motion, Russ Gillard seconded, and it was unanimously carried to elect Robert Brinton as Vice Chair for FY03-04.

Public park regulations

Joe Holmwood reported that the Board had previously considered amendments to the City Code pertaining to public park regulations, and the information being presented today contains minor changes to the previous recommendation. Holmwood then introduced Alfred Smith, Assistant City Attorney.

Smith said staff from the Community Services Department, Parks and Recreation Division, and City Attorney's Office worked together to review the existing City Code provision and draft amended language to various sections of the Code, specifically Title 6, Chapter 10, relating to public park

regulations in an effort to update the language to more articulate its intent. This chapter of the Code was last updated in May 1997. Recommendations were brought to the Board in May 2002; the Board approved staff's recommendation at that time; however, additional modifications requiring adjustments surfaced and the effort became a work in progress until the current version being presented today.

Smith highlighted the following amendments:

- Responsibility is given to the Community Services Manager or designee rather than the Parks and Recreation Director because it allows for more flexibility.
- To clarify the different areas in the city, the definition for parks and recreation facilities has been added to be more inclusive of parks and recreation areas requiring enforcement of these regulations by park rangers.
- The categories of water sliding and petting zoos have been included.
- Fires in parks were initially banned; however, wording has now been included to allow for special burning ceremonies conducted by the Boy Scouts and other groups.
- Previous wording required that when a beer/wine permit is issued for groups of 25 or more, 25 individuals must be of legal drinking age. The wording has been changed to require a majority of the individuals be of legal drinking age.
- Additional authority has been given to park rangers.
- Multi-use paths are included in this ordinance.

Gillard asked about ice blocking.

Smith replied that ice blocking consists of using blocks of ice to slide down the sides of a retention basin. Regular use of a specific site for this activity causes damage to the grass so it is a restricted use that will be allowed at rotating sites at the discretion of the department manager.

Peterson asked why only four parks were listed with locations in the definition section.

Smith replied that these are the four parks where alcohol is allowed to be served. This is from the previous ordinance and it was not changed for the amended ordinance.

White advised that Board member LeRoy Brady was unable to attend the meeting; however, he had contacted staff with his comments on the ordinance. Brady suggested that the ordinance define a retention basin as "any basin that holds water, whether detaining or retaining."

Smith said this language can be included in the amendment.

Brinton asked about the requirements to receive a beer permit.

Holmwood replied a permit is issued as part of the ramada reservation process. Park rangers are made aware of the permits that are issued and visit the park sites when the events are scheduled.

Brinton also asked about the difference in the permitting process for allowing beer and/or win at a non-park city facility.

Smith replied that he would research this question and provide an answer at a later date.

David Richins asked about liability issues.

Smith replied that there is no liability to the City of Mesa since the City is not providing the liquor; it is only providing the facility. Also, the park rangers are diligent about visiting the park sites and events where beer permits have been issued.

Holmwood advised that the Parks and Recreation Division has two government liquor licenses; Hohokam Stadium and Riverview Golf Course. The City is the licensee and must follow all guidelines and laws of the State Department of Liquor Licenses & Control. The City enters into an agreement with a concessionaire for sale of alcohol.

Bud Page asked if the ordinance is posted in parks so citizens are aware of the rules.

Holmwood responded that all City parks have park rules posted via signs; large parks have multiple signs. The significant rules are posted and this section of the City Code is cited.

Page asked why this recommendation was not taken to City Council last year.

Smith replied that several incidents occurred, such as the Community Services Manager retiring, necessitating restructuring of the Community Services Department, and issues with the park ranger program in connection with the budget process.

John Storment made a motion, Bud Page seconded, and it was unanimously carried that the Board recommend that action be taken to adopt the proposed amendments to Title 6, Chapter 10, of the Mesa City Code pertaining to public park regulations, including the recommended definition for retention basin.

Broadway Recreation Center

Terri Palmberg reported that due to the City's budget shortfall, the Parks and Recreation Division was given the task of reducing budget expenditures as part of the FY03-04 budget process. As staff looked at alternatives to meet the division's budget reduction and budgetary requirements, one of the alternatives evaluated was to transition direct supervision and daily maintenance of the Broadway Recreation Center (BRC) to a non-profit partner. The Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled (MASD) has been a valued partner with the City since 1992. Its involvement has allowed expanded adaptive programs throughout the city in a variety of sports. Many of the sports programs which MASD sponsors are being held at the BRC, including bocce ball, power soccer, and wheelchair basketball.

As part of the agreement, the Parks and Recreation will continue to have access to the BRC for recreation programs and will share storage space with MASD. MASD will also establish a sub-agreement with the Gene Lewis Boxing Club to allow the club to continue its operation.

By transferring direct supervision of the BRC to MASD, the City will realize a net annual savings of approximately \$68,000 in daily custodial maintenance and staff supervision. As part of this agreement, the City will continue to pay utilities and annual maintenance costs of the wooden gym floor, which are budgeted at \$31,000.

Palmberg introduced Greg Baumgarten, ex-officio members of MASD, and Sue Lilly, president of MASD. Lilly expressed her appreciation to everyone who helped this effort come to fruition. She reported that the first full-time executive director for MASD was recently hired. Also, the MASD has been asked to host the junior nationals next July. The event will include about 250 athletes ages 6-19 from about 40 states and three foreign countries. It is anticipated that about 1,000 people will be in attendance.

Palmberg said Kevin Petersen has been involved in the BRC for over 15 years and has been instrumental in the transition phase. Petersen also has been a board member of the Gene Lewis Boxing Club. The club will continue to operate at the site while MASD has the lease with the City. With the City as the BRC landlord and MASD as the tenant, the City will assume much of the maintenance of the facility. The City will do the annual floor maintenance and MASD will do the day-to-day duties. MASD will continue to make the BRC available to school groups.

Palmberg said all involved in this effort believe it is a good partnership and model for Mesa.

Brinton expressed support for the partnership and asked about the term of the agreement.

Palmberg replied that the term is for ten years, which is comparable to the term of the agreement with the Gene Lewis Boxing Club.

Baumgarten said MASD believes ten years is an appropriate term for the agreement. He also thanked Palmberg on behalf of MASD for her efforts in making this partnership happen.

Richins asked if any organization would be required to move from the BRC.

Baumgarten said MASD will not make significant changes to the BRC. The charter schools are the primary users during the school day and immediately after school; MASD does not conduct programs at those times. For the short-term, nothing will change; for the long-term, when MASD has opportunities for additional adult sports, they can be conducted in the evenings, on weekends, or at Mesa Public Schools facilities. MASD is a comprehensive program for disabled children starting at age 6 who can remain in the program indefinitely.

Robert Brinton made a motion, Dina Lopez seconded, and it was unanimously carried that the City enter into an agreement with the Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled (MASD) for use of the Broadway Recreation Center.

TSA Grant

Holmwood reported that the City has submitted a Tourism and Sports Authority (TSA) grant application in the amount of \$6 million for the Indoor Aquatic Center (IAC).

Palmberg said staff developed an excellent 57-page application. TSA will make funding decisions some time after the first of the year.

Stormont asked about the City's financial situation in relation to construction of the IAC.

Palmberg replied that if the \$6 million grant is received, the City is committed to making the IAC happen.

Holmwood said the City has made a commitment that if grant money is awarded to Mesa, the funds required to build the facility can be "cobbled together." The current challenge is determining the funding sources for the operating expenses; staff is currently working toward that end.

Storment said he endorses the project, and believes the project should be completed while support is high.

Parks Board Work Plan

Holmwood asked Board members to review the proposed Board Work Plan for FY03-04 and provide feedback to staff.

Meetings and/or events attended

Richins reported that about 50 people were in attendance to work at the Eureka Canal site on August 27. The event received media coverage and a four-minute video is currently showing on Mesa's Channel 11. Mayor Hawker and Councilmembers Walters and Kavanaugh were in attendance. It was an exciting and productive day. The next step will be to work with Salt River Project to pursue additional grant funding.

Gillard reported on his attendance at the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association (APRA) Boards and Commissions Day on August 29. He said the sessions and tours provided valuable information.

Richins reported that he also attended APRA event; it was an good conference.

Director's Report

Holmwood introduced Andrea Madonna, Parks Development and Strategic Planner.

He reported that at the recent APRA Conference, Mike Holste, Recreation Supervisor for the East District, received the Association's annual Professional Award.

He also advised that the division's Benefits Are Endless video recently won the National Recreation and Parks Association award for the best public service announcement.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 1:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph H. Holmwood
Assistant Community Services Manager