

Parks and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular meeting at Field Elementary School, 2325 East Adobe, on May 5, 2005.

Members Present:

Robert Brinton
Russ Gillard
Connie Gullatt-Whiteman
Walter "Bud" Page, Jr.
David Peterson
John Storment

Staff Present:

Tim Barnard
Mike Holste
Cindy Hunt
Terri Palmberg
Kevin Petersen
Diane Rogers
Gordon Sheffield
Bob White
Sherry Woodley

Members Absent:

LeRoy Brady, excused
John Dyer, unexcused
Jeff Kirk, unexcused
Dina Lopez, unexcused
Bernadine Mooney, unexcused

Others Present:

Brett Hansen
Ira Rubins

Items on the agenda were discussed out of order but for purposes of clarity, will remain as listed on the agenda.

Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Robert Brinton, Chair. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting.

Ira Rubins, Executive Director of the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association (APRA), introduced Brett Hansen from Fox Sports Arizona. Fox Sports is providing financial assistance to update community facilities. Mr. Hansen said they are excited to be a part of this project.

On behalf of the Arizona Parks and Recreation Foundation, Mr. Rubins presented a check to the City of Mesa for \$10,000 for bike court development at Kleinman tennis facility.

Mr. Brinton accepted the check and expressed appreciation for this effort.

Mr. Rubins also presented a plaque to the Parks and Recreation Division for Mesa's support of the Le Grande Bike Tour, which is in its 18th year. The APRA could not do the tour without help and support of the communities who volunteer their time and donate equipment and expertise. He thanked Mesa for its continued assistance with the Le Grande Bike Tour.

Approval of Minutes

Bud Page made a motion, Russ Gillard seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the meeting of April 14, 2005.

Public Comments

Mr. Brinton explained that the Public Comments portion of the meeting is for citizens to speak to the Board on any appropriate subject that is not on the agenda. However, no formal action can be taken by the Board.

There were no public comments.

Wireless Communication Requests

Tim Barnard introduced Gordon Sheffield, Planning Division and reported that Mr. Sheffield assisted Parks staff in developing the revised wireless communication guidelines which were approved by the Board in April 2004, the Downtown Development Committee in May 2004, and City Council in July 2004.

Staff is currently working with three providers to bring wireless equipment to Chaparral and Harmony parks. The providers, ALLTEL and T-Mobile for Chaparral Park and Verizon for Harmony Park, sent written notification of the public input meeting to the neighbors around each park location, as required by the revised ordinance. The facilities being proposed are compatible with the park surroundings and should not create any changes to the visual aesthetics of the parks. Two separate monopalms (faux palm trees) are proposed for the west side of Chaparral Park, adjacent to the City well sites. These will blend in well with the existing palm trees in that area of the park. The facility being proposed at Harmony Park is a monopine (faux pine tree) for the southwest corner of the park, which will blend in well with the large mature trees in that area of the park.

A recommendation by the Board to move forward with these proposals will allow City Planning staff to continue the review process. The applicants for the proposed wireless facilities will then submit applications for Special Use Permits, each of which will be considered by the Zoning Administrator/Board of Adjustment. If the Special Use Permits are approved, lease arrangements will be negotiated between City staff and the applicants, with the City Manager having the authority to sign the lease. Cell tower leases are brought to the attention of the City Council on an as-needed basis.

The City has pre-defined lease rates for cell sites. It believes that park sites are valuable and should carry a higher rate than non-park sites. The annual cost is computed based on the amount of ground space needed times the rate per square foot.

T-Mobile has requested a 55' faux palm at Chaparral with 480 square feet of ground space. At the rate of \$43 per square foot, the annual cost is \$20,640.

ALLTEL's request of a 75' tower with 860 square feet of ground space would cost \$36,984 annually.

Verizon's request includes 800 square feet of ground cover, for an annual cost of \$34,404.

If these three requests are approved, the revenue generated for the City would be over \$92,000 annually. Staff is in support of approval of these requests and as the Board provides direction to staff, there will be additional public input opportunities (Board of Adjustment, Planning and Zoning Board).

Mr. Brinton advised that the Board will ask questions and when finished, will accept public comments. After comments have been received, the Board will consider action.

David Peterson asked if the installations would be for a single provider or if additional antennae would be added in the future.

Mr. Sheffield replied that the Board has the authority to prohibit additional antennae.

Connie Gullatt-Whiteman asked about trees that are currently at Chaparral and Harmony parks.

Mr. Barnard replied that at Chaparral, there are palm trees on the south side of the park where ALLTEL wants to locate and one palm on the north side where T-Mobile wants to locate. At Harmony, there are many trees that are 40-50' tall.

Mr. Gillard asked how communication to residents was handled.

Mr. Barnard said the providers followed the guidelines regarding notification to residents prior to the public meeting, City staff posted notice of the meeting, and information was sent to the Board prior to the meeting.

John Storment asked about regulation and duration of the lease.

Mr. Barnard replied that the City's Real Estate and Communications divisions regulate the lease.

Mr. Sheffield said that it will be a standard lease that most municipalities use; the length is usually five years with a five-year option.

Mr. Page asked if the annual revenue to the City would be the same if T-Mobile and ALLTEL co-located.

Mr. Barnard said that the second provider would be using the same ground equipment and would have to work with the original provider that paid for the ground equipment.

Mr. Page asked how close to each other the two units could be.

Mr. Sheffield replied that there must be least 10' vertical separation of the antennae.

Mr. Page asked about liability insurance.

Mr. Sheffield replied that it is typically included as part of the lease.

Mr. Page asked if rates can be increased after the initial five-year lease term.

Mr. Barnard said the rates are usually projected out and now include an automatic 3% increase.

Mr. Brinton asked when a determination will be made by ALLTEL to reduce its proposed 75' tower.

Mike Campbell, ALLTEL representative, said ALLTEL will not consider a tower shorter than 75'.

Mr. Brinton questioned if 10 business days is sufficient time for notification to adjacent property owners.

Mr. Sheffield replied that 10 business days is the norm, such as for rezoning cases. If a longer notification time is needed, it has occasionally been extended to 15 days.

Mr. Brinton said the letters sent by the providers were notification only, with no pictures included. It would be in the best interest of the providers to include a sample of what they are proposing.

Mr. Brinton then invited citizens in attendance to speak to the Board about the proposed communication towers.

Mike Campbell, representing ALLTEL, said ALLTEL has requested a 75' monopole which meets the requirements for setbacks to the property line. If only one pole was in place, the area would be crowded. The horizontal separation between poles is typically 15'. Also, each carrier usually carries \$1 million in liability insurance per site.

Rulon Anderson, representing T-Mobile, said today people demand service for cell phone use in their homes, so service has to be provided where it was not provided before, such as neighborhoods. The industry has tried to create something not as unsightly as a monopole. It costs the provider \$30,000 - \$50,000 just to build the tower.

Gary Freed, 2023 East Inca, said he believes the process is seriously flawed. Notice was received only nine days before the meeting and it was sent in a regular envelope, just like junk mail. Also, the notice was sent only to residents living 300' from the park; the park belongs to everyone. The placement of the towers was determined prior to the meeting; the process requires public input. Residents asked what the monopole will look like and were told look to at a similar one rather than being provided a picture. The towers could be a health hazard and there are other places to put them. Parks are for people to recreate; they are for quality of life. Build the towers and take away our quality of life.

Robin White, 1247 East Fountain, said she is speaking as past chair of the Parks Board and current president of the Parks Foundation. She emphasized that she is passionate about parks. As chair of the board, she and board members lobbied City Council to allow the towers; she is asking the Parks Board to approve the towers. She is also a member of the City of Mesa Finance Committee. Budget cuts are coming for Parks and Recreation because parks are not considered an essential service. That means the City will lose services. Cell towers can bring in revenue to the City, and she will fight for that money to go to parks.

Cathleen Volante, 2119 East Inca, expressed concern about the lease and wants to know if the lease will piggyback or restrict the providers from adding height in the future. She also wants to know: 1) Can the providers add additional palms and, if so, must they come back to the residents? 2) Is there a possibility that these towers would be installed without the fake covering on them? 3) What other City groups would have access to the funds? 4) Is there a safeguard that the funds would be used for parks? 5) Are the setbacks based on the widening of Gilbert Road or the current configuration Gilbert Road?

Jeff Giguere, 2228 East Inca, said he has worked with wireless towers for eight years and cautioned that the City should pay close attention to how they get done. He thinks it is silly that two palm towers are being placed in Chaparral Park, with one being 75'. He asked why the providers could not co-locate and believes that the park should have just one tower rather than two.

Clay Layton, 2305 East Inglewood, said he is in the real estate business and uses his cell phone frequently. There is a cell service "dead spot" in the area and service is needed. He shares the concerns expressed about two towers, one at 75' and one at 55' and agrees that having both providers on a pine tree would help the aesthetics of the park.

Barbara Layton, 2305 East Inglewood, said she did not receive a letter. Several years ago, a pumping station was installed with the expectation of increased water pressure; however, residents don't have better water pressure but now have big ugly walls. Pine trees are not unsightly but block walls, like the ones at the cell tower near Outback Steakhouse, are terrible. She asked if the providers would dismantle the towers and tear everything down at the end of the lease.

Mr. Brinton thanked everyone for their comments.

Mr. Gillard said community input has been excellent and would like answers to some of the questions posed before the Board takes action.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman said aesthetics are an issue for many of the residents. She would also like answers to questions that were asked.

Mr. Peterson said he believes it is important to have the infrastructure. He commended providers for initially approaching the City and Mesa Public Schools concerning tower sites. His preference is for co-location for Chaparral.

Mr. Stormont advised that the center post on the football field at Mountain View High School is about 70', if residents would like an idea of how tall a 75' tower would be. He believes it is good to have neighborhood input and thanked residents for attending the meeting. He reiterated that the notification process needs to be revised, including expanding the area notified. He asked about the timeline for approval of the requests.

Mr. Sheffield said that neither provider has filed an application for a Special Use Permit. If an application was filed now, the earliest it could be presented to the Board of Adjustment would be July.

Mr. Brinton asked the provider representatives if there would be a hardship if the Board delayed taking action until the May 24, 2005 Board meeting.

Mr. Anderson, T-Mobile representative, said this process was started in January, and T-Mobile has been patient. Board action at the next meeting would result in two weeks of lost revenue to the City and two weeks of no service to residents. It becomes a balancing act for providers to use a city park vs. a commercial establishment. If it takes more time and costs more money, carriers will back away from going to city parks. He said he personally objects to co-locating because it is ugly; it makes a palm tree look like a cell site.

Mr. Brinton said the Board will be setting a precedent with its decision on these tower proposals. He believes there are some flaws in the guidelines and revising them now will improve the process in the future.

Terri Palmberg advised that the Board can do a split vote; Chaparral Park can be delayed and Harmony Park can be voted on now.

Mr. Gillard asked about the height of the Verizon tower at Harmony Park.

Jeannie Bullard, representing Verizon, said it is a 64' fabricated pine that will allow co-locating.

Mr. Brinton asked if there is a 75' tower that the Board members can view.

Mr. Campbell responded in the negative.

David Peterson made a motion, John Stormont seconded, and it was unanimously carried that the request received from Verizon for installation of a wireless communication tower at Harmony Park be approved, and that the issue of wireless communication towers at Chaparral Park be tabled until the next Parks Board meeting (May 24, 2005), and that *Wireless Communications Design and Placement Guidelines for Parks and Recreational Facilities* be revised.

Adaptive Programs

Cindy Hunt said a PowerPoint presentation was to be a part of the report; however, due to technical difficulties, that would not be possible. The presentation will be copied to disk and provided to the Board.

Ms. Hunt reported that Mesa provides adaptive programs for physically and mentally challenged individuals; Mesa's slogan is "Let no one sit on the sidelines." The Blaze Sports Program has donated many items, such as hand cycles, wheelchairs, money, etc. Last summer Mesa hosted the National Junior Disabled Sports Games, which had teams from every state, Canada, and Sweden. The games brought in over \$500,000 to Mesa in economic impact. This year the Mesa team will be traveling to Florida to participate in the games. Two weeks ago, Special Olympics basketball was held; this event brought in about \$50,000 in economic impact to Mesa. The athletes in these events are treated like athletes, not like physically and mentally challenged individuals. They are shown respect for their abilities; staff and partner organizations are proud to send them to the competitions.

These events are not conducted using City of Mesa funds, but rather through a partnership with Mesa Parks and Recreation, Mesa Public Schools, Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled (MASD), and Arizona Special Olympics (ASO). MASD leases the Broadway Recreation Center from the City of Mesa and the facility is used for practice by the athletes.

The Mesa summer camp for disabled individuals, called Camp Fiesta, is a day-long camp that is very popular. Also, three years ago Mesa began an inclusion program that allows individuals with disabilities to participate in any class offered. They do not have to go to special classes or camps; Mesa will provide modifications for equipment and staff support. This has opened up opportunities they thought they would never have. This year, over 65 youth will be in inclusion camps.

Also in May a popular event will be held – a fashion show which is conducted in cooperation with Tempe and Chandler. The clothes are donated by Kohl's and the participants are the center of attention; this gives them the opportunity to be a "star" for the evening. The event also includes a lunch and silent auction.

Reports on Meetings and/or Event Attended

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman reported that she recently attended the APRA Conference on Open Space at ASU; City staff also attended. She indicated it was a very worthwhile experience.

Staff Updates

Mr. Barnard reported that the City was recently awarded a grant from the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) to be used for ballfield lighting projects at Powell Junior High and Westwood/Carson. This grant is a result of the Indian community being required to give money back to the community they are getting money from.

Sherry Woodley reported that registration has begun for the City's summer recreation programs. As of May 4, 2005, participation registration for aquatics is 6,300, with 378 classes full with wait lists. For recreation programs, registration is over 4,000, with 50 classes full with wait lists. This year, about 50% of the registrations were via WebTrac.

Mike Holste reported that Cinco de Mayo was held April 29-30 at Pioneer Park. Attendance was estimated at 45,000. It was high this year due to other Valley cities having their Cinco de Mayo

celebrations the following week. The popular salsa contest had 70 entries this year. Also, sponsorships generated about \$20,000.

Ms. Palmberg reported that Versar is behind schedule in submitting its report on baseline conditions and the pool renovation plan. This necessitates the Parks Board holding a meeting on May 24, 2005 to take action on the aquatics alternatives and forward a recommendation to City Council. Notice of the meeting will be sent to citizens who attended the Parks Board meeting/public hearing in March.

Ms. Palmberg also reported that a call was received from Sky Mountain Limousine indicating their interest in sponsoring t-shirts for a recreation program.

Concerning the recent Beverly Park meeting, three citizens were in attendance. This was not the first meeting concerning this project, so it is presumed that most residents are satisfied with what was presented at the first meeting. Further, a meeting was held with the Emerson student council and they prioritized playground items and colors they would like.

Director's Report

Bob White gave the following reports:

- On May 18 and 19, 2005, the City Council will hold special budget hearings. Information concerning times and locations was provided; Board members were encouraged to attend.
- The City recently offered a voluntary severance package to employees. Ten people from Parks and Recreation have applied and were approved. Staff have until June 20, 2005 to make a final decision. Kevin Petersen, who assists with the evening Board meetings, will be retiring.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob White
Parks and Recreation Director