

Parks and Recreation Board  
Meeting Minutes

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular meeting at the Parks Administration Office, 100 North Center Street, on April 14, 2005.

Members Present:

LeRoy Brady  
Robert Brinton  
Russ Gillard  
Connie Gullatt-Whiteman  
Bernadine Mooney  
Walter "Bud" Page, Jr.  
John Storment

Members Absent:

John Dyer, excused  
Jeff Kirk, excused  
Dina Lopez, unexcused  
David Peterson, excused

Staff Present:

Tim Barnard  
Joe Holmwood  
Mike Holste  
Cindy Hunt  
Patty King  
Andrea Madonna  
Kym Otterstedt  
Terri Palmberg  
Diane Rogers  
Debbie Spinner  
Bob White  
Sherry Woodley

The meeting was called to order at 12:08 p.m. by Robert Brinton, Chair.

**Approval of Minutes**

Bud Page made a motion, John Storment seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the meeting/public hearing of March 8, 2005.

**Public Comments**

No public comments.

**Master Plan/CIP Update and Board Appointments**

Tim Barnard reported that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2025 was approved by City Council and Mesa voters in the fall of 2002 as part of the City's General Plan update. The vote culminated a two-year planning process, which included public meetings, surveys, focus groups, and master planning efforts by Mesa citizens and staff. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2025 provides a blueprint for staff for the growth of parks and recreation facilities and operations through the year 2025, which is the projected build out of the city. The plan includes capital improvement projects as well as a variety of organizational management recommendations.

The capital improvement portion of the master plan was developed with four milestones, 2002-2006, 2006-2010, 2010-2014, and 2014-2025. Each milestone included the recommended capital development of land acquisition and park and facility development. The development included the recommended number of neighborhood, community, metro, and regional parks; sports fields for youth and adult; neighborhood and community recreation centers; pools; golf courses; and special use facilities (multi-use paths, retention basins, competitive aquatics). In addition to these new construction projects, the master plan also recommends the need to renovate existing parks and facilities.

Mr. Barnard said park and facility types were identified for Mesa's urban community needs based on the parameters of size, service area radius, and operational guidelines. Parks and recreation facility classifications outline future site and development activities. Capital improvement and land

acquisition costs are developed from these categories. He then reviewed the size and purpose of a neighborhood park, community park, metro park, and regional park.

Andrea Madonna reported that the City has been focusing on land acquisition and multi-use path (MUP) development. Since the master plan was approved, the City has acquired 83+ acres that may be developed. When operations and maintenance funding is available, development can begin. Also, it is hoped that by the end of next year, all six miles of the MUP will be in place. Mesa currently has two miles completed; the remaining miles are in the design phase.

Ms. Madonna requested that three Board members be appointed to serve on a committee to prioritize capital (CIP) projects, which usually are funded entirely by bond funds. A CIP project is anything that adds to the City's assets and costs over \$1,000. The committee will meet 1-2 times during the months of May and June.

Mr. Brinton said this committee will play a part in the overall citywide bond election. Generally, the Mayor appoints a committee of citizens to evaluate and prioritize projects. The committee then forwards a recommendation to City Council.

Mr. Barnard said the tentative schedule for the City committee will be to meet July through September. The process needs to be concluded by the end of November.

Mr. Brinton asked for volunteers to serve on the subcommittee. Bud Page, Russ Gillard, and Bernie Mooney indicated that they would serve.

### **Aquatics Update**

Terri Palmberg introduced Debbie Spinner, Mesa City Attorney. Board members then introduced themselves.

Ms. Palmberg reported that the March Board meeting consisted of significant public feedback concerning proposed aquatics alternatives. The City is currently moving forward with Versar, who will create a footprint for development of those facilities. Also, a meeting will be held within the next few days with the Mesa Community College consultant concerning the outdoor facility at site 17.

Mr. Brinton said informal discussions have taken place since the March public hearing concerning whether neighborhood pools and an aquatic center would be subject to a vote.

Ms. Spinner said there is no definitive answer. The Quality of Life tax that was approved specifically gave the City of Mesa authority to build neighborhood pools and the Indoor Aquatic Center. However, because of Proposition 104, it was necessary to determine if a vote would be required. Proposition 104, which was challenging the construction of the Cardinals Stadium, states the City of Mesa cannot spend more than \$1.5 million to construct or add to the construction of facilities without a public vote. She then read the description of "facilities" as it appeared on the ballot. However, none of these facilities is specifically defined.

Proposition 104 will be interpreted to the best of staff's ability. If a project is challenged, the court will be asked to make a determination. Ms. Spinner believes that neighborhood pools do not fall within the language of Proposition 104 and is okay with the City Council approving construction of neighborhood pools without a vote.

However, there is a distinction between construction and renovation. Renovation is for the City of Mesa to maintain its current assets; additions or expansions may fall within the language of Proposition 104. Moving a pool outside its normal footprint could be challenged and if a

competitive pool is anticipated to have state, local, and regional meets, it would more likely require a vote.

Mr. Storment asked if funds earmarked for a specific project could be used for something else.

Ms. Spinner replied that City Council can allocate funds to all or just some of the items identified in the voter-approved initiative. Funds cannot be used for projects that were not identified.

Mr. Brinton said the Parks Board will forward a recommendation to City Council concerning expenditure of the funds. He asked staff to ensure that these projects are addressed in a timely manner.

Mr. Brinton thanked Ms. Spinner for attending the Board meeting and addressing this subject.

### **Youth Sports Organizations**

Mike Holste introduced himself and said that on April 4, 2005, he was promoted to Assistant Parks and Recreation Director for Facilities/Programs. He encouraged Board members to call if they have questions or need information concerning division programs

Mr. Holste reported that each year the months of February through August represent the highest concentrated use of athletic facilities in the city by youth sports leagues. There are currently three seasons, with 8700 participants; soccer, lacrosse, and baseball utilize over 70 City/School lighted fields and five sports facilities heavily. Also, the Skylogix computerized lighting control system is being expanded via a partnership between the Parks and Recreation Division and youth sports organizations. The following highlights were presented:

#### **Soccer**

- The secondary All Star season began January 3 and ends at the end of April.
- Five leagues currently operate with approximately 578 participants.
- The groups utilize Quail Run Soccer Complex, Red Mountain Soccer Complex, Dobson High School, and Westwood High School 3-5 days per week.

#### **Lacrosse**

- The season began January 3 and ends at the end of April.
- Three leagues currently operate with approximately 131 participants.
- The group is looking to become an official high school sport within the next two years.
- The groups utilize Dobson High School, Mesa High School, and Red Mountain High School.

#### **Little League Baseball**

- Little league began its season March 1 and will complete regular play the end of May/early June.
- Thirteen leagues are currently operating, and two more will begin in May. Current number of registered participants is 7,060 with an estimated total number of 8,160 with the additional two leagues. Last year's participation was 8,466.
- Many changes were experienced within little league this year due to changing boundaries and demographics. Superstition Little League merged with Adobe Little League, and Mesa American Little League combined with Dobson South Little League. In addition, two girls softball leagues were formed out of existing leagues, Mountain View Softball and Red Mountain Softball. Also, Challenger baseball (adaptive program) became part of Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled (MASD).
- Due to anticipated construction at Westwood High School and Carson Jr. High, limited scheduling was done through May, and the girls softball program is being relocated to Evergreen Park for the summer.

- Groups are utilizing Quail Run Baseball/Softball complex, Countryside Park, Jefferson Park, Fitch Park, Gene Autry Park, 23 lighted school facilities, plus 26 elementary schools, for a total of 92 fields (66 lighted, 26 unlighted).

#### Skylogix

- Three additional sites were added for the spring season...Brimhall Jr. High, Highland Jr. High, and Countryside Park. Groups contributed \$5,500 toward the total \$8,800 installation cost.
- Technical problems were experienced for the first few weeks, but all units are now operating without issue.
- It is anticipated that two more units will be added by fall for the football groups that have contributed.
- Training on how to operate the Skylogix units will be provided to all sport user groups.

Mr. Storment asked about the number of sites that currently have SkyLogix.

Mr. Holste replied that there are six sites currently. As youth groups donate money to the program, new lights are installed at the locations used by those groups.

Mr. Page asked about SkyLogix training.

Mr. Holste replied that when problems arise, the City of Mesa Information Services Division is available to determine the problem with the server. Training sessions will be held with the users of Skylogix and representatives from the leagues prior to use of the fields.

#### **Meetings and/or Events Attended**

Mr. Brinton reported that he recently attended a division core values meeting. Discussion included determining how to charge fees. It was a well organized meeting and he appreciates being invited.

#### **Staff Updates**

Kym Otterstedt reported that the Red Mountain Multigenerational Center "5 for Fitness" is underway. Over 172 citizens applied for the five openings by submitting an essay on why he/she wanted to participate. The program includes four months of complimentary admission fees, various fitness tests, and nutritional counseling. Each participant is contacted every few weeks to determine if their satisfaction with the program, if their goals are being accomplished, etc. Staff has received positive feedback from the five selected participants.

Cindy Hunt reported that Cinco de Mayo Fiesta will be held at Pioneer Park April 29-30. Many sponsorships were acquired this year, which reduced expenses for the City. This year, the City of Phoenix event will not be on the same date, so a very large attendance is expected.

Ms. Palmberg distributed a flyer concerning a neighborhood meeting/open house to be held April 26, 2005 to gather citizen input on the playground design at Beverly Park. No City funding is available to begin park development. A request has been submitted for CDBG funding that the division would match, but the project is low on the City's list of priorities.

Mr. Storment asked about the cost for purchase and installation of the playground equipment.

Ms. Palmberg replied that entire park project will cost about \$900,000. The project could be done in phases, including infrastructure. Staff will be discussing alternatives. Also, the Foundation for Mesa Parks and Recreation may be involved, especially as related to donation of trees.

The City received a \$10,000 grant from Fox Sports Net Arizona that will be almost 50% of the shared cost for putting in manufactured bike ramps at Kleinman Park. The area will be named the Kleinman Wheels Court, and should be open for use this summer. A community meeting will be held to discuss the timeline.

Mr. Page asked if the lighting will be upgraded.

Ms. Palmberg replied that the lighting will not be upgraded because the intention is that this will be a neighborhood-level lighted facility and current lighting is adequate.

Mr. Page asked about a recent story in a local newspaper in which several young people were quoted as saying this court will not be a challenge.

Ms. Palmberg advised that several meetings were held with the group interviewed. The group was given the opportunity to assume development and operation responsibility for the facility; however, they cannot afford it. The group wants deep concrete bowls, 15-20 foot high ramp systems, and several other amenities. These items will not be part of the project as pre-manufactured ramps will be installed, based on funding availability.

Ms. Palmberg distributed the analysis of a recent park ranger survey. About 200 surveys were given to park users, with 30 responses received. Satisfaction with Mesa parks and park rangers remains high.

### **Director's Report**

Bob White recognized Patty King as being in the audience. Ms. King is with the City's Human Resources Division and is attending the Board meeting as a member of a Management Development class. He also recognized Tessa Hill from the Mesa Independent.

Mr. White presented the following reports:

- Guidelines were adopted by the City in June 2004 for wireless communications (cell tower) design and placement for parks and recreational facilities. Staff recently received requests for installations at Chaparral and Harmony parks. These requests will be presented to the Board at the May meeting. The meeting will be held at 6 p.m. near Chaparral Park to allow for public input.
- The department review of fees and charges with the Finance Committee was held April 14, 2005. The committee approved the recommendations forwarded by the Parks Board. Also, at the April 14, 2005 Study Session, City Council discussed budget priorities.
- Ms. Spinner will present information at the September 2005 Parks Board meeting concerning the Open Meetings Law.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 1:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob White  
Parks and Recreation Director