

Parks and Recreation Board  
Meeting Minutes

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met in a special meeting at Emerson Elementary School, 415 North Westwood, on May 24, 2005.

**Members Present:**

LeRoy Brady  
Robert Brinton  
John Dyer  
Connie Gullatt-Whiteman  
Jeff Kirk  
Bernadine Mooney  
Walter "Bud" Page, Jr.  
David Peterson  
John Storment

**Staff Present:**

Darla Armfield  
Tim Barnard  
Joe Holmwood  
Mike Holste  
Andrea Moore  
Terri Palmberg  
Diane Rogers  
Bob White

**Members Absent:**

Russ Gillard, excused  
Dina Lopez, excused

**Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Robert Brinton, Chair.

**Approval of Minutes**

Bud Page made a motion, David Peterson seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the meeting of May 5, 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.

Mr. Brinton also advised that at previous Board meetings, verbal and written public comments were received by the Board concerning aquatic facilities improvements and cell towers at Chaparral Park. For the current meeting, written comments would be accepted on the cards provided (comments attached).

**Aquatics Facilities Improvements**

Terri Palmberg reported that in late 2004, staff began to look at alternatives for redirecting Quality of Life funds to a variety of aquatic needs throughout the community, as directed by the Parks and Recreation Board and City Council. Knowing that many of Mesa's existing outdoor pools are aging, particularly in the west and central parts of the city, and knowing that there were various neighborhoods voicing strong support for pools to be built in their areas, staff explored options using the following objectives:

1. Projects would be spread across the city.
2. Evaluate old pools located in the west and central parts of the city based on existing conditions.

3. Address new pool needs in east Mesa based on expressed need by the community and as identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2025, Proposed Target Areas for Pools.
4. Address a majority of the same community audience and event needs originally planned for the Indoor Aquatic Center.
5. Provide equal access to facilities for competitive and family swimming opportunities and amenities.

In an effort to validate the facility cost estimates for design, construction, and operations, Versar, Inc., a Valley architectural and engineering firm, was contracted by the City Engineering Division to provide the following services as part of a thorough analysis of the aquatic needs in Mesa:

1. Baseline existing conditions report for each of the renovation sites.
2. Property renovation and improvement plan for each of the existing renovation sites.
3. Basic design for any new facilities as well as for the Site 17 Outdoor Aquatic Center.
4. Revised conceptual drawing illustrating the proposed layout and various elements of the aquatic facilities at each site.
5. Construction cost estimates (including demolition), along with estimated operations and maintenance.

On March 8, 2005, the Parks Board held a meeting at Stapley Junior High to hear public comments related to aquatic facility needs in Mesa. Approximately 100 people attended the meeting to voice their opinions and to present a petition (with 289 signatures) and letters of support for a pool at Smith Junior High. Also, many telephone calls and emails were received by staff supporting facility needs in Mesa.

In April 2005, a meeting was held with Mesa Community College representatives, consultants from Concord Eastridge, and Mesa Convention and Visitors Bureau staff related to development, facility uses, and operations of the Site 17 Outdoor Aquatic Center. The development of this facility has future linkage to MCC's Health and Wellness Zone that could encompass uses such as: nurse aqua therapy training; exercise science instruction/training programs; regional paramedic and firefighter water rescue training; MCC and MPS competitive swimming venue; and training/education partnering with state and national pool/spa institutes.

At the April 14, 2005 Parks Board meeting, City Attorney Debbie Spinner indicated that because of Proposition 104, the Outdoor Aquatic Center at Site 17 would require a vote of the public. Carson and/or Smith may also require a legal opinion because of Proposition 104.

Ms. Palmberg introduced Doug Ashline from Versar, who presented a slide show of the planning study Versar recently completed, highlighting the elements of each proposed renovation or new construction, along with estimated construction cost and annual operations and maintenance cost.

Mr. Brinton asked about providing sufficient depth for water polo.

Ms. Palmberg replied that the pools proposed for construction/renovation will be the minimum size required for water polo. Kino Pool will be large enough for competitive water polo play. Concerning fiscal impact, the cost estimate provided by Versar is \$29,617,953; funding will come from \$25.1 million in sales tax and \$4 million from bond funding.

The total Quality of Life funding identified for the design and construction of aquatic projects was \$29,100,000. It is anticipated that the City would submit an Arizona Sports and Tourism Authority grant request for funding to assist with the Outdoor Aquatic Center because of its regional aquatic impact. The following cost breakdown was presented:

<b>Funding Priorities</b>	<b>Versar Cost Estimate</b>
Carson	\$ 5,411,656
Outdoor (site 17)*	11,676,554
Smith	5,248,396
Kino	4,057,402
Taylor	<u>3,223,945</u>
	<b>29,617,953</b>
STA grant request*	<u>1,500,000</u>
	<b>\$28,117,953</b>
<b>Unfunded</b>	
Poston	\$3,487,658
Rhodes	<u>3,340,646</u>
	<b>\$6,828,304</b>

The Mesa Convention and Visitors Bureau completed an economic impact report based on the following design features of the Outdoor Aquatic Center:

- 10-lane facility with moveable bulkhead
- 50 meter x 25 meter constant depth competitive pool
- 25 yard x 20 yard diving pool with springboard compliment
- Seating to accommodate 1,500 spectators, expandable to 2,500 for major events
- Locker room/fitness area
- Multi-purpose meeting room and staging area
- Electronic scoring system with media connectivity
- Recreational amenities to include separated public use water slide and spray pad area
- Adjacent park area to accommodate portable 50 meter pool for large events

Ms. Palmberg said staff's recommendation to the Board is that the priorities be: 1) Carson; 2) Site 17; 3) Smith; 4) Kino; 5) Taylor; 6) Poston; and 7) Rhodes. Staff believes that design and construction of Site 17 and Smith could be done simultaneously. However, an outdoor facility needs to be in place before reconstruction of Kino begins. Taylor is #5 priority because it is impacting Brimhall. Citizens are coming from the Taylor area to enjoy the amenities of Brimhall.

Ms. Palmberg said another item on the agenda is Board approval of a grant application for \$1.5 million to the Arizona Sports and Tourism Authority. If the grant is awarded, the total construction cost would be \$28.1 million, and it is likely that five projects would be able to be completed; unfunded at this point would be Poston and Rhodes. Full operations and maintenance is estimated at \$1.2 million, with anticipated revenue of \$500,000, for a net cost of approximately \$700,000. The City has a reserve fund from sales tax of \$985,000 for operations and maintenance, so funds will be available to operate these aquatic facilities.

Mr. Page asked if Proposition 104 would require voter approval for Carson and Smith.

Ms. Palmberg said it is believed that if a challenge is received from the community, the issue would then go to the courts to decide.

Mr. Page asked how the STA grant request would be used if the application is approved.

Ms. Palmberg replied that if the grant is received, the funds would be used only for the outdoor aquatic facility since the STA wants to fund items that have regional and state impact.

Mr. Page asked if the City's operations and maintenance costs are shared with Mesa Public Schools.

Ms. Palmberg replied that Mesa Public Schools has separate operations and maintenance costs.

John Storment expressed concern about the top three priorities. He said Site 17 will definitely require voter approval, and the other two (Carson and Smith) may require a decision by the courts if challenged. He asked what the City would do if Site 17 does not obtain voter approval.

Ms. Palmberg said the next project on the list would be addressed. When Carson and Smith are operating, some Kino user groups would be moved to those facilities while Kino is being renovated.

Mr. Brinton expressed the opinion that the Board's recommendation should include the aquatic facilities as one group rather than individually. He would prefer not to see a challenge on Carson or Smith, and Council should be asked to approve as a group also. He believes a lot of good work has been done and appreciates the public input received from the aquatic community.

Mr. Peterson announced that due to his employment by Mesa Public Schools, he would abstain from voting on this agenda item.

John Dyer made a motion, and Connie Gullatt-Whiteman seconded, to proceed with staff's recommendation according to the funding priorities established.

Mr. Storment said he supports the motion but would like to change the priority order so that Smith is #2 and Site 17 is #3.

Mr. Dyer withdrew his motion.

John Storment made a motion, LeRoy Brady seconded, and it was unanimously carried to recommend that Quality of Life and Parks Bond funding previously identified for the Indoor Aquatic Center be directed toward implementing aquatic facilities improvements in the following priority order: 1) Carson (replacement); 2) Smith (new); 3) Outdoor Aquatic Center at Site 17 (new); 4) Kino (renovation); and 5) Taylor (renovation).

### **Wireless Communication Tower**

Tim Barnard reported that this agenda item is a follow-up to the May 5, 2005 Board meeting. Based on the updates to the Wireless Communications Design and Placement Guidelines for Parks and Recreation Facilities adopted by the City Council on July 6, 2004, the Parks and Recreation Board is the first step in the approval process for requests to place cell towers and ground equipment in City Parks. Section 5. Procedure for Site Plan and Elevation Review of the Guidelines states "the Board may vote to approve or deny upon a finding that the proposed facility: 1) will be compatible with these Guidelines; 2) will be compatible with and not detrimental to surrounding sites; and 3) will not interfere with the present and expected future use of the recreational or open space use of the park or retention basin."

At the May 5, 2005 Board meeting, proposals were presented for the installation of two cell towers and ground equipment in Chaparral Park. Residents of the Chaparral Park neighborhood were invited to the meeting to provide public input on the proposals. Residents had several questions regarding the proposals and the Board tabled its decision until the next meeting. The questions and staff responses are listed below.

1. Can the providers add additional palms and, if so, must they come back to the residents? Answer: The Board can request that providers provide additional landscaping to buffer the cell equipment as per Section 2. Purpose and Intent of the Guidelines.
2. Is there a possibility that these towers would be installed without the fake covering on them? Answer: No, providers can only install the monopalm or monopine towers, which would blend in with existing trees.
3. What other City groups have access to the funds? Answer: Any City group would have access to the funds from cell tower leases in parks. The City Council voted 6-1 at their July 12, 2004 meeting to have the funds from leasing cell tower sites in City parks to go to a restricted revenue account for allocation by Council at a future date.
4. Is there a safeguard that the funds would be used for parks? Answer: No, the revenues will go into a restricted account for allocation by Council at a future date.
5. Are the setbacks based on the further widening of Gilbert Road or the current configuration of Gilbert Road? Answer: Per the Transportation Division, the most effective way to widen Gilbert Road would be along the west side of the street opposite the park; therefore, the park would not be affected.
6. Why can't providers co-locate on one tower rather than having two? Answer: The Board could provide direction requesting that the providers co-locate on one pole; however, co-location on a monopalm is not aesthetically pleasing.
7. Would the providers dismantle the towers and tear everything down at the end of the lease? Answer: This stipulation will be included in the lease agreement.

Mr. Barnard advised that the Alltel proposal for a 75-foot faux monopalm has been withdrawn. The T-Mobile proposal is for a 55-foot monopalm and 480 square feet of enclosed ground space.

Mr. Barnard further reported that placing wireless communication facilities in City parks disguised in a stealth design is a relatively new concept for Mesa and other Valley cities. Parks are a highly valued amenity that the City of Mesa provides for its residents. While it is recognized that there may be areas in some parks that have lower recreational value and are therefore suitable sites for cell facilities, the potential sites will still take a piece of a park out of public recreational and open space use. The City places a high value on park sites, but also wants to be cooperative in assisting wireless communication companies working to meet the needs of their customers by providing cell coverage. Based on the feedback from the Board and residents, staff supports the T-Mobile request for a 55 foot tall monopalm and 480 square feet of enclosed ground space.

The City of Mesa has existing lease rates for the ground space requested by providers. The lease rates are based on the following four classifications:

- Class 1: (Very little room, controversial, hard to site, high population coverage, high vehicle traffic area) currently an annual rate of \$43 per square foot.
- Class 2: (Difficult to site, mid to high coverage area, mid to high vehicle traffic, little room on the site) currently an annual rate of at \$33 per square foot.
- Class 3: (Sited in a residential neighborhood, some room on the site, semi-concealed site) currently an annual rate of at \$27 per square foot.
- Class 4: (Rural area, little controversy, lots of room, not a lot of people or vehicles nearby) currently an annual rate of at \$22 per square foot.

The Board was advised that it can consider an appropriate lease rate for each wireless proposal as it is presented, based on whether or not the proposal "will be compatible with and not detrimental to surrounding sites; and will not interfere with the present and expected future use of the recreational or open space use of the park or retention basin." Staff recommends the

Class 2 lease rate, which is currently an annual rate of \$33 per square foot of ground space, for the T-Mobile proposal. If the proposal by T-Mobile is approved through the Planning Division process and by the City Manager (or, as needed, the City Council), the fiscal impact based on the Class 2 annual lease rate would be \$15,840 annually (480 square feet of ground space x \$33 per square foot).

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked about the change in procedures that was mentioned at the previous Board meeting regarding notice to residents and the use of envelopes that indicate the importance of the contents.

Mr. Barnard replied that the guidelines will not be changed because they are a minimum and the City and cell tower providers can always do more than is stated in the guidelines. However, a process will be established, including better timeframes and contact methods. With future proposals, more advance notice will be sent to a larger group of residents, hopefully through neighborhood associations, and residents will be better educated prior to the proposals being presented to the Board.

Mr. Page asked about the restricted revenue account.

Mr. Barnard replied that City Council did not want funds earmarked specifically to parks and recreation. The restricted revenue account places funds outside the regular City budget, with separate accounting.

Mr. Page asked if the blank walls will be made more appealing, as was requested by a resident at the previous Board meeting.

Mr. Barnard replied that well sites have already been painted a different color to blend in better. The Board can direct for additional landscaping.

Mr. Brinton suggested that the Board include a recommendation to enhance landscaping. Also, the Board needs to insure that proposed towers are not too tall and that they blend in. He said that he would reluctantly support the proposal because the City needs the revenue generated by the lease.

David Peterson made a motion, and John Stormont seconded, that the Board approve the request received from T-Mobile for installation of a 55-foot cell tower monopole at Chaparral Park, with an enclosure of 480 square feet of ground space, and that this installation include additional landscaping to enhance the outer area, and that 40% of the proceeds be earmarked for park activity.

Mr. Dyer questioned if the Board should lock in 40%.

Mr. Peterson said 40% was stated because revenue from cell towers at Mesa Public Schools sites is distributed with 40% to the school and 60% to the district budget.

Joe Holmwood advised that at the time City Council was discussing revenue from cell tower leases, Council wanted 100% to be placed in the general fund. This restricted revenue account was a compromise.

Mr. Dyer requested that the residents be involved in the additional landscaping.

Ms. Palmberg reported that trees have been purchased and plans are underway for planting. She requested a neighborhood resident contact and said a meeting will be scheduled.

The motion made by David Peterson carried unanimously.

### **AZSTA Grant Application**

Mr. Barnard reported that the Arizona Sports and Tourism Authority (AZSTA) was created by the Arizona State Legislature and approved by the voters of Maricopa County in November 2000 with the passage of Proposition 302. One of the many purposes of AZSTA is supporting the acquisition of land, construction, financing, furnishing, improving, marketing or promoting the use of community youth and amateur sports and recreational facilities that are located in Maricopa County. In implementing the funding of youth and amateur sports, AZSTA has established a Biennial Youth & Amateur Sports Grant Program.

The goals of the AZSTA Youth & Amateur Sports Grant Program are to: identify, solicit, develop and allocate funding for youth and amateur sports proposals in Maricopa County which will service a wide variety of sporting experiences throughout the Valley; provide technical assistance, demographic and facility information and outreach to youth and amateur sports participants and their communities about opportunities and activities of AZSTA; participate in and encourage partnerships which benefit youth and amateur sports; and ensure that funds provided by AZSTA are allocated in a responsible and effective manner and in compliance with the organization's enabling legislation. AZSTA has a maximum of \$2.4 million of funding available for the 2005 Grant Program cycle.

At their January 13, 2005 Study Session, the City Council provided staff direction to develop project cost estimates for the Outdoor Aquatic Center. With these costs now completed, the proposed cost for the Outdoor Aquatic Center project is \$11.6 million.

Staff is proposing to submit a grant application to the AZSTA in the amount of \$1.5 million to help offset the total cost of the Outdoor Aquatic Center project. The application is due to the AZSTA by June 1, 2005 and the timeline for the grant review to be completed is early September 2005. Applications that are recommended for funding will go to the AZSTA Youth and Amateur Sports Oversight Committee and the AZSTA Board for final approval at the end of September 2005. Successful grant applicants will be notified, with grant disbursement scheduled for February 2006.

John Dyer made a motion, Connie Gullatt-Whiteman seconded, and it was unanimously carried that staff submit an application to the Arizona Sports and Tourism Authority (AZSTA) 2005 Biennial Grant Program for \$1.5 million to help fund the Outdoor Aquatic Center.

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

No report

### **Director's Report**

Jeff Kirk reported that a new Wal-Mart will be opening in July at Greenfield Road and U.S. 60. He is employed by Wal-Mart and has been asked to promote grants in the community on behalf of Wal-Mart. Mesa Parks and Recreation has been identified as a possible recipient, along with other City departments and Mesa businesses. He gave a grant application to division staff for completion and submission.

Bob White presented the following reports:

- The typical Board meeting schedule for the summer is to recess for June, July, and August unless the need arises to have a special meeting. The Board will follow the same schedule this year and will be notified if it becomes necessary to have a special meeting.
- The Board subcommittee to discuss the Capital Improvement Program will meet on June 6 at the Parks and Recreation Administration Office.
- Outgoing Board members Robert Brinton and John Storment were recognized for their years of service to the Parks and Recreation Board, and each was presented with a gift of appreciation from the Parks and Recreation Division.

Mr. John Storment said he and his family have been utilizing Mesa parks for many years. The previous evening his family had an event at a Mesa park and a park ranger stopped by and visited. He extolled the benefits of the park ranger program.

Mr. Barnard reported that the Hawes Loop trail dedication will be held on June 4, 2005. Board members will receive an invitation and agenda.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob White  
Parks and Recreation Director

**City of Mesa  
Parks and Recreation Board Meeting  
May 24, 2005  
Citizen Comments (written)**

**Aquatic Facilities Improvements**

I have 3 kids who swim competitively for Carson. The new Carson ideas are great, but the site 17 plans are fabulous! That would be a great boost to Mesa's competitive swimming program. I look forward to spending some hot days there watching my kids swim!

Appreciate the opportunity to improve our Carson Pool facility. It will be greatly utilized by our community. Thank you for your hard work!

I like what I heard tonight at the meeting. One suggestion for the pool would be to make it 10 lanes. A small increase in building cost, but warm up/cool down area for competition swimming. Also additional space for dual team practices or the general public. Thank you.

I'm happy to see the city moving forward on their plans for renovation and construction of new aquatic facilities. I believe the proposed plan has been well thought out and I support it fully. I wanted to thank the board and city staff for all their hard work.

From the brief update and info on the aquatics facilities, it sounds pretty good. I would really like to stress the importance of the new Carson and Smith pools and would like to request an as soon as possible decision on the constructions. Summer 2005! It's for the kids, it's for the community.

Please encourage the construction of site 17 to occur as soon as possible. This is a critical need for our community and will replace the indoor facility that the public already approved and voted for.

Hoping Carson Pool continues to be a top priority in getting a new pool. My reason:

- I teach special needs students at Carson and Westwood and they need a pool that is safer for our needs.
- I have a son that swims for Westwood and I want him to have pride in his team and facility.
- My son also plays water polo and needs a pool in this area for practice.

Do the planned pools include warm up and cool down areas? Does the Carson Pool include a classroom instruction area as mentioned for Smith? Concern with depth of pools for water polo. Oh, got the answer...2m depth. Thank you.

Kino Pool needs larger bathhouses and a meeting and training room, not just improved, same size bathhouse. Also needs larger deck space. Suggest expand to the north for meeting room and deck space. This was a major part of the public request for this pool. Thank you for supporting the aquatic package.

Water sports in the Mesa area are not limited to the summer months of June-Aug. Aquatics provide a comprehensive form of exercise which can and should be available to all interested residents as many months of the year as desired. Also, aquatic facilities provide healthy work opportunities for many young and mature workers. Everyone should be water safe and city programs can make that happen in an enjoyable and affordable way to all who choose to participate. Pools need to be aesthetically pleasing as well as structurally and environmentally safe. The voters agreed that money should be spent to provide aquatic facilities. I want to express my full support for the plans as presented by Versar and the other consultants.

My family has resided in Mesa for over 15 years. During that timeframe, every other major city in this Valley has built a top notch aquatic facility. By public vote, Mesa residents approved funding for such a facility. Enough time has passed. We need to get such a facility built now. Although my main interest is in a top notch facility, I understand some of the older facilities need improvements now. Those older facilities are generally in less well off areas. Those families need a place to go. Do not delay any longer. As a resident, I would like to see our city look forward!

I am pleased the council set funding priorities based on the public meeting on March 8, 2005. I was concerned when I thought I heard Mr. Stormont say funding was based on "whim and fancy." However, his concern of the simultaneous construction of Smith and site 17 is valid. I would like construction of these sites to remain simultaneous. However, if there are delays based on voter approval for site 17, then Smith will not be affected. Thank you.

I agree with the motion. The Smith Pool should be a high priority and I think tying the site 17 with other plans would be a mistake and could end up delaying the other projects. While I support the downtown site plan, I am more interested in the ones that will allow for more local competitive aquatics and at the same time for family swimming as well.

In support of Carson Pool.

**City of Mesa  
Parks and Recreation Board Meeting  
May 24, 2005  
Citizen Comments (written)**

**Wireless Communication Tower at Chaparral Park**

Please consider adding palm trees around the site to mitigate the impact of the monopalm. I have worked for more than 7 years developing wireless sites. I stuccoed existing block; I build concession stands at Little League parks. I am suggesting that T-Mobile pay to make these improvements. Please have them stucco the existing walls. The photo simulation was not to scale. The taller existing palm does not exceed 35'.

City parks should not be commercialized. The cell towers are unsightly and no one has addressed the health issues. Alltel's 75-foot request was outrageous as is T-Mobile at 55 feet (when the City now is only approving 40 foot elsewhere). If the City allows this encroachment, we can only be concerned with what will be done next to commercialize the parks. This is a big deal and if the City were to go forward, much against my beliefs, then the City should allow each park's community [to] develop a design review committee (much like the DRAB).

If a monopalm tower is constructed, then at least 3 real palm trees should be clustered around the fake palm. Also, the cell provider [should] provide an amenity to the park in exchange for the site. It should be 4 additional park benches and perhaps a covered ramada.

This is all about money. Alltel has already shown that they don't really "need" the tower. They want it, but only on the cheap. They saw an opportunity to throw some money at the city for an outrageous 75 foot monopalm. By comparison, 55 feet for T-Mobile sounds reasonable. It is not. When pressed to be fair and do what is right for the City, they probably will react the same as Alltel. Please keep the towers out of our park and all parks. I cannot believe you would deface the park for \$16,000 a year. It's not worth the hassle.

If cell towers are installed in our city parks, they should not lessen the beauty nor hinder the original purpose for our parks. Historically our parks have been a point of pride in Mesa because of their use by many and the open spaces they provide for a large city. In addition, the revenue that would come from cell towers should at least, in part, go back to Parks and Recreation. It may be time for Mesa to consider a city property tax.

I oppose the commercialization of Mesa's parks. Our parks (and our Arts Center) are all that is left of the beautiful Mesa we enjoyed when we moved here in 1974. I acknowledge the need for increasing Mesa's revenue stream and recommend considering a property tax. Parks are important! If you must build cell towers, the revenue, in fairness, should be directed to the parks and the community should be able to work with the cell tower owners to minimize the aesthetic impact on the park. (PS - We do not have a neighborhood association and we were never notified of the proposal or the earlier meeting.)

I am the applicant and I am in favor.