

Parks & Recreation Board Meeting Minutes

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular session at the Parks and Recreation office at 200 S. Center Street, Building 1, Mesa on October 11, 2007.

Members Present:

Frank Alger
Don Goodrum
Russ Gillard
Connie Gullatt-Whiteman
Walter "Bud" Page, Jr.
Michelle Udall

Members Absent:

Marilyn Wilson, excused
Dina Lopez, excused
Reggie Dye, excused
Jeff Kirk, excused
David Martinez, excused

Staff Present:

Rhett Evans
Andrea Moore
J.D. Dockstader
Darla Armfield
Bob Huhn
Dawn Bies
Kelly Rafferty
Dale Furnas
Scott Rigby
Mike Holste

Sherry Woodley
Stephanie Weeks
Josh Buschel
Andy Reidy
Aimee Manis
Nicole Behrman
Sue Deck
Scot Rigby
Robert Howerton

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Connie Gullatt-Whiteman, Chair.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked if there was a motion for approval of the minutes from the September 13, 2007 meeting. Bud Page made a motion, Don Goodrum seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes as written.

Public Comments

None

Presentation from Making Wave Programs

Mr. Page introduced Russ Gillard and Aimee Manis and presented Mr. Gillard with a check for \$5,000 from the Mesa HoHoKam Foundation for sponsorship of the Making Waves Program.

Hear Presentation on Riverview Park Survey Results

J. D. Dockstader gave an update on the results of the Riverview Park online survey. He stated that the City had received 152 responses with the majority of them from the 85201 zip code, which includes the Riverview Park area.

Mr. Gillard asked if the questions pertained to living in West Mesa only. Mr. Dockstader said no. Mr. Gillard mentioned that the design of the Waveyard Project shows the lake at the park for fishing; however, the survey results didn't rate it as a high priority for parks users.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked to have the survey results posted online for residents to view. Mr. Dockstader said staff would post the results as presented to the Board.

Hear a Presentation and Discuss the Relocation of the Riverview Softball Fields

Scot Rigby gave the Board an update on the status of the Waveyard Project. He informed the Board that the City is dealing with several private property owners to try to find a new location for the ball fields. In addition there are three City-owned sites staff is analyzing:

- Center Street & 202 Freeway – could be configured to fit four ball fields in a half-moon, side by side layout
- Kleinman Park – could hold four ball fields
- Mesa Drive & US 60 retention basin – looking at making a tiered retention basin with raised fields to separate retention basin from ball fields and parking areas.

Mr. Rigby said the City could move forward quickly with their commitment to replace the Riverview ball fields in west Mesa on one of the three city-owned sites, if necessary. He stressed that the City is continuing to work with individual property owners to try and find additional property to relocate the ball fields. He stated that the City is eager to move forward with the project and told the Board that the early voting has started on this ballot item.

Hear and Discuss Updated Information Regarding Pioneer Park Locomotive

Mike Holste informed the Board that staff is working on developing a committee to secure outside funding sources for renovation/relocation of the Pioneer Park Locomotive. Mr. Holste mentioned the possibility of the train being considered an “art project” with the current light rail development. If approved, it’s possible the City could receive the necessary funding for the entire renovation of the train. This would require relocation of the train to one of the stations along the light rail route on Main Street. Final approval for this option would not be available until 2008. Scott Lindsay, consultant with Steam Operations Corporation who initially prepared the recommendation report for the City, agreed it would be possible to delay repairs/renovation to the train for a year, but suggested the citizen’s committee try to obtain funding to start asbestos and lead paint abatement as soon as possible while waiting for Federal funding.

Scott Bouchie from the City’s Environmental Programs office reviewed Mr. Lindsay’s report and agreed that the asbestos abatement must be done right away. He estimated the asbestos abatement to cost more than the \$40,000 quoted in Mr. Lindsay’s report. After the scope of the job is determined, it could possibly run as high as \$80,000.

Melanie Dykstra, a PRCF Recreation Coordinator, will chair the citizen’s fundraising committee, and Mr. Bouchie will also be on the committee. During the next couple of months, the City will survey citizens to assemble a committee through various means of public advertising. Mr. Holste stated that staff would keep the Board informed of the committee’s progress.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked if staff was planning to have a Parks Board member serve on this committee. Mr. Holste thought it would be a good recommendation to have a voice from the Board on this committee.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman encouraged the Board members to consider a seat on this committee, stating that Jeff Kirk may be a good candidate because of his previously expressed interest in the locomotive project. Mr. Holste said that Ms. Dykstra will attend the November Board meeting and will speak to the Board members in more detail at that time.

Mr. Gillard informed the Board that the Foundation for Mesa Parks and Recreation agreed to be a funding resource for the locomotive restoration once the citizen's committee is formed; the Foundation will be glad to accept donations.

Rhett Evans told the Board that on Thursday, October 25th, following the City Council's study session, at approximately 8:45 a.m.; staff will be presenting the Board's recommendations to relocate the locomotive to the Council subcommittee over Neighborhood Services. Upon Council's approval, staff will initiate press releases to inform the public that we are seeking ways to raise funds for the locomotive restoration/relocation and asking for volunteers to be on a citizen fundraising committee headed by Ms. Dykstra and a member of the Parks Board.

Hear Update on Pool Renovations

Andrea Moore gave the Board an update on pool renovation projects that was presented to the City Council. The City completed renovation at Carson Westwood Aquatic Center, using some of the funds from the \$25.1 million Quality of Life money set aside for pool projects. Many pools are aging and in serious need of repair; many of the pools are out of compliance with some of the new regulations the County has put in place for pools. Staff has been working with Council to determine which pools will have the highest priority for renovation to be done.

In September 2006, Council directed staff to begin renovation design on the 50-meter competition pool at Kino and the 25-meter pool at Rhodes Jr. High. Initial cost estimates have been received, and staff has asked Council to provide direction as to the extent of renovations they would approve, since additional amenities have been explored to revitalize the Rhodes pool.

In September 2007, Council agreed to the site designs for Kino and Rhodes pools with the extra amenities suggested by staff. When renovations at these pools are completed, the City will have enough money for one more renovation project. However, Council wants to change the direction of the pool program and has requested staff to consult Mesa Public Schools (MPS) about constructing a new pool in East Mesa. The remaining pools will be addressed as needed based on maintenance concerns. Ms. Moore explained that Council is aware that the continuing deterioration of some pools may result in having to shut them down if additional funds are not identified. If significant repairs are needed, staff will turn to Council and MPS for further direction.

Mr. Gillard asked about the Board's previous recommendation to build a pool at Smith Jr. High in East Mesa. Ms. Moore explained that Council had concerns about opening a new pool with so many existing pools in disrepair. Staff was directed to go ahead with renovations at Kino and Rhodes and see what funds were left over. Council has since directed staff to continue to look at pool sites in east Mesa, even if it means leaving existing pools in disrepair until additional funds become available.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked about the timeline for repairs to Kino and Rhodes. Ms. Moore said they were currently in design and that Darla Armfield would be talking more about the renovation schedule.

Ms. Armfield showed the Board a public use schedule for the City's pools and stated that the trend shows that when pools are upgraded with amenities, attendance goes up. Ms. Armfield compared attendance for the past two years at Carson Pool, comparing 04-05, the season prior to renovations, against 06-07 when it was reopened; attendance quadrupled. This concept has been very successful and the City wants to continue with it.

Ms. Armfield shared information about competitive use and public use pools with the Board. She explained that the two types of usage conflict with each other due to the differing pool depths. She stated that Kino will be a competition pool with a diving well and movable bulkhead and a recreation amenity facility, which accommodates both user groups at one site. She informed the Board that Kino used to be a premier competitive facility; however, due to changing requirements it was disqualified for use as a competitive facility about eight years ago, which left the City unable to host competitions in Mesa. Other points of the Kino design are a classroom used for meetings, and indoor restrooms. The facility has been shifted and expanded to provide additional parking and space for canopies for groups during competitions.

Ms. Udall asked about the dive tank width and if it would be larger than it is now, and about the timeframe for completion. Ms. Armfield reported that staff was hopeful that construction would begin in February 2008 with a completion date of February 2009.

Ms. Armfield then shared the planned amenities for Rhodes Jr. High pool. She informed the Board that the Dobson High swim team would use the pool and that staff had been working with Mesa Community College to develop curriculum classes for their use. She stated that there would be some unique amenities such as deck features, competition areas and a new amenity called a standing wave feature, which has been approved for purchase by Council.

Mr. Gillard asked if there would be concessions at Kino. Ms. Armfield stated that all the City pools have vending machines, except Rhodes, which will have a concession stand.

Hear Presentation on Summer Aquatics Program

Ms. Armfield introduced the Aquatics staff Aimee Manis, Andy Reidy, Josh Buschel, and Stephanie Krause, who shared highlights from the 2007 Summer Aquatic Program. Those highlights included:

- Training classes were filled to capacity.
- Transitioned back to American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor Program.
- Automated External Defibrillators (AED) purchased for all pools, keeping staff in compliance with training regulations.
- Started incentive programs to recruit and retain staff.
- Guard Start Program had 169 participants with 11,520 hours volunteered.
- Experienced a 37% decrease in swim lesson participants from previous year for variety of reasons such as: fee increases, involvement in other events/activities, and rising cost of gasoline.

Ms. Udall pointed out that MPS had experienced a drop in enrollment of over 1,200 due to the real estate market and the large number of families moving to the far southeast part of the Valley, which could attribute to the drop in summer programs.

Ms. Armfield and her staff also shared:

- Making Waves Program gave away 891 scholarships this year in partnership with the Foundation for Mesa Parks and Recreation.
- Salt River Project provided all printing services for the Aquatics Program this season for free.
- Competitive programs had 2,375 participants in various areas (swim, diving, synchro, and water polo) and over 900 swim team participants.
- Customer satisfaction survey results showed over 85% of participants satisfied or very satisfied with programs.

- Great attendance and media coverage at special events: April Pools Day, Pachanga en la Piscina, the Luau & Bubble and Splash Bash, and weekly teen nights.
- Reservations increased with an 8.5% increase in revenue.
- Public swim attendance 24% increase over previous year. Contributing factors included: family pass usage, Carson Aquatic Center re-opening, a pilot program for weekend discounts, new pool amenities (climbing wall, dive-in movies, foam pit, cage balls).

Appoint Subcommittee for Annual Fees and Charges Review

Sue Deck introduced Nicole Behrman, Financial Coordinator and addressed the Board regarding fees and charges. She asked for three volunteers for the subcommittee and told the Board the first meeting would be in early November with the committee going before the Board for fees and charges approval at the January meeting. Fees would then be submitted to the Finance Committee on February 8th.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman suggested Ms. Udall and Mr. Alger get involved on this committee because it would serve as a great educational tool for them as new Board members. She mentioned that Mr. Gillard had volunteered to be on the committee as well.

Chair Comments

- TimeOut Brochure - Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman expressed how much she liked the style of the new TimeOut Brochures put out by Parks and Recreation, listing all their programs. She feels it is much more compact and easier to read.
- Park of the Canals – Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman spoke about an article on the Park of the Canals that had been in the East Valley Tribune on September 17th. She asked to have Park of the Canals added to a future agenda for discussion and feels there are issues that need to be addressed for that park. She said it was a wonderful park and she had visited it many times in the past, but that she wouldn't dare go there now.

Director's Report

- MASD Fundraiser - Mr. Evans attended the Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled (MASD) at the Marriott; \$108,000 was raised, which was the most money raised at a single event.
- Upcoming Events –
 - Mr. Evans reminded the Board that the next meeting would be held on November 8th and mentioned the survey that had been sent out to the Board identifying which date/times were best for a tour for the Board.
 - Mr. Evans invited the Board to attend the Paralympic Academy at ASU on October 26-27. He asked Dawn Bies to send out the calendar of events to the Board.
 - Mr. Evans gave the Board Sherry Woodley's phone number (644-3311) to set up a Ranger ride-along if interested.

Mr. Evans suggested that the Board might want to reschedule the retreat portion of the meeting to another time, as there would not be a quorum available for the retreat.

Reports on Meetings and/or Events Attended by Board Members

Mr. Gillard attended the Foundation for Mesa Parks and Recreation meeting to discuss securing funding for the Pioneer Park locomotive.

Discuss Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Work Plan

This item was suspended due to lack of quorum (two members had to leave the meeting early due to prior commitments).

Mr. Page then suggested forming a subcommittee now for the Fees & Charges. Mr. Alger, Ms. Udall and Mr. Gillard volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. The first meeting was scheduled for October 30, 2007.

Mr. Goodrum recommended moving the retreat to the November 8th meeting and rescheduling the tour of the facilities to another date. Mr. Alger stated that the work plan should take precedence over the tour.

Mr. Page asked if there was a more appropriate time for Board meetings. Mr. Goodrum suggested surveying the Board. Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked staff to send an email to the Board with suggestions for meeting times.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked for the retreat to be rescheduled to the November 8th meeting and asked Ms. Bies to send out a survey to the Board for meeting date/time options.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked if there were any other items for discussion; the Board had no additional comments. Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Alger made a motion, Mr. Goodrum seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Rhett Evans
Parks, Recreation and Commercial Facilities Director