

Parks and Recreation Board  
Meeting Minutes

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met for a regular meeting at the Parks and Recreation Administration Office, 100 North Center Street, on September 9, 2004.

**Members Present:**

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

**Members Absent:**

John Storment, excused

**Staff Present:**

Darla Armfield  
Tim Barnard  
Marc Beasley  
Rhett Evans  
Joe Holmwood  
Mike Holste  
Andrea Madonna  
Terri Palmberg  
Diane Rogers  
Alfred Smith  
Sherry Woodley  
Mark Woodward  
Debbie Yukolis

**Others Present:**

John Dominguez  
Ryan Hyatt

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Robert Brinton, FY03-04 Vice Chair.

**Welcome New Board Members**

Brinton welcomed Connie Gullatt-Whiteman to the Board. Bernadine Mooney was not present at this time and was welcomed later in the meeting.

Brinton expressed the Board's condolences to John Dyer and asked for a minute of silence in remembrance of Dyer's wife, Susan, who recently passed away.

**Election of Officers**

Bud Page made a motion, David Peterson seconded, and it was unanimously carried to elect Robert Brinton as Chair for FY04-05.

John Dyer made a motion, Russ Gillard seconded, and it was unanimously carried to elect Bud Page as Vice Chair for FY04-05.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting of June 10, 2004, were unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Brinton said the minutes state that John Storment asked for information on cemetery fees and asked if that information had been provided.

Mark Woodward replied that staff would be bringing the cemetery fee analysis to the Board this fall.

**Public Comments**

John Dominguez, 1857 East Dartmouth Street, said he was addressing the Board on behalf of a small group of citizens concerning Parkway Pool. The fee to use the pool recently increased, which is acceptable if the services are provided. Last year, the entrance door was locked so the pool could not be used. Mr. Dominguez spoke to several City staff concerning this issue.

Mr. Dominguez said a similar problem occurred in 2004 and he was told that malfunctioning equipment was the reason the pool could not be used. He spoke to several staff from the City and Mesa Public Schools about this problem and was told it would be repaired. However, when he went to Parkway Pool the doors were locked. He again spoke to several City staff concerning this, and the pool was eventually opened.

Mr. Dominguez said he received a letter of apology from the City. He believes the problem is that there are two entities involved, the City of Mesa and Mesa Public Schools, and there needs to be better communication.

### **Spirituos Liquor in Parks**

Mr. Woodward reported that amendments to Title 6, Chapter 10, of the Mesa City Code pertaining to a variety of public park regulations were reviewed by City Council at their August 19, 2004, Study Session. While Council was generally supportive of the proposed changes, concerns were expressed about the changes proposed to the Code provision covering the consumption of spirituous liquor in public parks. Council agreed to proceed with action on the Ordinance amendment without the changes proposed to the section of the Code pertaining to the consumption of spirituous liquor.

Council asked staff to have the Parks Board further evaluate the spirituous liquor section. Specifically, two Council members expressed concerns that, when compared to surrounding cities, Mesa's permit fees were too high; that Mesa was too restrictive in terms of the number of parks where spirituous liquor could be consumed; and that Mesa was too limiting by requiring a group in order to obtain approval of a permit.

A summary of the existing Code language was presented to the Board.

- consumption and possession of spirituous liquor, by permit issued by Parks and Recreation, is limited to beer;
- permits can be issued for consumption and possession of beer in only four parks (Falcon Field, Pioneer, Riverview, and Red Mountain); and
- permits for consumption and possession of beer in these parks will only be issued to groups of 50 or more and only issued to persons of legal drinking age who are attending a state picnic, family reunion, company picnic, special event, or similar gathering of an organized group.

Mr. Woodward then summarized the Parks Board's original recommendation for amending the Parks regulation.

- consumption and possession of spirituous liquor, by permit issued by Parks and Recreation, would be expanded to include wine as well as beer;
- permits can be issued for consumption and possession of beer and wine in only four parks (no change-Falcon Field, Pioneer, Riverview and Red Mountain).
- The City Manager, with the approval and consent of the City Council, could recommend and designate additional park sites where the consumption and possession of beer and wine would be allowed by permit.
- permits for consumption and possession of beer and wine in these parks will be issued to groups of 25 or more (the reference to the particular activities was struck);
- the majority of the 25 in the group must be of legal drinking age (in the current Ordinance it implies that only the holder of the permit must be of legal drinking age);
- the holder of the permit must stay on site during the event (there is no such requirement in the current Ordinance language).

To assist the Board in its evaluation, staff presented alternatives and provided a pros and cons analysis of each alternative, as well as the Board's original recommendation.

Original recommendation:

**Pros**

- Reducing the permit requirement for the current groups of 50 to 25 better mirrors the group use patterns
- Can be administrated and enforced with available resources
- Modification clarifies requirement for “drinking age” participants and responsibility of permit holder
- Permit cost covers administrative costs

**Cons**

- Limits consumption of spirituous liquor in public parks to only four locations
- Could be perceived as too much government control
- Excludes individual users from acquiring a permit
- Mesa is not comparable with surrounding cities in regulating consumption of liquor in public parks

Alternative #1: This alternative is the same as the original recommendation, except reducing the fee from \$20 to \$10.

**Pros**

- Reducing the permit requirement for the current groups of 50 to 25 better mirrors the group use patterns
- Can be administrated and enforced with available resources
- Modification clarifies requirement for “drinking age” participants and responsibility of permit holder
- Mesa is more “in-line” with surrounding communities in terms of the fee for beer and wine permits

**Cons**

- Limits consumption of spirituous liquor in public parks to only four locations-could be perceived as too much government control
- Reduces the amount of revenue, per permit (which was based on covering administrative costs)
- Excludes individual users from acquiring a permit
- Mesa is not comparable with surrounding cities in regulating consumption of liquor in public parks

Alternative #2: Decrease the permit cost from \$20 to \$10 and expand the number of parks from four to ten. Staff recommends 1) Gene Autry, 2) Countryside, 3) Fitch, 4) Kleinman, 5) Dobson Ranch, 6) Falcon Field, 7) Pioneer, 8) Red Mountain, 9) Riverview, and 10) Skyline.

**Pros**

- More geographical distribution of parks where permits can be issued
- Limits alcohol consumption to groups within larger, district parks with full restroom facilities
- Mesa is more “in-line” with surrounding communities in terms of the fee for beer and wine permits and the number of parks where consumption is permitted
- Overall revenues could increase due to expanding the number of parks where permits can be issued

**Cons**

- Impact on resources; permit activity increases
- More enforcement impacts on Park Rangers and potential for increase in police call-outs for problems in parks
- Permit fee does not cover administrative costs
- Mesa remains “more” restrictive when compared with surrounding communities-perception of too much government may still exist

Alternative #3: Allow alcohol in all parks all of the time, without permits, for groups and/or individuals.

**Pros**

- No permits required, thereby no adverse impacts on staff who issue permits
- Groups or individuals can consume spirituous liquor in all parks throughout the community

**Cons**

- Allowing consumption in parks without full restroom facilities
- More enforcement impacts on Park Rangers and potential for increase in police call-outs for problems in parks
- Poor example to youth
- Possible negative community feedback due to potential for more widespread alcohol use

Mr. Woodward identified the potential fiscal impacts of each alternative:

- Original recommendation: no fiscal impact anticipated. Currently, permit revenues total approximately \$3500 annually.
- Alternative #1 would likely be a reduction in annual revenue from permits;
- Alternative #2 could increase annual revenues, yet may not cover annual administrative costs. This alternative could also impact resource costs relating to the issuance of permits, safety and security, and maintenance; and
- Alternative #3 would eliminate the annual revenue from permits and significantly impact the cost of resources relating to the safety, security, and maintenance of parks.

Mr. Woodward summarized the following feedback received from the Mesa Police Department:

- support permits for liquor consumption in parks with full restrooms
- not support the reduction in the permit
- support the reduction of the group size to 25 from 50
- support the addition of wine to the permit
- suggest that a perimeter standard be established in the Ordinance to clarify where the limits of the consumption are permitted (e.g., those consuming alcohol must remain within 50' of a ramada)
- suggest the permit holder be responsible for any violations relating to the consumption of spirituous liquor
- suggest we not allow the issuance of permits in parks that are adjacent to or within 300 feet of a school or church
- anticipate there will be an increase in calls as a result of expanding the permit authority to other parks

Mr. Woodward also reported statistics provided by the Mesa Park Rangers concerning citations and warnings issued January 2004 through the present for glass containers and possession/consumption of alcohol in City parks.

In summation, Mr. Woodward reported that staff remains supportive of the original recommendation; however, they would suggest allowing permits to be issued for larger community parks with full restroom facilities. Staff clarified that the existing fee was established to recover the majority of the direct costs relating to issuing permits. But if the Board wished to recommend lowering the cost, staff believes a \$10 fee is reasonable based on the comparison of surrounding cities. Staff would not recommend allowing permits in parks where conflicts would exist with current concession agreements, nor would staff support the issuance of permits to allow alcohol consumption in neighborhood parks and/or facilities dedicated to youth.

Relating to the list of parks in Alternative #2, City Attorney, Alfred Smith, commented that expanding the number of parks focused on existing community parks. He explained that Reed, Quail Run, and Park of Canals were not included in the recommended list due to their heavy use by youth.

Dina Lopez moved and Bernadine Mooney seconded, that no changes be made to the Board's original recommendation which was summarized by Mr. Woodward.

In response to questions from Chair Brinton, staff reviewed the expanded list of parks and determined that there was at least one park in each Council District that was recommended for issuing permits. The four parks where permits are currently allowed are located in Council Districts 1, 4, and 5. Mr. Woodward also clarified that staff believes the majority of the group should be of legal drinking age to prevent a group consisting of one to two adults and the remainder children.

Mr. Brinton explained that he would be voting against the motion because he would like to see the Board recommend an expanded list of parks where consumption of spirituous liquor would be allowed by permit. He also commented that the Ordinance should clearly state that permits couldn't be not issued for retention basins.

Board member Gillard asked staff to comment on the establishment of a resident and non-resident fee. Terri Palmberg stated her opinion that the City has maintained a position concerning our Parks and Recreation services of not charging residents and non-residents a different fee.

At this time, Mr. Brinton called for a vote.

The vote tied with five aye (Brady, Dyer, Kirk, Lopez, Mooney) and five nay (Brinton, Gillard, Gullatt-Whiteman, Page, Peterson), with the general feeling of the members voting nay that more parks other than the four currently allowed by Ordinance should be considered for issuance of spirituous liquor permits.

Mr. Holmwood commented that the members' opinions are respected and that City Council is looking for some direction from the Board.

Board member Peterson asked whether the Board should consider adding Dobson Ranch, Countryside, and Skyline Parks to the expanded list. Member Dyer commented that Countryside and Skyline are heavily used by youth and he would not wish to recommend a situation that might cause the mixing of alcohol consumption with youth.

Board member Gullatt-Whiteman commented that with being a new member of the Parks Board, she is not as aware of the use of all of Mesa's parks, but is concerned that several of the proposed parks are near youth-oriented activities or schools.

John Dyer moved and Jeff Kirk seconded, that the Board recommend to City Council the following changes to Title 6, Chapter 10, of the Mesa City Code pertaining to public park regulations and the consumption of spirituous liquor:

- consumption and possession of spirituous liquor, by permit issued by Parks and Recreation, would be expanded to include wine as well as beer;
- permits can be issued for consumption and possession of beer and wine in only four parks (no change-Falcon Field, Pioneer, Riverview and Red Mountain).
- The City Manager, with the approval and consent of the City Council, could recommend and designate additional park sites where the consumption and possession of beer and wine would be allowed by permit.

- permits for consumption and possession of beer and wine in these parks will be issued to groups of 25 or more (the reference to the particular activities was struck);
- the majority of the 25 in the group must be of legal drinking age (in the current Ordinance it implies that only the holder of the permit must be of legal drinking age);
- the holder of the permit must stay on site during the event (there is no such requirement in the current Ordinance language).

The motion passed by a vote of 6-4, with Board members Brinton, Gillard, Page, Peterson voting nay.

### **Falcon Pool Demolition**

Ms. Palmberg said she would like to publicly apologize to Mr. Dominguez for the miscommunication about Parkway Pool. City staff realizes the value of Parkway Pool to the citizens.

Ms. Palmberg reported that Falcon Field Pool is one of the 13 City of Mesa operated pools and is located adjacent to Falcon Field Park, on the south side of Falcon Field Airport. Mesa's Falcon Field began in 1941 as a British RAF pilot training base, and the pool was built in 1942 by 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Studios in appreciation for being allowed to film the movie "Thunderbirds" on the base. The City of Mesa took over operation of the pool in 1949 and has continued to operate it throughout the years and it has recently been utilized as a swim lesson and rental facility. The pool is a small, non-standard sized pool that has passed its prime. The pool is in need of extensive renovations and Parks and Recreation staff were directed to evaluate the feasibility and cost effectiveness of spending funds to bring the project up to new Maricopa County Health Department standards and provide expanded open space for informal play.

After researching the cost effectiveness of making renovations versus closing the pool, staff has determined that the pool be closed and demolished. It is the plan to turn the area into a recreation area with turf, which will add to the ambience of the surrounding park and RAF memorial. Throughout this year's swimming season, there have been signs posted at the pool indicating that it will close at the end of August and no longer be kept in use. The final pool reservation was on August 28, 2004, and staff has worked with the public throughout the summer to insure that they are aware of the options for swim lessons and pool rentals at the City's other pools. A plaque will be installed, recognizing the site as part of a World War II pilot training area.

Staff is in the process of notifying key City officials and staff and surrounding businesses and residents of the possible demolition. The RAF Veterans group in England has also been made aware of the pending demolition of the pool and the City's intent to convert the area to a recreation area with turf to enhance the memorial area.

Bids were solicited for the demolition and the low bid was \$12,689.

Mr. Gillard asked what is included in the demolition and how the area will be used. Ms. Palmberg replied that all the concrete, fences, etc. will be pulled out, and pumps, motors, etc. will be salvaged. It will be filled with dirt and planted with grass. There is currently one sand volleyball court in close proximity.

Mr. Dyer asked if the restroom facilities are being demolished.

Ms. Palmberg replied that the old bathhouse would be demolished.

The Board unanimously concurred that the Falcon Field pool should be removed and filled in due to the cost ineffectiveness of the required renovations.

### **Meetings/Events Attended**

Mr. Brinton reported that many Board members attended the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association (APRA) Boards and Commissions Day on September 2, 2004. It was a wonderful event.

Mr. Gillard said it was a good opportunity for sharing experiences with board members from other cities in Arizona.

Rhett Evans reported that there were 19 board members in attendance and eight were from the Mesa Parks Board. Mesa had the best poker hand and won a \$250 gift certificate from Dave Bang Associates.

Mr. Evans also reported that the Red Mountain Multigenerational Center won the APRA Partnership Award.

The regular meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhett Evans  
Acting Parks and Recreation Director

City of Mesa  
Parks and Recreation Board  
Planning Workshop Summary  
September 9, 2004

The planning meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Robert Brinton, Chair.

Mr. Evans said we look to the Board and appreciate their efforts and want to make it a good partnership between the Board and staff. He reviewed voting requirements and conflict of interest.

Mr. Dyer said he works extensively with youth groups and asked for clarification of his voting on related agenda items.

Mr. Brinton said Mr. Dyer would not have a conflict of interest and should vote on such issues.

Mr. Evans reviewed the Mesa City Code creating the Parks Board and requested Board members notify staff when they are unable to attend a board meeting.

### **Board Work Plan**

Mr. Evans said we are ready to move forward with the work plan this year. We want to work together as a team. We have been working on implementation of the Parks and Recreation 2005 Master Plan this year and formed three division Solution Squads to look at core services, cost recovery, and standards.

Mr. Brinton asked the Board for goals they would like to see on the FY04-05 work plan. Board members provided the following items to be included in the work plan:

- Tour of parks and facilities
- Quail Run Park usage in off-season
- Use of basins/design issues
- Communication between staff and facility users concerning maintenance, etc.
- Address match of facility use with support facilities, especially school facilities.
- Board input on the future of Indoor Aquatic Center.
- Enhancement of Pioneer Park
- Involvement in recruitment of Parks and Recreation Director
- Portable parks
- Board meeting held in neighborhoods
- Board involvement in Master Plan implementation (standards, core services, interim plans)
- Board involvement in establishing priorities
- Work on Park Foundation involvement
- Moving forward on the Parks Foundation

Ms. Palmberg informed the Board that the October and November meetings must be rescheduled, due to staff being out of the office on October 14 and a City holiday on November 11. It was the consensus of the Board that the meetings be held on October 21 and November 18.

## **Presentations by Solution Squads**

Darla Armfield said the Core Program Solution Squad mission statement was "To objectively determine which services are 'core' or essential to the division." She gave a slide presentation on the Squad's methods, criteria, results, and action plan.

Ms. Palmberg said the mission statement of the Cost Recovery Solution Squad was "To develop aggressive and sustainable funding source strategies that support 30% of the division's operational budgets over the next five years that result in increased user and community investment in City programs, service, and facilities to create pride and ownership." She gave a slide presentation on the Squad's key values, partnerships, revenue, solicitation, pricing and recommendations for each.

Andrea Madonna said the Standards Solution Squad's mission statement was "To develop consistent division standards that provide safe, accessible, affordable, quality programs, facilities, and services for all our users which will enhance the quality of life in Mesa." She gave a slide presentation on standard levels, facility areas, and recommendations.

## **Bond Issue**

Joe Holmwood said the focus of the March 2004 bond election, which passed, was on land acquisition. The thought process being that acquiring parkland now, according to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, would preserve open space while not incurring immediate operating costs. The Bond issue does include some renovation of existing facilities and upgrading of equipment. Acquisition of parkland is a slow process because there needs to be a willing seller and the site locations should follow the Master Plan as clearly as possible. The City Real Estate Office is negotiating for land adjacent to Zaharis Elementary School. Currently, there are also plans to: upgrade the playground areas at Sherwood and Mountain View parks, as well as replacing pumps at Riverview Park and Riverview Golf Course. It is anticipated that there may be a bond sale in January 2005.

Mr. Brinton asked if we anticipated any projects that would require the public vote.

Mr. Holmwood said no. We will come back to you as more detail is worked out on other bond related projects.

## **Year-End Presentation**

Mr. Evans gave a slide presentation for the division FY03-04 year-end.

He reported that Golden League Baseball is coming to Mesa. We have signed an agreement with them and will hold minor league games in the off-season.

Mr. Brinton asked about naming rights.

Mr. Holmwood replied that the alternative funding source committee, headed by Rhett Evans, which has been researching various naming rights and sponsorship issues, will be making a recommendation to the Quality Management Steering Team (QMST), which will result in the development of a Citywide policy on the subject.

## **Updates**

Mr. Barnard reported that Wireless Communications Design and Placement Guidelines for Parks and Recreational Facilities was adopted by the City of Mesa on June 14, 2004, per Resolution No. 8280. A wireless carrier company must submit its request for a communication

tower in a City park to the Planning Division. The request will then be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Board. The Board's recommendation will go to the Downtown Development Committee and Planning and Zoning Board, with final approval by the City Council.

Mr. Brinton asked if there are any pending applications.

Mr. Barnard replied that no applications are pending, but the Planning Division web site will contain information that communication towers can now be placed in City parks, if approved through the City's process. Also, City Council recently discussed revenue from communication tower installations at City parks coming back to Parks and Recreation. The revenue will come to a specific revenue account that could be considered for parks and recreation projects.

Mr. Evans reported that the Quality of Life ½ cent sales tax, which was approved by the voters in 1998, would drop to ¼ cent in a few years. Parks and Recreation receives about \$1.7 million per year from this sales tax. The Mesa Library and Parks and Recreation will be looking at what can be done when that occurs, and the funding source goes away.

Mr. Dyer said the public needs to be educated about the benefit of certain taxes. They need to be educated that some parks and programs are funded by the Quality of Life sales tax.

Mr. Gillard asked what the City's plans are for updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Ms. Palmberg said staff is in the process of submitting a plan for amending the Master Plan. All proposed revisions will come to the Parks and Recreation Board.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the planning workshop adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhett Evans  
Acting Parks and Recreation Director