

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 January 13, 2010.

Members Present:

Frank Alger
Milt Fort
Connie Gullatt-Whiteman
David Martinez
Marilyn Wilson
Ron Wills
Mark Yarbrough

Staff Present:

Darla Armfield	Mike Holste
Dawn Bies	Robert Howerton
Jessie Brodersen	Andrea Moore
Stacy Cheaney-Thompson	Roy Nunnally
J.D. Dockstader	Bryan Raines
Dale Furnas	

Members Absent:

Don Goodrum, excused
Steve Ikeda, excused
Matt Shaffer, excused
Michelle Udall, excused

The meeting was called to order at 3:34 p.m. by David Martinez, Chair.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Martinez asked if there was a motion for approval of the minutes from the November 18, 2009 Parks Board meeting. Frank Alger made a motion, Milt Fort seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes.

Mr. Martinez asked if there was a motion for approval of the Fees & Charges subcommittee minutes from the December 8, 2009 and the January 5, 2010 subcommittee meetings. Mr. Alger made a motion, Connie Gullatt-Whiteman seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes.

Mr. Martinez asked if there was a motion for approval of the Dogs in Parks subcommittee minutes from the December 15, 2009 and the January 6, 2010 subcommittee meetings. Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman made a motion, Ron Wills seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes with the spelling of Mr. Wills name corrected on the minutes.

Public Comments

None.

Discuss the citizen comments received by the Dogs in Parks subcommittee and the recommendation to allow dogs in city parks while on leash, with restrictions

Mr. Alger addressed the Board to give an update on the outcome of the Dogs in Parks subcommittee meetings. He told the Board that the results from the public comments gathered showed that most citizens who participated in the citizen online survey wanted to be able to bring dogs to city parks. The majority of comments received were regarding owner responsibility

issues rather than dogs in parks. He mentioned that the subcommittee would be meeting again to finalize a recommendation before the March Parks Board meeting.

Dale Furnas added that city stakeholders, including representation from the City Attorney's office, Public Information (PIO) office and PRCF staff, had met regarding the feasibility of allowing dogs in city parks to determine the risk, liability and cost that would be involved with allowing dogs in parks. She told the Board that the stakeholders determined that dogs are already being brought to the majority of city parks and with the City's limited resources and no additional resources in the foreseeable future, staff can't effectively enforce the rules currently in place. Ms. Furnas said the consensus of the stakeholders was to start a public education campaign enlisting the help of Mesa citizens to keep parks clean and maintained.

Ms. Furnas introduced Jessie Brodersen from PIO to present a proposed plan for educating and enlisting the help of Mesa citizens. Ms. Brodersen outlined a draft proposal plan for the Board, with the final plan being presented at the Dogs in Parks subcommittee meeting scheduled for February 25, 2010. The draft proposal included utilizing the following methods to get this information to citizens:

- Include URL for informative web page wherever possible
- Information on Mesaaz.gov
- Listserv messages
- Provide information at city events
- Presentations to neighborhood groups
- Articles:
 - City newsletters
 - Neighborhood/HOA newsletters
- Educate/pitch media at all levels
- News releases
- Social media outlets when appropriate
 - YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, etc.
- Channel 11:
 - Public Service Announcements
 - Segment on "Mesa Now"
- Presentation at Council Study Session
- Flyers in public buildings
- Signs in Parks
- Cards given out by Park Rangers/Parks Maintenance Staff

Mr. Martinez suggested notifying outside groups such as pet stores and veterinarians to pass that information on to residents who visit their businesses.

Marilyn Wilson felt that the survey data received was skewed due to the small number of responses received. Ms. Wilson felt that mostly dog owners had responded to the survey and the things that she was concerned about were enforcement, the cost to replace signage and waste receptacles. She added that it seemed the priority is being placed on leashed dogs in parks rather than people in parks and she would be unable to support that decision.

Mr. Alger responded that the subcommittee did recognize that the number of citizens who responded to the survey was only a small sampling for a city of this size. Mr. Alger said that public comments gathered showed that dogs were already being taken to most city parks, other valley cities allow dogs in their parks and the rules were unenforceable due to the lack of manpower available. He added that the subcommittee process was not complete yet and that

no regulations would be changed until after a trial period had passed and the Board could reevaluate whether this effort to enlist the help of Mesa's citizens was successful.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman added that public relations are very important to educate people to help with the long term effort.

Mr. Martinez clarified that for a period of time leashed dogs will be allowed in city parks to see whether the public response shows citizens being accountable and responsible for their dogs in city parks before any final decision is made.

Bryan Raines added that the PIO staff would now be working on an educational campaign to promote responsible dog ownership and would present to the Board and Council in March prior to rolling it out to the public for a trial period to begin in April or May 2010.

Mr. Wills added that the subcommittee considered all the Board's concerns and is hopeful that by allowing leashed dogs in the parks, owners will take more responsibility in abiding by the rules and being responsible for their dogs.

Appoint replacement Dogs in Parks subcommittee members

Mr. Martinez told the Board that he has asked for a member of the Board to replace him on the Dogs in Parks subcommittee as he felt he was unable to attend all of the meetings necessary to serve on the subcommittee. Ron Wills agreed to take Mr. Martinez's place on the subcommittee. Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman also asked to have a replacement member assigned now to attend meetings in order to take her spot on the subcommittee when she leaves the Board in June 2010. Milt Fort volunteered and was assigned to the Dogs in Parks subcommittee. Milt will attend all future meetings to be brought up to speed with subcommittee items.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman further asked to assign another Board member to replace her on the Fees and Charges subcommittee. Mark Yarbrough volunteered and was assigned to the Fees and Charges subcommittee.

Discuss and consider recommendations by Fees and Charges subcommittee to forward to City Council for final approval

Stacy Cheaney-Thompson gave a brief description of proposed adjustments of those items needing formal approval by the Board. She added that the fiscal impact from the recommended changes to Fees and Charges is estimated to be \$5,000. Proposed adjustments included:

AQUATICS

All references to Mesa Jr. High, Poston and Powell pools have been eliminated because the City will no longer be utilizing these pool facilities.

Non-Residential Fee: Swim, Dive, Synchronized and Water Polo/Per Session Non-Residential Fee: Aquatic Lessons

Add a new Non-residential fee of approximately 20% to the current fee schedule for Competitive sessions and Aquatic lessons is recommended. Since all surrounding communities are raising fees, this will give Mesa residents an advantage over non-residents for Program registration. The revenue to be generated from these increases is estimated at \$5,000.00 for the additional fee annually.

	Current Fee	Proposed Range
Swim, Dive, Synchronized Swimming and Water Polo/Session	\$25.00-\$84.00	\$30.00-\$101.00
Aquatic Lessons/per person	\$16.00-135.00	\$19.00-\$162.00

Swim Punch Ticket

The recommendation is to establish a fee range rather than a fee increase periodically to be consistent with the rest of the Parks and Recreation fee structure. It allows staff to adjust fees as needed based on the economy, cost recovery and program incentives. It is anticipated that this fee range will not generate an increase in revenues.

	Current Fee	Proposed Range
Fremont/Taylor	\$28.00	\$28.00-\$40.00
Brimhall/Carson/Shepherd/Stapley/Kino/Rhodes	\$49.00	\$49.00-\$70.00

Family Pass

It is recommended to establish a fee range rather than a fee increase periodically to be consistent with the rest of the Parks and Recreation fee structure. It allows staff to adjust fees as needed based on the economy, cost recovery and allows staff to do special promotions to increase participation. It is anticipated that this fee range will not generate an increase in revenues.

	Current Fee	Proposed Range
Fremont/Taylor	\$145.00	\$70.00-\$200.00
Brimhall/Carson/Shepherd/Stapley/Kino/Rhodes	\$210.00	\$100.00-\$300.00

Public Swim

Recommended action is to establish a fee range rather than a fee increase periodically to be consistent with the rest of the Parks and Recreation fee structure. It allows staff to adjust fees as needed based on the economy, cost recovery and allows staff to do special promotions to increase participation. Also recommending to add a Senior rate for Public Swim, based on Council request, and in order to be consistent in offering seniors a discounted rate. Senior age range will be 55 years and older. It is anticipated that this fee range will not generate an increase in revenues.

	Current Fee	Proposed Range
Fremont/Taylor		
Infants (6 months and younger)	Free	Free
Youth (17 years and under)	\$1.00	\$1.00-\$3.00
Adults (18 years and over)	\$2.00	\$2.00-\$4.00
Senior (55 years and over)	Not established	\$1.00-\$3.00
Brimhall/Carson/Shepherd/Stapley/Kino/Rhodes		
Infants (6 months and younger)	Free	Free
Youth (17 years and under)	\$1.75	\$1.75-\$4.00
Adults (18 years and over)	\$3.50	\$3.50-\$7.00
Senior (55 years and over)	Not established	\$1.75-\$4.00

BANDSHELL

The recommendation is to establish a fee range structure to accommodate uses by interdepartmental, non-profit and commercial usage. The fee range will also be consistent with the rest of the Parks and Recreation fee structure. It allows staff to adjust fees as needed based on the economy, cost recovery and the different group usage. It is anticipated that this fee range will not generate an increase in revenues.

	Current Fee	Proposed Range
14x28 stage/per day	\$350.00	\$0.00-\$500.00
Second day rental=50% discount	\$175.00	\$0.00-\$250.00

BLEACHERS

The recommended action is to establish a fee range structure to accommodate uses by interdepartmental, non-profit and commercial usage. The fee range will also be consistent with the rest of the Parks and Recreation fee structure. It allows staff to adjust fees as needed based on the economy, cost recovery and the different group usage. It is anticipated that this fee range will not generate an increase in revenues.

	Current Fee	Proposed Range
Per day	\$350.00	\$0.00-\$500.00
Second day rental=50% discount	\$175.00	\$0.00-\$250.00

Mr. Martinez asked about early registration for Mesa residents. Darla Armfield responded that it was already in place for competitive classes only.

Mr. Fort asked what determines what a citizen pays in the range for a punch ticket. Ms. Armfield stated that the ticket is based on the admission price and added that this change to a range gives staff the flexibility needed to adjust fees as needed based on the economy, cost recovery and program incentives during the year. Mike Holste further explained that with a range rather than one fee, it allowed staff to update fees immediately rather than going back to the Board in order to make adjustments.

Mr. Raines added that the family passes ranges will start with a lower price than the current fee in place in order to offer early pre-season discounts.

Mr. Martinez clarified that the reason for the range for the bandshell and bleachers would be to account for interdepartmental use which would be free, as well as non-profit and commercial rates which would fall within the proposed range.

Mr. Raines asked Ms. Cheaney-Thompson to correct the verbiage to read resident/non-resident instead of residential/non-residential prior to going to Council.

Mr. Martinez asked for a motion to approve the recommendation on proposed fees and charges. Ms. Wilson made a motion, Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the changes to the fees and charges as recommended by staff.

Discuss and consider final design for Parks Board webpage

Robert Howerton told the Board that the changes to the Parks Board web page that were agreed upon at the November 2009 meeting were not completed due to a new city web page

that was being designed. He told the Board that the new web page would be available during 2010 and would give staff more flexibility to add additional information and pictures to the Parks Board web page. He added that the requested changes will be made at that time.

Hear update on aquatics performance measure

Ms. Armfield gave the Board an update on the aquatics performance measure for competitive program capacity and participation from FY 08/09. She said that overall attendance went down slightly; however, individual pool attendance has increased due to the closure of several of the city pools and the new Kino Pool opening up during the past fiscal year.

Ms. Wilson asked if there was a way to increase hours at pools or add additional classes instead of residents having to go to other pools due to classes being full at Stapley Pool. Ms. Armfield said lesson classes were reduced and evening hours were extended due to programs from Poston being moved to Stapley. She said this is mostly due to demand for competitive program classes. She added that staff will continue to look for ways to accommodate more citizens.

Hear update on Parks Maintenance reorganization

Mr. Holste updated the Board on the reorganization of the Parks maintenance group. He said that with the budget reductions from the previous FY, it was decided to reorganize the area in order to consolidate operations from the east and west maintenance facilities. Highlights included:

- Consolidation of resources - all staff and equipment consolidated and relocated to Parks Decatur office
- Increased efficiency - consistent maintenance standards for all parks, equipment, playgrounds and basins citywide
- Maintenance zone contract consolidation -
 - Consolidated 3 zones to 2 zones
 - Estimated \$450,000 yearly savings - 3-yr contract
 - Added regular vegetation maintenance to contract, realize cost savings related to extra vegetation maintenance as per former contract
 - Remaining 3 zones consolidated to 2 zones Aug./Sept. 2010
 - Anticipate additional cost savings
 - Goal: 4 zones total
- Assessing Parks & Basins East of Gilbert Road:
 - Trimming all trees/bushes
 - Contractor will begin to maintain Feb./March 2010
- New Philosophy: *Well maintained/manicured parks and basins citywide*

Mr. Holste showed some pictures of park sites where the overgrown vegetation had been cleaned up since the reorganization.

Director's Comments

- Chicago Cubs update/Spring Training 2010:
 - Tickets for individual games went on sale 1/12/10
 - City management expects to hear more information regarding the Cubs remaining in Mesa within the next few weeks. The Cubs are requiring a new facility if they are to remain in Mesa.
 - City hopes to lure another team from the Grapefruit League in Florida to use Hohokam Stadium if the Cubs remain in Mesa and move to a new facility.

- PRCF Director recruitment – Marc Heirshberg from Colorado has accepted the position of PRCF Department Director and will begin employment on February 15, 2010.
- Skyline Pool update – Skyline Pool goes to Council February 8th; Mesa Public Schools will put in 45% of capital funding, the pool footprint will be similar to Kino Aquatic Center and is slated to open April 2010. This will use up the last of the Quality of Life Sales Tax capital money collected for aquatic facilities in Mesa.
- Day of Play event – January 30th at Red Mountain Park; some of the proceeds to provide recreation scholarships through Foundation for Mesa Parks and Recreation
- Cell Tower at Rancho Del Mar Park – Clearwire's Special Use Permit request was denied by Board of Adjustment on January 12, 2010.
- Bountiful Baskets – Group has been using 10 parks as distribution points for their customers to receive pre-ordered food. Complaints have been received from residents due to blocked driveways and clogged streets from customers picking up their orders. City has asked for proof of insurance from Bountiful Baskets and is directing group to use parks that have adequate parking available for their customers.
- Top 2 Bottom Event – Citywide clean up event to be held February 27, 2010.

Reports on meetings and/or events attended by Board Members

Ms. Wilson attended soccer games at Harmony and Red Mountain parks and played tennis at Gene Autry Sports Complex.

Mr. Alger attended Fees and Charges and Dogs in Parks subcommittee meetings.

Mr. Fort attended Mesa Sister Cities meetings.

Ms. Gullatt-Whiteman attended Fees and Charges and Dogs in Parks subcommittee meetings.

Mr. Yarbrough attended the City Hall at the Mall event in October.

Mr. Wills attended Dogs in Parks subcommittee meeting and also visited various city parks speaking with residents. He and his family also utilize city pools regularly.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Heirshberg, CPRP
PRCF Director