

Parks and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular meeting at the Parks and Recreation Administration Office, 100 North Center Street, on June 10, 2004.

Members Present:

LeRoy Brady
Robert Brinton
John Dyer
Russ Gillard
Jeff Kirk
Dina Lopez
David Peterson
David Richins
John Storment
Robin White

Staff Present:

Darla Armfield
Rhett Evans
Mark Grant
Joe Holmwood
Terri Palmberg
Diane Rogers
Bob White
Sherry Woodley
Mark Woodward

Others Present:

Scott Grondin
Heidi Jones
Bernie Mooney
Mark Schaller
Kai Wilbur

Members Absent:

Walter "Bud" Page, Jr.,
unexcused

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by Robin White, Chair.

Approval of Minutes

David Peterson made a motion, John Dyer seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the meeting of April 8, 2004.

Public Comments

No public comments.

Recognition of Outgoing Board Members

Mark Woodward said that per Mesa City Code, board members can serve two consecutive three-year terms. Robin White's second term will end June 30, and during her six years on the board, she has been vice chair for two years and chair for the past three years. He presented Ms. White with a plaque and expressed staff's appreciation for her visibility at City and Division events and her strong support of parks and recreation in Mesa.

Mr. Woodward said that David Richins has been on the board since April 2003. He will be leaving the board on June 30 and has been appointed to the City's Design Review Board. He presented Mr. Richins a plaque and expressed staff's appreciation for his involvement in community projects, such as the Eureka Canal and Riverview development.

Concession Service

Darla Armfield reported that concession services are provided at the major sport field complexes that include Riverview softball, Skyline softball, Red Mountain softball, baseball and soccer, Quail Run softball and soccer, and Gene Autry baseball. The philosophy behind offering concession services at these facilities is to insure that participants and families have access to refreshments during play, to insure food item consistency, and to generate additional revenue for league programs. Services are housed in existing City-built concession stands, except for

Quail Run Soccer, which requires a mobile cart. Vendors provide all the equipment to operate according to Maricopa County Health Department standards and the City maintains the buildings. The contract duration is two years with an additional two-year renewal option at the City's discretion. The existing vendor, City Concessions, has chosen to not renew the contract and will be vacating the stands at the end of their contract period in August.

A new contract was solicited through a competitive proposal process that yielded four bids. A flat monthly rate was required instead of a percentage of gross sales, thereby safeguarding the City's share without costly audits. Bids were evaluated on the following criteria:

Response Format and Organization	100 pts. Maximum
Financial Contribution to the City	300 pts. Maximum
Professional Experience	100 pts. Maximum
Business/Management Experience	100 pts. Maximum
Managing Concession Facilities Experience	100 pts. Maximum
Financial Stability	200 pts. Maximum
Reference Checks	<u>100 pts. Maximum</u>
	1000 pts. Maximum

Ms. Armfield said three vendors are being recommended for proposal awards; the fourth vendor had less than a year of concession experience and limited business resources to conduct wide-scale concession services, so it was eliminated from contention. Multiple vendors were chosen in an effort to lessen the financial impact because each vendor will be responsible for a large capital outlay for commercial equipment to operate the stand. Additionally, multiple vendors provide a fallback should any one vendor fail to meet its contractual obligations. Vendors had the option of bidding on single or multiple facilities.

Ms. Armfield introduced the vendors from the three recommended concessions: Scott Grondin (Grondin's); Mark Schaller (Just for Fun); and Kai Wilbur (Sun Valley). She said the facility assignments would be:

Grondin's	Quail Run Baseball and Mobile Soccer
Just for Fun	Skyline Softball
Sun Valley	Riverview Softball, Red Mountain Baseball, Softball and Soccer, and Gene Autry

Revenue will be collected monthly, except for August when programming is discontinued due to the extremely hot weather. Revenue is anticipated as follows:

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Concessionaire</u>
Quail Run	\$5,500	Grondin's
Riverview	\$2,200	Sun Valley
Red Mountain Baseball	\$1,100	Sun Valley
Red Mountain Softball	\$3,300	Sun Valley
Red Mountain Soccer	\$2,200	Sun Valley
Gene Autry	\$1,100	Sun Valley
Skyline	<u>\$2,486</u>	Just For Fun
	\$17,886	

Russ Gillard asked why City Concessions did not wish to renew its contract with the City.

Ms. Armfield replied that City Concessions has contracts with stadiums in the Valley and the revenue from the City's concession contract was not as lucrative. The City had a successful relationship with City Concessions.

Mr. Gillard asked how revenue from the flat monthly rate will compare to percentage of gross sales.

Ms. Armfield replied that revenue will be higher.

Robert Brinton said he supported the idea of having three concessionaires.

Mr. Richins suggested that in the next evaluation process, points be given for businesses located in Mesa.

Russ Gillard made a motion, Dina Lopez seconded, and it was unanimously carried that the City enter into the following contracts for the provision of concession services:

Grondin's	Quail Run Baseball and Mobile Soccer
Just for Fun	Skyline Softball
Sun Valley	Riverview Softball, Red Mountain Baseball, Softball and Soccer, and Gene Autry

City of Mesa Cemetery Fees

Jerry Bradney reported that the philosophy of the Cemetery program is to provide excellent customer service to patrons, maintain the grounds in an aesthetic and professional manner, and be competitive with the fees charged by similar facilities. The seven-year history of the fee structure for the Cemetery shows an increase in selected services in FY97-98 and FY00-01 with no fee increases in any other year. These increases were approved to offset the development, capital, and operations maintenance costs associated with the previous expansion and still left the fee structure much less than the average charged by similar facilities. The revenue/ expenditures history clearly indicates that a surplus in cemetery operations has significantly balanced expenditures since the previous expansion in FY97-98.

The existing fee structure is significantly below the corresponding prices of the similarly maintained cemeteries in this area. The fees and charges schedule indicates large discrepancies in certain categories, specifically in disinterment, niches, and inurnment when compared to the surrounding market. These fees are less than half of the average of the other cemeteries listed. Generally, the other charges range from 30% to 75% less than those surveyed.

While the City of Mesa Cemetery is not in business to directly compete financially with the other regional cemeteries, it does have a goal to approach a total cost recovery of expenditures. The Cemetery is anticipated to reach capacity in the developed sections by FY05-06 and this will mandate the construction of the infrastructure in the northwest quadrant and the expansion of the niche bank in the north. The expansion projects will ensure the continued operation and viability of the Cemetery. While the new construction will provide a steady revenue stream, it will also impact the operations and maintenance budget, therefore making it more difficult to maintain total cost recovery.

This fiscal year, the Cemetery program's expenditures will approximate \$900,400, of which \$90,400 is capital equipment expenditures, and the concurrent projected revenue will approach \$940,000. Anticipated revenues will slow as the available spaces lessen, but the development of the northwest quadrant will provide for expansion. Revenues should recover to existing levels with maintenance costs increasing due to the addition of maintained land and inflationary pressures.

According to the City's Engineering Division, the north niche bank construction is estimated to cost \$220,000, the northwest parcel expansion is \$120,500 and improvement projects, such as the renovation of the flood irrigation mainline and sign installation, will add another \$26,000. The total of these improvements will add \$366,500 to the operations costs in the Cemetery's program in future fiscal years. In order to balance the expected costs associated with the new expansion and maintenance projects, it may be necessary to increase revenues in order to maintain total cost recovery.

A fee increase may be needed to fund a portion of the construction of the projects listed in order to provide cost recovery. The expenditure/revenue comparison indicates that the Cemetery will continue to remain profitable, but may not be able to adequately defer all of the expenditures for the expansion and maintenance projects. The Cemetery's fees and charges are significantly lower than any similar facility and will be able to absorb any and all increases without difficulty. At the end of FY03-04 (June 30), the cemetery is in a position where revenues will exceed expenditures.

Mr. Woodward advised that since the fees at the cemetery are below the current rates, and the annual profit is about \$125,000, staff cannot justify increasing the rates right now.

Mr. Brinton asked if the \$125,000 profit goes into an enterprise fund.

Mr. Woodward replied that the revenue goes into the City's General Fund. He further stated that the intent of a fee increase is to make the cemetery self-sustaining, which it is now. A perpetual care cost is built into the cemetery fees. This perpetual care fee goes into a reserve fund that earns interest. When the cemetery is sold out, it is anticipated that the interest from this account will sustain the cemetery.

John Stormont requested that the Board be provided the current fees at the City of Mesa Cemetery.

Junior National Wheelchair Games

Ms. Armfield recognized Mark Grant, Recreation Coordinator, for recently receiving the Ray Rafford Community Award. The award recognizes community members for their contributions to special education students in Mesa Public Schools.

Mr. Grant reported that the Junior National Wheelchair Championships began in July 1984 as a small meet for wheelchair athletes ages six to nineteen. Wheelchair Sports USA sanctioned the inaugural event, setting in motion an opportunity for disabled athletes to showcase their abilities and strengths by providing them the experience of national competition.

This event has been hosted in nine different states and has grown to over 230 athletes. Athletes have registered from over 40 states and five foreign countries – Sweden, Germany, Canada, Australia, and Nigeria. Competition is held in Olympic-style events such as track and field, pentathlon, swimming, archery, table tennis, and weight lifting. Additionally, this year's event represents a milestone in the disabled sports movement as it will mark the first time a national championship has been held solely for junior athletes with all types of disabilities.

Many organizations are pulling together to showcase Mesa as a prime venue. Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled has pledged to make this an outstanding event in terms of competition, enduring friendships, and lasting memories. They are committed to partnering with sponsors to bring the resources needed to make the 2004 championships a quality event. The Sheraton Hotel is the host hotel and has already booked 1580 room nights with overflow being sent to the Holiday Inn. The presence of City Board members would continue to demonstrate

Mesa's support and provide first-hand experience with these unique athletes. Additionally, sponsorship contributions are still needed to fund promotional efforts, venue staging, competition awards, equipment, volunteer recognition gifts, etc.

Mr. Grant invited Board members to volunteer for this event or if they know of groups that would like to participate financially, to direct them to Parks and Recreation staff. A packet of information and schedule of events will be mailed to interested persons.

Board Meeting Schedule

Mr. Woodward said that in the past the Board usually did not meet in July and August. He asked the opinion of Board members concerning a retreat in August.

Ms. White said she believes a retreat is important for new board members so they can become familiar with other board members, board processes, etc.

It was the consensus of the Board that a retreat be held on August 19, 2004, at 2:00 p.m. Staff will prepare appropriate information.

Ms. White said it is also extremely important, and she personally requested, that Board members attend the annual Arizona Parks and Recreation Conference. At the conference, contact is made and issues discussed with board members from other cities.

Meetings and/or Events Attended

Mr. Richins reported that he met with Northwest Mesa Little League representatives and at that meeting it was mentioned that the Whittier sports fields are in poor condition. The league is trying to get sponsorships and grant money to improve the fields. They would like the board to consider a complex possibly on the west side of the golf course.

Ms. White said strategic planning is good but projects that cost over \$1.5 million must go to the voters for approval. She also reminded the Board that City Council recently approved the revised guidelines for wireless towers in parks.

Joe Holmwood said City Council also has planned to meet again to discuss where to place the revenue generated from wireless communication equipment placed in parks.

Mr. Brinton reported that next week, on behalf of the City of Mesa, the HoHoKam Organization, and the Mesa Convention and Visitors Bureau, he will be presenting gift baskets to Chicago Cubs staff. This year's spring training broke the all-time record. He also thanked City of Mesa staff for their support during spring training.

Mr. Brinton also reported that he attended a meeting concerning the Indoor Aquatic Center.

Mr. Richins reported that he attended the Cinco de Mayo event and Mr. Peterson was also in attendance.

Ms. White said she attended a Finance Committee meeting on June 9, 2004, which also included a tour.

Director's Report

Mr. Woodward introduced Bernie Mooney, who was appointed to the Parks and Recreation Board effective July 1, 2004. He advised that orientation for new board members will be held June 28, 2004, and current board members are also invited to attend.

Mr. Woodward introduced Rhett Evans, Convention and Community Center Director, who will assume the position of Acting Parks and Recreation Director on July 12, 2004.

Mr. Woodward expressed staff's appreciation to Ms. White for her positive efforts on behalf of parks and recreation.

Ms. White said it has been her privilege to serve on the Parks and Recreation Board. She owns her own business in Mesa; this community supports her and she wants to support it. She can be more effective now with all the knowledge gained by being a board member. The Parks Board is a very important board because in parks and recreation, there is never a second opportunity to buy land; it must be bought when it is available and it must be used wisely. Everything the Parks and Recreation Board does is for future generations and that's important. She has been asked to be a member of the Foundation for Mesa Parks and Recreation and she will accept that challenge.

Mr. Gillard said as a former chair of the board, being appointed again has been a pleasure, and Ms. White has set a new standard with her leadership and involvement and he commends all that she has done.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.