

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 March 11, 2004.

**Members Present:**

LeRoy Brady  
John Dyer  
Russ Gillard  
Dina Lopez  
David Peterson  
David Richins  
Robin White

**Staff Present:**

Darla Armfield  
Tim Barnard  
Lisa Blyler  
Don Flavell  
Joe Holmwood  
Cindy Hunt  
Andrea Madonna  
Terri Palmberg  
Diane Rogers  
Rachel Valenzuela  
Kim West  
Bob White  
Mark Woodward

**Councilmembers Present:**

Rex Griswold  
Claudia Walters

**Members Absent:**

Robert Brinton, excused  
Jeff Kirk, excused  
Walter "Bud" Page, Jr., unexcused  
John Storment, excused

Items on the agenda were discussed out of order but for purposes of clarity, will remain as listed on the agenda.

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Robin White, Chair.

**Approval of Minutes**

LeRoy Brady made a motion, David Peterson seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the meeting of February 12, 2004.

**Public Comments**

No public comments.

**Agreement with Pro Golf Management**

Mark Woodward reported that Pro Golf Management (PGM) has provided the contracted golf professional services at Dobson Ranch Golf Course since 1986. The current agreement terminates on June 30, 2004 with the City of Mesa having the option of renewing the agreement for a period of one additional year under the same terms, covenants, and conditions and subject to the same restrictions and exceptions contained in the current agreement.

Kent Bulkley and PGM have been under contract with the current agreement since October 2000. During this contract time, he and his staff have been consistent in providing quality customer service and meeting all of the stipulations identified in the contract. Based on their history and consistency during the contract period, staff was going to recommend that the City exercise the one-year option in the agreement and extend the agreement to June 30, 2005.

Prior to notifying PGM of this decision, Mr. Bulkley made a request in writing for the current agreement to be considered for a two-year extension instead of the one-year extension based on revenue loss and disruption to PGM's operation during the golf shop project.

Don Flavell reported that the golf shop project was scheduled to begin in March 2002 and had a 210-day project time frame. The project started 30 days early, which prevented PGM from having a "moving sale" prior to moving into the temporary trailer that served as the golf shop during the project. This prevented them from having the ability to move the majority of their inventory during the middle of the peak golf season.

Also, golf rounds were down as the golf shop project progressed. There was a substantial amount of time when the parking lot ingress and egress were disrupted and golfers had to park on the far south end of the lot. This became a deterrent to golfers and many chose to play elsewhere. Reductions in rounds affected green fee revenue, golf cart revenue, driving range revenue, soft goods, lessons, etc.

The project was scheduled for completion in August of 2002; however, it was not completed until November 2002 due to the original contractor defaulting and the bonding company having to take over the remainder of the construction. This extended contract time resulted in further reductions of revenue for the City and PGM.

Another concern is the current status of golf in Arizona and the Valley. Rounds have been steadily declining across the Valley since September 2001. The majority of the golf courses in Arizona had a 4% decline in rounds for 2003. The forecast for golf over the next several years is a modest growth of only 1-2% in rounds annually. This was not foreseen when the request for proposal was submitted for the current contract period.

All of these factors have contributed to a reduction of revenue generation for PGM. When considering the impact of the golf shop project and the losses sustained by PGM during this time, it is reasonable to consider extending the current contract to two years instead of the one year outlined in the current agreement.

Mr. Peterson asked about the legal aspects of recommending two years rather than one year. Mr. Woodward replied that staff conferred with the City's legal counsel and their opinion was that a two-year agreement is permissible. An addendum to the agreement or letter of understanding will be prepared and reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

David Peterson made a motion, Russ Gillard seconded, and it was unanimously carried that the City of Mesa extend the current agreement with Pro Golf Management for two additional one-year extensions under the same terms and conditions as the current agreement, and that the agreement be reviewed and approved by the City Attorney's Office.

### **Trails Master Plan**

Andrea Madonna reported that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2025 was approved in the fall of 2002 and included a section outlining the City's existing and future planned Multi-Use Path (MUP) system. The plan shows the system following the canal and power line easements to create a network of alternate transportation - off-street, non-motorized trails.

A group of citizens interested in maintaining their equestrian lifestyle and use of the MUP system in the north-central area of Mesa approached City Council, City Management, and the Parks and Recreation Division with a request to find a way to access the South Canal MUP. Because of their use of the path system with horses, they expressed a need to get onto the South Canal without traveling on street and by avoiding Red Mountain Freeway interchanges.

The citizens were successful in lobbying the Maricopa County Department of Transportation to have a multi-use path on the east side of Gilbert Road from Thomas Road to McDowell Road included with planned County road improvements on Gilbert Road.

After working with City staff and Councilmembers, the group of citizens is requesting a proposed trail alignment from Gilbert Road to the South Canal, east of Val Vista Drive, called the South Canal Access Spur. The proposed trail alignment starts at the terminus of the County's multi-use path at Gilbert and Thomas Roads, continues east and north skirting City-owned properties, following the south bank of the Salt River on Arizona Department of Transportation property, and then connecting to the north bank of the South Canal. This side of the canal is already included in the Parks and Recreation Multi-Use Path Plan as a phase to be built in the future.

The path connection from Gilbert and Thomas Roads east to the South Canal to the Parks and Recreation Multi-Use Path Master Plan will be added to the list of future path construction priorities and possible funding opportunities.

David Richins asked how the alignment would fit in with the planned river bottom development. Tim Barnard replied that several proposals have been submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers; however, development will depend on the scope of their budget.

Mr. Richins asked if the proposal is a standard size path. Mr. Barnard replied that rather than a ten-foot path with three feet of decomposed granite, it will probably have six feet of decomposed granite, which is preferred for equestrian use.

Mr. Richins asked if any negative responses had been received from the neighborhood near the proposed path.

Michelle McCroskey, a neighborhood resident, said a survey was completed, with 96% of the residents responding to the survey saying they wanted the equestrian path.

Brian Campbell, a neighborhood resident, said the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community had expressed concern about citizen use of tribal land, specifically Va Shly' ay Akimel. However, this path will serve as a buffer and ease that concern.

Mr. Barnard thanked staff members Lisa Blyler and Kim West for their assistance with this project.

LeRoy Brady made a motion, John Dyer seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the amendment to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2025, Multi-Use Path (MUP) map, to add the South Canal Access Spur.

### **Volunteer Program**

Cindy Hunt reported that the Parks and Recreation Division has utilized volunteers for many years. To date, each division area has recruited, trained, and recognized their volunteers. Though the division has had many volunteers serve in its programs over the years, there was no consistent record of the numbers or hours served. Consequently, because areas were responsible for their own volunteers, the division was not consistent in the application and background check procedures, trainings, and recording of volunteer numbers and hours. In addition, since there were so many different individuals utilizing and supervising volunteers, the community was unsure of the contact person for volunteers.

In July 2003, the division initiated a reorganization and redeployment of staff and was able to designate a full-time recreation coordinator to the development of a volunteer program. The responsibilities of this position were the recruitment, training, managing, and evaluation of volunteers in parks and recreation, and to work in cooperation with and synchronization of the

City Volunteer Program, assisting in the establishment of volunteer web pages, applications, requirements, and training.

The volunteer coordinator is responsible for the marketing, recruiting, promotion, training, and accounting of volunteers. To date, the coordinator has completed the following:

- Staff training manual for volunteers
- Volunteer training manual
- Tracking system for recording volunteer hours
- Coordinating the design of the volunteer recruitment web pages
- Participation in the city-wide Volunteer Management Team
- Responsible for the Division becoming an active member of the Maricopa County Volunteer Agency
- Recruitment of volunteers for city wide special events, adaptive recreation programs, after school sports programs, junior high school intramural programs and Rec 'N Roll
- Recognition of all volunteers at completion of their service

Volunteer projects in progress:

- Coordinating a volunteer commercial for Channel 11
- Review of the current fingerprinting policy of youth volunteers
- Coordination and implementation of the Golden Instructor volunteer program
- Communicating with local service organizations for sponsoring volunteers in existing programs

The volunteer area has room to grow. In the future, staff will be looking to implement the following:

- Offer volunteer sponsorships to service organizations of individual programs and special events
- Become involved in the national service days and events, including National Volunteer Week (April), National Youth Service Day (April), Make a Difference Day (October), and National Family Volunteer Day
- Recruit and obtain a large core group of volunteers to train and utilize in the various recreation areas

The Points of Light Foundation Volunteer Center National Network equates \$16.54 as the monetary value assigned to each volunteer hour contributed. From August 2003 through January 2004, the division recorded 2,546 volunteers, serving 10,420 hours, equating to a savings of \$172,346.80 in staff hours.

Mr. Peterson asked about the marketing efforts for the volunteer program. Ms. Hunt replied that much information is on the City's web site and at the service learning areas of the local schools. Information is also included in newsletters distributed to senior citizens and in the division's TimeOut brochure.

Mr. Richins asked if Eagle Scout projects are part of the program. Ms. Hunt confirmed that Eagle Scout projects are coordinated through the division's volunteer program.

Mr. Barnard stated that when Board members attend meetings, park openings, or other events as a volunteer, that time is included in the total volunteer hours reported.

Mr. Dyer asked how volunteer information is distribute to the Boy Scouts. Ms. Hunt replied that letters are sent to the points of contact and all scout masters are made aware of the program.

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

Robin White reported that the letter she recently sent to the Editor of the Tribune about how imperative it was that the parks bond be approved by the voters was a matter of principle. The election turnout was not large; however, the parks bond was approved and she is grateful for that.

Concerning the Ethics Manual which was sent to all Board members, Ms. White said it is an important document that all Board members should read.

Ms. White also reported that the Citizens Finance Committee met the previous evening; however, she could not attend. Meetings are broadcast on Channel 11.

Councilmember Griswold encouraged Board members to be advocates for parks and recreation. He said the Citizens Finance Committee is comprised of talented people who understand finances. Members of the committee are gaining knowledge of where revenues come from and money is spent. It has been learned that for value per capita, Mesa is one of the lowest for cost of government.

### **Director's Report**

Bob White gave the following reports:

The division's management development opportunity is moving forward. Staff is in the last 30 days of the first rotation and preparations for the next rotation, which begins on April 12, are underway.

The Red Mountain Multigenerational Center (RMMC) is receiving an award from the National Recreation and Park Association, Pacific Southwest Region, for outstanding facility. Paul Widman, RMMC Facility Supervisor, is in Anaheim to accept the award. Last month, the RMMC received a Crystal Award for community excellence.

April 27 is the five-year anniversary of the RMMC. A small celebration will be held; Board members will receive invitations.

Mesa Day 2004, which was held March 4, was very successful. The parade had 75 entries, which included 31 floats. There were 2,500 participants, and an estimated 5,000 spectators. The next special event will be Cinco de Mayo, which will be held April 30-May 1 at Pioneer Park.

Mr. Gillard reported that Andrea Madonna and Terri Palmberg have proposed to use Porter Park for the planned Cancer Survivors Park. Ms. Madonna will get the information together for the grant request; it will hopefully move forward quickly.

Joe Holmwood advised that tentative dates have been set for the Community Services Department budget presentation to the City Council Finance Committee. A tour will take place on May 26, with the presentation on June 9.

Mr. Holmwood also said it is good to see citizens attending Parks Board meetings. Staff is pleased to have so many people in the audience who are involved in parks and recreation activities.

Councilmember Griswold said existing trails need to be protected so we leave behind something good for our grandchildren. We need to preserve what we have, not build something new. He thanked the Parks Board for taking positive steps to preserve trails in Mesa.

Ms. McCroskey thanked Councilmembers Claudia Walters and Rex Griswold for the support they provided for this endeavor. She said Parks and Recreation staff were also very helpful, particularly Ms. Madonna. They were very well served and are very grateful that when a neighborhood has a vision, City staff listens and provides help.

Robin White said citizens can always call the Parks and Recreation Division and if staff do not have the answer, they will get it. She believes citizen involvement will grow and the enthusiasm will be contagious.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.