

METROPOLITAN PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of June 12, 2007

Location: Parks and Recreation Admin Building, 1801 Fourth Street NW, Building A

Members Present: Donald H. Couchman, Chair; Sandra P. Richardson, Vice Chair; Robert W. Day; Joe M. Montano; Robert W. Wood; Jerry Worrall

Members Absent: Orlando Sedillo; Carolyn Stewart

City Staff Present: Jay Hart, PRD-Director; Jay Evans, PRD- Deputy Director

Visitors: Darlene Couchman, Arts Board; Bill Nordin, BFPB representative; Cliff Richardson, Cherry Hills

Call to Order - Chair Couchman called the meeting to order.

Introduction of Visitors and Guests - Visitors and guests listed above.

Approval of May Minutes - Vice Chair Richardson moved approval, Member Wood seconded; the board unanimously approved the motion.

Approval of Today's Agenda – Member Wood moved approval, Member Day seconded; the board unanimously approved the motion.

Announcements - Member Day – The Los Altos Bathrooms were very well appreciated.

General Public Testimony – No public testimony.

Staff Reports

Jay Hart, Director PRD reported that he'd like to present a PowerPoint on the CIP that he will then include for the web. Jay greatly appreciated the public support at the Budget meetings. The Shooting Range has had only 1 new person since 1984. With the significant increase in business staffing needs to increase with at least a ¾ Time person. Jay praised the wisdom of the city to purchase 5 acres for the Shooting Range which will prevent encroachment. Jay discussed staffing for various areas of the department: 1) Recreation at 37 (no new); Park Mgmt. at 156 (reduced by 1); Golf at 38 (no new); Open Space at 41 (no new). Jay gave an overview about funding, as at the Shooting Range which now has flushing toilets (\$289 K increased to \$361 K.), Recreation (\$5.4 M increased to \$7.3 M), and Park Mgmt (increase of \$50 K). A great improvement in staffing Life Guards at city pools has been the increase from \$6.75/hr to \$7.50/hr as well as the city paying for uniforms and training. Golf Mgmt, at \$150 K, will be in the red despite all the efforts and support by the Golf Advisory Board to set fees that would have resolved many issues including funding replacement equipment. PRD has been tasked with maintaining the Aviation landscaping at \$1.56 M. Sierra Vista Swimming Pool renovations are proceeding. Bosque Fire Management has 100 registered volunteers as well as a flyover plane equipped with infrared. Security at the Coronado Skate Park has been a challenge. An issue of concern with the increase of skate parks is the need for a 3 member permanent crew to maintain these assets. A query about the BMX at UNM revolved the newspaper coverage of a "bait and switch" complaint. The new state helmet law for everyone below the age of 18 years old is effective 1 July. No smoking in city parks is a benefit to maintaining clean parks. The CNM collaborative for soccer fields was signed with \$1.5 M being given to PRD, this agreement results in 3 full-sized soccer fields with cost of operation split, APS/COA 40% and 60% respectively. Nob Hill planters installed by COA will be maintained by the local businesses. \$23 K has been provided for a native plant nursery.

Questions: Member Montano asked for a key or some way to have bathrooms open during daytime games at Los Altos Park which resulted in a decision to identify a responsible person so that in addition to the successful evening games, seniors would have access to bathrooms.

Jay Lee Evans, Deputy Director, PRD reported that a new wildlife biologist position has been added to Environmental Health Department which will have a positive impact on dealing with the prairie dog issue. He reported about the Duke City BMX which led Vice Chair Richardson to suggest that taping portions of these events for Gov 16 would be a great way to educate citizens and promote the BMX activity. The final inspection for Roosevelt Park will be June 14th. Balloon Fiesta Park Phase V is on-going. APD and related agencies are addressing homelessness, change of use of parks and an updated policy.

Bill Nordin, Balloon Fiesta Parks Board representative, reported that there were concerns about the inability for users to access parking without having to leave the park at great inconvenience. He discussed the recently newspaper/TV coverage of the Los Angeles Land Fill problem created by lack of a liner causing contamination of wells and release of methane gas. He reported that Council President O'Malley took a "field trip" on May 17th to the area. Methane being released is 400 cu ft/min. and will cost \$6 M to repair. He further reported that the electrical roll-outs were never up-to-current code. With regard to the City employee who died of asphyxiation at the site in August 06, OSHA has reviewed and finished their evaluation. The plan is to have everything in order by Balloon Fiesta. Chair Couchman commended the BFPB for increasing multiple, simultaneous use of the Park and was concerned about the access problems. Bill reported that a tenant, Garduno's On the Green, had a significant problem when all their parking was filled at a time when Garduno's had several weeding receptions and other scheduled events. Bill indicated that the Sandia Cup includes 92 teams from outside of NM and brings \$2 M per year. There was a suggestion that with 11 high schools, each with photo departments, students could be encouraged to participate in a photo contest and pictures could be used for a calendar and other uses.

Sub-committee reports –

MPRAB position on O-07-078-Chair of Sub Committee Richardson indicated that as yet, the newer version of the resolution has not been available for her committee to review and therefore no meeting has been held. Chair Couchman indicated that he would check on its status and forward it to her.

Ditches with Trails Status –with member Sedillo excused, no report.

Prescription Trails Status- no report. Members queried the criteria and responsibility for evaluating neighborhood parks for inclusion in this project. Vice Chair Richardson reported that her Board at Cherry Hills and Michelle had walked the Heritage Hills Park trail for suitability and had reported back at an earlier MPRAB meeting. There is much support for this park as one of the only parks North of Montgomery. She recalled Chair Couchman indicating his interest in Academy Hills Park trail, too. Her concern was that these are included and how could that be accomplished.

Members' Roundtable – report on park issues in their area

Member Day is very pleased with the bathroom facilities at Los Altos that are available for night games.

Vice Chair Richardson reported that the Heritage Hills Park Mutt Mitt project initiated by Cherry Hills Civic Association was a success, benefiting the 5 neighborhoods that use this park. She added that Director Hart reported that the loss of green area was due to broken pipes. Her concern was that these pipes are only 15 years old.

Member Wood reported broken glass in grassy areas is a liability.

Bill Nordin reported that because soccer can overuse grassy areas, his soccer organization has always donated sod with COA providing labor for repair.

Member Worrall announced he hiked in the Alps and was very interested in the new form of walking (in the newspaper) that protects knees and hip joints while developing, in addition to lower body strength, upper torso fitness. He suggested this would be a great sport to promote.

Chair Couchman reported that the parks in District 8 are in good shape and that the Academy medians are "coming along." He talked about the 2400 bike riders who raised \$11 M for AIDS/HIV research.

Unfinished Business – Handbook/information for new members

New Business - None discussed

Adjourn meeting until 4:00 pm Tuesday, July 10th, 2007.