



February 18, 2009

**Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Board meeting held on February 18, 2009
7:00 p.m., Library Board Room, 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona.**

Members Present:

Frank Granillo, Chair
Scott Hamilton
Ed Parker
Ed Roberts
Don Watkins

Members Absent:

Angela Thornton (excused)
Chuy Carreon (excused)

City Staff Present:

Travis Dray, Deputy Manager – Parks & Recreation Department
Cynthia Yanez, Executive Assistant – Parks & Recreation Department
Bob Pohlit, Parks & Capital Project Coordinator – Parks & Recreation Department
Michelle Konnath, Recreation Supervisor – Parks & Recreation Department
Nancy Ryan, Rio Salado Manager – Community Development

Meeting convened at 7:05 p.m.

Frank Granillo called the meeting to order.

Agenda Item 1 – Consideration of Meeting Minutes:

The minutes of the January 21, 2009 meeting were accepted as written.

Agenda Item 2 – Svob Park Master Plan

Bob Pohlit, Parks & Capital Project Coordinator, introduced Kevin Moore, The Moore-Swick Partnership.

1. Kevin and Bob have been working with the Svob Park neighborhood and city staff to develop a master plan for the 7.8 acre park.
2. Svob Park is east of 48th Street on Vineyard, between Baseline Rd. and Southern Ave.
3. They have held three (3) meetings with the neighborhood and two (2) with city staff.

4. The neighborhood was invited to provide input on elements that they wanted to see in the park.
5. From these meetings three (3) different concept plans were designed and then share with staff.
6. Once the designs were refined by staff, they were brought back before the neighborhood so that they could be rated on individual as well as overall design.
7. As a result, a preliminary master plan was developed and returned to the neighborhood.
8. The amenities include, but are not limited to, two (2) age appropriate playgrounds, walking trails, two (2) basketball courts, two (2) picnic ramadas, game tables and and open space.
9. The park will also have a garden area as a tribute to Bob Svob, for whom the park is named after.

General Discussion:

- Participants of the neighborhood meetings are usually adults, including parents and grandparents.
- Many of the amenities and concepts that were incorporated into the master plan reflect the need for safety in that neighborhood.
- The basketball courts are located in a retention basin and, therefore, precautions are taken to protect the court from standing water during heavy storms.
- It is usually more cost effect to replace a court every 20 years, then to continually resurface it.
- The current lighting is not up to current standards and will have to be replaced.
- A new irrigation system will be installed, but flood irrigation will be used to deep water the trees, as needed.
- There were 25-30 neighbors in attendance at each meeting.
- All perimeter pathways will have lights.
- The playground equipment is outdated and will have to be replaced.

Agenda Item 3 – Spring Training

Michelle Konnath, Recreation Supervisor, shared information on the upcoming Spring Training season at Diablo Stadium.

1. Practice for the new season is already under way.
2. The Cactus League will hold their annual breakfast on February 24.
3. There will be two (2) additional teams in the Cactus League this year.
4. There will also be a World Baseball Game on March 4 with a visiting team from South Africa.
5. Notre Dame will play two (2) exhibition games during the season.
6. Tickets sales, thus far, are not where they were last year.
7. However, with two additional games, it is hoped that attendance will exceed last year's number of 114,000.
8. The 1st game of the season, scheduled for 1:05 p.m. on March 25, is a charity game, with all moneys going to the Tempe Diablos Charities.
9. Each year the Diablos raise money for scholarships and other local programs.

Agenda Item 4 – Rio Salado Update

Nancy Ryan, Rio Salado Manager, updated the board on various items related to the Rio Salado area.

1. Aloft Hotel opened a week ago in the Playa del Norte area.
2. The infrastructure for the south bank area has been completed.
3. Funding has been acquired for the design of a path that will span from Tempe Marketplace to Mesa's Riverview area.
4. The new restrooms at Tempe Beach Park should be ready by the first part of May.
5. The south bank path from the TCA to Priest opened two (2) weeks ago.
6. A new design for the Veteran's Memorial will be presented at the next Parks Board meeting.
7. Another RFP has been issued for an amateur sports facility west of Priest.

Agenda Item 5 – Budget Update

Travis Dray, Deputy Director, spoke about the current budget issues facing the City.

1. The City Council will review recommendations for potential future budget cuts.
2. The recommendations include the elimination of 21 positions in the Parks and Recreation Department.
3. The plan also includes elimination of several recreational programs as well as a reduction in parks maintenance.
4. Staff developed guiding principles, determined the cost of programs and services, looked at the number of participants and reviewed competition in the marketplace before submitting any recommendations for the elimination of programs, services or positions.
5. The Council will hold a special budget meeting on Thursday, December 19 at 3 p.m.

General Discussion:

- Classes and programs for youth and seniors are subsidized by 50%.
- The department relies heavily on part-time staff to run programs on evenings and weekend.
- Staff will continue to look at the pricing structure of its classes and programs.
- Clark Pool may be closed up to and during the proposed renovation.
- Currently, the City provides sponsorship monies to several special events.
- If that sponsorship is eliminated, the events may have to find other donors or they may no longer be held in Tempe.
- For most of these events, however, the City sponsors only a part of their overall event. The one exception would be the Veterans Day Parade.
- The funding has already been distributed for this year.
- The City should consider continuing the sponsorship for those events that have an economic impact on Tempe.
- The City has contracts with the following events: Rock & Roll Marathon, Ironman, 4th of July Celebration, Way Out West Oktoberfest and the Block Party.
- The cost of the Halloween festival is about \$20K, but may have to be eliminated due to staff reductions.

Agenda Item 6 – Chair/Board Member Comments

Prior to the approval of the minutes, Chair Frank Granillo expressed his gratitude towards Mayor Hallman for taking the time to share his thoughts with the Parks and

Recreation during their January 21 meeting.

Ed Roberts, after listening to the Mayor, felt that the Board needed to be more proactive.

The board was invited to ask for additional items to be placed on the agenda for future discussion as a way to provide information to the Council. However, they were reminded that the City Council makes all final decisions.

If the some of the board and commissions are merged, the workload will increase for the Parks and Recreation Board.

Don Watkins said he is impressed with the City's great people and activities and added that Mark Richwine and Travis Dray do a great job.

Ed Roberts put in a request to Travis Dray for consideration of possible future agenda items.

The Parks and Recreation Board will meet again in April.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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