



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
May 4, 2012  
Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Department  
3500 West River Road, Tucson, Arizona



Quorum having been established, the Chair called the study session to order at 9:05 a.m. Upon roll call, commissioners present were Jan Johnson (Chair), Chuck Catino, Michael Lundin, Judith Meyer, Victor Rivera, and Enrique Serna. Commissioners Richard Barker, Tom Drzazgowski, Anita Kellman, and Jim Mazzocco were absent. Staff present: Rafael Payan, Aaron Chambers, Jennifer Psillas, George Kuck, Joe Barr, and Gregoria Tucker.

Guests: Nancy Cole, Project Manager, Pima County Project Management Office  
Diane Luber, Pima County Communications Coordinator

Pledge of Allegiance: Those present recited the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

- Commissioner Lundin made a motion to approve the February 3, 2012 minutes. Commissioner Catino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Commissioner Lundin made a motion to approve the April 13, 2012 minutes. Commissioner Catino seconded the motion. Commissioner Meyer commented that she asked Mr. Payan and Ms. Johnson as to what Steve Anderson had to say about his meetings with trails and mountain bikers in regard to the Sweetwater Preserve and the Robles Pass. In response to her question, Mr. Payan stated that, per his recollection, Steve Anderson did not report on that particular issue. Mr. Payan stated that the statement should be so noted in the minutes. Therefore, she contested that the reference on the April 13, 2012 minutes that Steve Anderson briefed the commission regarding trails meetings with mountain bikers regarding the Sweetwater Preserve and Robles Pass is false.
- Commissioner Meyer “want to know about any such meeting with mountain bikers, what was said, and what action, if any, is under consideration or being taken as a result.” Mr. Payan responded that Steve Anderson would present this information at the next or a subsequent meeting.

Motioned by Commissioner Lundin and seconded by Commissioner Catino, the April 13, 2012 minutes were approved unanimously as amended.

Call to the Public: There were no public comments rendered.

## Commission Discussion/Action Request

### 1. Reappointment of Chair Jan Johnson to the Conservation Acquisition Commission

Chair Johnson provided a history of her involvement with the Conservation Acquisition Commission (CAC), the role of CAC in the acquisitions of open space properties, their preservation in conjunction with the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, and funding provided for this program via 2004 bond funds, which was approved by voters by a 68% margin, and the CAC's interaction with the county administrator and the Board of Supervisors.

In response to Commissioner Rivera, Chair Johnson responded that the Board of Supervisors authorized the eight-year appointment term to the members of the CAC. Chair Johnson, in response to Commissioner Meyer, clarified that one of the members of the Pima County Parks and Recreation Commission is appointed to the CAC by the Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Serna made a motion to re-appoint Chair Jan Johnson for another eight-year term to the Conservation Acquisition Commission. Commissioners Lundin and Meyer seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

### 2. AYSO Region 206 presentation was tabled in the absence of Kaissa Gurvine, the presenter.

### 3. Pima County Trails Master Plan and The Loop

Nancy Cole gave a brief presentation in regard to the Pima County Trail Master Plan and the on-going development of the 55-mile non-motorized loop trail that links to the towns of Marana, Oro Valley, and Sahuarita, and other unincorporated areas within Pima County. The Loop includes the Rillito River Park, the Santa Cruz River Park, the Julian Wash Greenway, the Harrison Greenway, and the Pantano River Park. Ms. Cole requests for the commission's approval of the trail master plan and the designation of The Loop as a park.

Commissioner Serna inquired about the El Paso Greenway, which was included in the original project. Mr. Payan stated that future revisions to the map of The Loop should include critical secondary regional connectors, such as the El Paso Greenway, and will be presented to the commission for its review. Mr. Payan will have Steve Anderson call Commissioner Serna regarding South Tucson's request for a dedicated right-of-way from Union Pacific.

Commissioner Meyer motioned to approve amendment to item a, and to approve b, and c. Chair Johnson suggested taking action on the three items one at a time. In response to Commissioner Catino's question, Mr. Payan stated that although the Pima County Trails Master Plan and The Loop have been approved by the Board of Supervisors, the Board would like to re-engage the Parks and Recreation Commission with any future changes affecting the two documents.

Commissioner Meyer made a motion that the Parks and Recreation Commission approve the amended Pima County Trails Master Plan, including the Harrison Greenway stretch, as presented and endorse its advancement for approval by the Board of Supervisors. Commissioner Catino seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Meyer made a motion that the Parks and Recreation Commission approve The Loop and its appurtenant spur trails, designating them as a park and endorse the advancement of the same seeking designation approval by the Board of Supervisors. Commissioner Catino seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Catino made a motion that the Parks and Recreation Commission accept that future acquisitions of river parks and appurtenant trails acquisition be undertaken by the Pima County Regional Flood Control District. Commissioner Lundin seconded the motion. In response to Commissioner Meyer's question, Mr. Payan explained that this action will authorize the Pima County Regional Flood Control District to acquire river park lands and transfer management contract of the river parks to the Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation. Motion passed unanimously.

#### 4. Native Plant Nursery Update

Mr. Payan introduced Aaron Chambers, a botanical scientist and manager of the Pima County Native Plant Nursery (NPN).

Mr. Chambers stated that the scope of the NPN is to provide plant materials for use on county projects such as restorative re-vegetation of roadside and trailside, park plantings, along with mitigation and environmental restoration improvements. The plant materials are not typically commercially available for public purchase in many cases. Although the audience was not in accord to planting desert broom, Mr. Chambers mentioned that the plant is the keystone specie for many pollinators. Regarding information on pollinators, Mr. Chambers mentioned that Dr. Stephen Buchman is the expert on the subject. Commissioner Serna commented that understanding the role of bees as pollinators would be helpful. Mr. Payan suggested inviting Dr. Buchmann to give a presentation on pollinators at a future commission meeting. In regard to the invasive species, Mr. Chambers explained that the specie does not necessarily have to be non-native to be classified as invasive. Mr. Chambers said he does not claim responsibility for creating the tall pots process as other agencies are already using the process.

The NPN has already more than 15,000 orders for tall pots, according to Mr. Chambers. Mr. Chambers described the tall pots planting process and its significant result compared to conventional planting process. With the traditional 15-gallon conventional pots planting method, the tap root grows around within the nursery container, creating numerous subsequent problems for the plant and requires constant irrigation, while with the tall pot planting method allows the tap root to grow downward and requires less soil, water, and weeding. It also takes longer for plants to grow using the traditional planting method compared to tall pot. Therefore, the tall pots planting method is cost effective.

#### 5. Fiscal Year 2012-13 NRPR Budget Process

Joe Barr, recreation superintendent, reported that the county is engaged in an enterprise resource planning system called the Advantage and the Maximo. NRPR personnel involved in administrative financial responsibilities have been trained in either system as applicable.

The department's budget remains status quo. The county administrator proposes "maintenance" budget effort. That is, no supplemental budget will be awarded to any county department; however, the county will strive to maintain funding levels. Commissioner Lundin explained that the reason for the maintenance budget effort is that the Board of Supervisors has been directing county department to cut budgets for the past three years in order to avoid raising taxes. This is the first year that the Board is not raising taxes and hopes to maintain the budget status quo.

#### 5. Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Catino reported that the BAJA group met with the Regional Flood Control District staff regarding flooding in the wash at the Canoa Preserve Park. He stated that the BAJA group has established partnership with public and private agencies to fund the baseball and community park project. Funding limitations will initially preclude the development of a senior community center at this park.

#### Division Reports

The following divisions did not report: Development, GeoMedia, and Natural Resources.

#### Operations Division

George Kuck, maintenance/operations manager, reported that:

- playground replacement parts will be installed at Summit Park, and the new playground has been installed at Star Valley Park.
- the division installed new landscape and irrigation system at El Banco, a project of the Pima County Facilities Management Department.
- there has been constant metal theft at the parks, in addition to graffiti.

#### Recreation Division

Mr. Barr reported that

- Robles Ranch Community Center received Community Block Grant Fund (CDBG) to construct a basketball court.
- Picture Rocks Community Center also received CDBG fund to install a computer lab, and a high-speed Internet connection has already been established. In response to Chair Johnson, Mr. Barr stated that equipment donations (computers and accessories) are not accepted at the centers due to incompatibility with newer technology.
- Splash pad at Brandi Fenton Memorial Park opened April 21, 2012. Rainwater harvesting at swimming pools would be considered as the new splash pads are designed and developed. In response to Commissioner Serna, there is a joint-use operation agreement with the YMCA regarding the Kino Swimming Pool.
- Picture Rocks Swimming Pool will offer free swim through the generous donation of the Knights of Pythias Tucson Lodge #9 in partnership with the Picture Rocks Fire District.

- The Flowing Wells School District has delayed the closure of the swimming pool for renovation. It is still in limbo whether or not the swimming pool can be opened for the summer.

#### Future Agenda Items

The following items are suggested for the June 2012 study session:

- Environmental Education Unit of the Natural Resources Division presentation of the River of Words by Kerry Baldwin/Wendy Burroughs
- Summer recreation utilization of programs and who is using them

The following items are suggested for discussion in July 2012:

- AYSO Region 206 Presentation re lighted fields
- Report re Sweetwater Preserve and Robles Pass meetings with trails and mountain bikers by Steve Anderson and Kerry Baldwin
- Canoa Ranch master plan/implementation plan for Phase I by Robert Vaughn
- Pima Prickly Park presentation by Jessie Byrd
- Presentation on Pollinators by Adjunct Scientist Dr. Stephen Buchmann, Department of Entomology, University of Arizona (possibly in September 2012)
- Next meeting date/time/site

It was suggested that the June study session be held in Catalina, Arizona. The other site being considered is in the Southeast Shooting Range education building.

Call to the Public: No discussion.

Adjournment: Motioned and seconded, the regular meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.