

PIMA COUNTY  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
June 4, 2010  
Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Department  
3500 W. River Road, Tucson, Arizona



A. CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

Quorum having been established, the Chair called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m.

Commissioners present: Jan Johnson (Vice-Chair), Chuck Catino, Stephanie Maben, Gary Davidson, Anita Kellman, Lisa Ulher, Peter Chesson

Commissioners absent: Richard Barker (Chair)

Staff present: Rafael Payan, Carlo DiPilato, Tim Rapoza, Kerry Baldwin, Joe Barr, George Kuck, Steve Anderson, Gregoria Tucker, Evelyne Thorpe, and Ann Khambholja

1. Peter Chesson, PhD, District 3 Appointee to the Parks and Recreation Commission was welcomed to the commission.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Those present recited the pledge of allegiance.

C. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of January 15, 2010 Minutes

Commissioner Catino made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ulher, to approve the January 15, 2010 minutes; the motion passed unanimously.

2. Approval of April 2, 2010 Minutes

Commissioner Catino made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kellman, to approve the April 2, 2010; the motion passed unanimously

D. COMMISSION DISCUSSION/ACTION REQUEST

Item D-3. Status of the Rillito Racetrack Use Agreement, a presentation by the Pima County Fair Horse Racing Commission (PCFHRC) and the Pima County Horsemen's Association, Inc. (PCHA) for the non-exclusive use of Rillito Park/Racetrack (Pat White, President, Pima County Horsemen's Association).

Commissioner Jan Johnson, Acting Chair, advanced discussion of agenda Item D.3 because of the large number of attendees representing both PCFHRC and PCHA. Television stations present at this meeting included channels 4, 11 and 13. Without much ado, the volunteered speakers were invited to express their opinion on the issues.

## Public Speaker Comments

1. Patty Shirley, Vice-Chair, Pima County Horsemen's Association: The Pima County Fair Horse Racing Commission (FHRC) and the Pima County Horsemen's Association (PCHA) had a three-year agreement to continue operating the racetrack; however, the lease was terminated by Pima County prior to the three-year period lapsing. The FHRC/PCHA had paid \$3,750 per year more than any other leased property. An annual fee ranging from \$21K to \$150K is being considered by Pima County. This is not Pima County's first attempt to discourage horse racing at this site. Pima County removed half of the stalls to build soccer fields that have not been completed to date. A potential revenue generating opportunity may exist if the proposed soccer field site is turned into parking and parking fees are assessed. The racetrack does not have a locally available alternative. If Spring Fling does not like the fees, they have locally available alternatives—the racetrack does not.
2. Phineas Anderson: The Rillito Racetrack complex is a historic site; the site helps to define the city. He proposed that the Board of Supervisors consider a fee structure that is comparable to the rates paid by other not-for-profit organizations leasing county property.
3. Jim Gutenkunst, owner/trainer: The primary issue is that the site cannot be developed until horse racing has been removed from the site. The site will then be developed by private developers so that the developers can get rich.
4. Mardi Burden: Rillito Racetrack is part of the community and part of her family. It provides resources for varied interests and serves as a historical component in the area.
5. Lonny Powell, Director, Arizona Department of Racing: Rillito Racetrack has spun off several renowned greats in the racing industry further contributing to American history. The site is historic in nature. Recently, it has drawn more users than any other horse racetrack in Arizona. It creates jobs and pays salaries. It helps sustain regional agribusiness, an industry that is becoming less prevalent. It provides entertainment; it supports the world's leading college horse racetrack industry racing programs. It is a poor time to make changes especially in light of the fact that this site is making money and creating jobs when the national economy is hurting. If changes are to be made, they should be transitioned. Fee increases should be fair and reasonable.
6. Douglas Reed, Director, University of Arizona Racetrack Industry Program: Students get hands on training exposure to an industry-related historic site, and education at Rillito. The UA program is world renown. The site attracts great crowds who are not there necessarily to gamble. The site provides recreation and entertainment for Hispanic families. This site is one of the most heavily used racetracks in the nation. UA students could help with collecting a parking fee during racing and events to help offset costs.
7. Mark White: This site was on a county ballot in the mid 70s and 80s; the county needs to be fair: let Rillito Racetrack be Rillito Racetrack.
8. Ed Moore: Rillito Racetrack drew more attendance than Tucson's rodeo or the Accenture Match-play Golf Tournament and other top golf tournaments. The 1984 referendum required that this historical site be preserved. In 1989, Pima County supported historic designation for the site. In 2009, the Tucson Historic Preservation Committee [sic] unanimously voted to support the historic designation for this site. There is a plan to sell Rillito Racetrack—this can easily be researched and this information can be found; it needs to be looked into. The two groups that are interested in buying this property do not want to purchase it if it has the historic designation. The Parks and Recreation Commission, the Fair Horse Racing Commission, the soccer families and others are being used as “shields.” There is plenty of room at Kino/TEP complex for conversion into a soccer complex. This would be the best use for the \$35 million investment that Pima County made in locating Kino/TEP at its present site. The conversion could be done right away. Regional, international, and professional soccer teams would use the Kino/TEP site—not a single member of the Pima County Board of Supervisors knows about this.

9. Pat White, Chair, PCHA: The PCHA puts every penny that it makes back into the operation. At end of the season, the PCHA must use its line of credit, but all loans are retired shortly after the end of the season. The FHRC will come up with the rent.

10. Madelaine Moore: waived.

11. Ed Barney: Supports the racetrack. He has nine children and takes them to the track because it is good entertainment for his family. The track means so much to so many people in the community. It is unconscionable to raise fees at this site when Pima County is not doing so at any other site.

12. Pete Schlegel, PMA Group: The Pima County Board of Supervisors did not do what they could have done. There is a trend to not support parks and recreation, but to reduce it instead. The most important thing that can be done is to increase recreation services—not reduce them—and enhance parks and recreation. Pima County needs to find how to do things, not how to close things. Consider renewing lease.

13. Justin Jenkins, student intern representing himself: It is everyone's job to find things for folks to do. Everyone must work together. We all benefit or we all suffer.

14. Pat White again took the floor: Racetrack is more important than the ranches and open space that Pima County has been purchasing. A7 Ranch uses taxpayer dollars to operate unlike other ranch sites that Pima County has acquired; yet, we cannot find money to fix toilets. Insurance moneys did not go to fix all of the items damaged by storms. The FHRC/PCHA is continuously being harassed by Pima County; they [FHRC/PCHA] are not allowed onto the site during the off-season but then are told they [FHRC/PCHA] have to fix things.

Karen Chaney did not speak but submitted the following comment: Keep the track open; make it a multiuse facility.

Pima County Parks and Recreation Commission Comments:

1. Anita Kellman, representing District 4: Pima County should honor lease and not raise fees.
2. Victor Rivera, representing District 5: No comment.
3. Chuck Catino, representing District 4: Pima County should mandate funding of parks and recreation.
4. Lisa Uhler, representing District 2: Commission can provide direction on tough budget decisions. She invited guests to attend future Commission meetings.
5. Stephanie Maben, representing District 1: There is a great misconception that the commission is against horse racing. Contrary to Ed Moore's information, the Commission never voted to close the track. Ed Moore and Pat White signed the agreement to relocate the track, not to close it. Pima County did not fight against its historic designation; it submitted its own nomination. The Commission voted to endorse what the Rillito Racetrack Advisory Committee previously signed - period! Equal fees for equal uses; Spring Fling paid the rate for their event totaling \$6,500.
6. Peter Chesson, PhD, representing District 3: Cannot comment on models at this time.
7. Gary Davidson, representing District 1: Meeting guests should attend the Bond Advisory Committee meetings to discuss the proposed racetrack at the Fairgrounds. This issue is about money and although some may disagree with the fees being proposed, the proposed fees are aligned with the Board of Supervisor's approved fee structure. This issue has never been against horse racing. [Gary Davidson] is unaware of any nefarious deals to sell the

racetrack to any unnamed private parties as noted by Ed Moore. This issue is about fairness in what we charge other users groups at this site.

8. Jan Johnson, representing District 3: Pima County needs to consider fees assessed to other not-for-profit organizations at county-owned sites. Per Commissioner Johnson's data: there are five not-for-profit operated sites that are charged \$0; two not-for-profit operated that are charged \$10 per year; one for-profit operated site that is charged \$145k per year; and, one for-profit organization that is charged \$4,100 per month that is applied to a rent credit and used for respective onsite improvements. The FHRC is charged \$3,750 for twelve racing days; special events are assessed fees that are based on the Board of Supervisors approved fee schedule.

9. Richard Barker, representing District 5: Absent.

Item D-1—Proposed establishment of parks publications, souvenir and enhancement funds development in accordance with A.R.S. §11-941 to allow Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation (NRPR) to raise revenues for the current and future publications used for leisure and educational information was tabled.

Item D-2—Budget impacts on NRPR of the May 18, 2010 election on temporary \$0.01 state sales tax: Tim Rapoza, Finance Account Supervisor, Departmental Analysis Division, Finance and Risk Management Department told the commissioners that since Proposal 100 passed, the budget was submitted to the County Administrator who would submit it to the Board of Supervisors with his recommendations. The budget is 5% less than the previous year's; however, this would technically increase the budget by 9% if one time expenditure is taken into account. Two supplemental budgets for parking lot and playground improvements were also submitted.

Item D-4—Native Seeds/S.E.A.R.C.H building at Brandi Fenton Memorial Park: Kerry Baldwin reported that Native Seeds/SEARCH is building a new \$1.5M conservation facility that will provide a larger, safer and secured location to house their invaluable seed collection. They will partner with the County to create demonstration gardens, orchards, and an education center. The conservation education facility is scheduled to open on October 22, 2010. The second phase construction will include a retail store.

Item D-5—Park "designations": Mr. Baldwin told the commission that NRPR is still in the process of upgrading park designations. The parks will be designated as urban, recreational, and natural resource parks and will be reestablished as parks by the Board of Supervisors probably in August, 2010

Item D-6—Constituents request for commissioner's contact information: The commissioners have requested that no private or business information be provided to the public. Instead, they would like to be filtered into the pima.gov email address. Staff will check as to whether commission members can be given a pima.gov email address except for Victor Rivera who does not have a computer. In the case of Mr. Rivera, staff will forward any calls or requests for information via postal service or have staff relay the message to him.

Item D-7—September 3, 2010 Meeting: Mr. Rafael Payan requested that the September 3, 2010, regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission be cancelled because of staff attendance conflict with the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association conference. A motion was made by Commissioner Maben to hold the meeting on September 10, 2010 instead. It was seconded by

Commissioner Kellman. The motion passed. The next meeting will be held on August 6, 2010 at an offsite location, possibly the Ellie Towne Community Center.

Item D-8—Mr. Joe Barr provided the Parks and Recreation Commission with a draft letter in support of the Board of Supervisors stand on the proposed child care licensing rules amendment. A motion to accept the letter as amended by Commissioner Davidson was moved by Commissioner Maben and seconded by Commissioner Catino. The motion passed.

Item D-9: Mr. Barr informed the commission that a letter from the Parks and Recreation Commission regarding the proposed changes to the child care licensing rules for circulation to the parents/guardians of recreation program participants was not recommended by the County Attorney's Office. The Attorney's Office recommended that the Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department is not allowed to circulate the letter; however, the parents of program participants can sign and circulate a petition.

Item D- 10—Election of Officers: Motioned and seconded, the slate of officers for July 1, 2010 thru June 30, 2011 is.

Chair	Stephanie Maben
Vice-Chair	Jan Johnson
Secretary	Anita Kellman

Item D-11: Mr. Barr informed the commission that the Centro del Sur Boxing Gym, located at 1631 South 10th Avenue, was successfully transitioned to operation by the non-profit Aztlan Youth Programs, Inc. NRPR will continue to maintain the building exterior and mechanical equipment. Youth and adult fitness and boxing programs will continue on essentially unchanged at a lower cost to Pima County.

#### E. DIVISION UPDATE REPORTS

There was no discussion of the division reports per agenda and accepted as is by the commission.

#### F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S):

The next meeting will be held on August 6, 2010 at an off-site location. Commissioner Davidson is of the opinion that the agenda needs to be taken into consideration before moving meetings off-site. Commissioner Catino would like the minutes to be sent to the Board of Supervisors for their information.

#### G. CALL TO THE PUBLIC None.

#### H. ADJOURNMENT:

Motioned by Commissioner Catino and seconded by Commissioner Davidson, the meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.