



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
STUDY SESSION  
JULY 6, 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 9:03 a.m. Upon roll call, commissioners present were Jan Johnson (Chair), Anita Kellman (Vice Chair), Chuck Catino, Tom Drzazgowski, Michael Lundin, Jim Mazzocco, and Enrique Serna. Commissioners absent were Richard Barker (Secretary), Judith Meyer, and Victor Rivera. Staff present were Joe Barr, Kerry Baldwin, Wendy Burroughs, and Gregoria Tucker. Guests were Tom Moulton, Linda McNulty, Mike Holmes, Kaissa Gurvine, Tim Johnson, Arlan Colton, Diane Luber, John Spiker, and Joy Lyndes.

Those present recited the pledge of allegiance.

**Presentations:**

Pima County Sports & Tourism Authority

Tom Moulton, director of Pima County Economic Development and Tourism, introduced Linda McNulty, chair of the Pima County Sports & Tourism Authority (PCSTA) and Dave Holmes, executive director of PCSTA. Mr. Moulton gave an overview of how PCSTA was formed, its mission, and objective. PCSTA was "re-formed" (from its inception in the early nineties) in 2008, and is comprised of citizens and representatives of the business community, in an effort to keep major league baseball spring training to remain in Tucson.

Ms. McNulty elaborated on the mission and objective of PCSTA. She stated that the Arizona State Legislature-approved referendum must be placed on the ballot (either in November of 2013 or 2014 bond election) to determine whether or not the voters would agree to pay higher taxes to benefit sports (currently focusing on amateur sports). PCSTA hopes the referendum will enhance Tucson's economy.

PCSTA is currently considering the proposal received from Populous, a firm specializing in the design of sports facilities such as Olympic venues, to conduct an assessment of the region's existing sports facilities and activities associated with them, to identify areas needing enhancement, and possibly construct regional multiuse sports venues.

Born Again Jocks Association (BAJA) Project

Commissioner Catino gave an overview on how the BAJA was formed in 1998. BAJA currently has eleven softball teams. He reported that the BAJA group partnered with Pima County to build the softball field. The county has to date granted BAJA approximately \$75,000 specifically allotted for softball field construction documents. BAJA has thus far received approximately \$80,000 in cash and in-kind contribution from individuals, agencies, etc. Amenities at the park include four softball fields, parking, restroom, ramada, etc. Mr. Catino expects the support of the commissioners with the BAJA fund-raising effort to raise \$250,000 and if attained, the county will match to complete the project.

### Soccer Field Lighting

Kaissa Gurvine introduced herself and her associate, Tim Johnson. They work with the community's youth and adult sports and are actively involve with the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO). Their soccer group and other sports leagues have been using the two unlit multiuse fields at Tortolita Park. They propose the lighting of these two existing fields using state-of-the-art lights to maximize their use year-round by not only soccer leagues but also other sports leagues such as baseball/softball, football, lacrosse, and rugby. These fields could also be used as a sports leagues tournament site, according to them. Lighting of these fields will also alleviate safety issues.

Mr. Kerry Baldwin stated that the lighting of the Tortolita fields was previously identified in the bond package; however, it did not meet the priority consideration. It was suggested that Rafael Payan, director of Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, check into an alternate funding source to possibly light the two multiuse fields (estimate between \$150,000 and \$500,000 depending on the type of lighting fixtures). Staff will research the intergovernmental agreement with school districts as it relates to lighted fields operations and maintenance costs. Ms. Gurvine stated that their group has the potential of obtaining fund-raising revenues to assist in the installation of the field lights at Tortolita Park. It was suggested that Ms. Gurvine and Mr. Johnson contact Mr. Payan regarding the funding issues. With regard to the proposed environmental education/interpretation in coordination with the department and the Audubon Society, Ms. Gurvine and Mr. Johnson were advised they will need to approach the Audubon Society first to get their opinion. Commissioners Serna and Lundin commented Ms. Gurvine and Mr. Johnson for keeping the drive to light these fields alive.

### River of Words

Wendy Burroughs introduced herself as the environmental education program manager in the Natural Resource Division of the Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department. She distributed two brochures and a book to the commissioners regarding the Tucson River of Words.

According to Ms. Burroughs, River of Words (RW) is an international organization that brings poetry and art and science education to the children in the classroom literally around the world. The organization emphasizes on water harvesting and encourages individuals and artists to create a work of art related to water. In 2002, Ms. Burroughs initiated the Tucson River of Words (TRW), a recognized international affiliate in the state of Arizona. The TRW integrates science and the art. Environmental education educators teach young people primarily about watershed, an important concept of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan. Disseminating to the young people to engage into this art was a challenge to staff because of Tucson's desert setting; therefore, the educators use visual art to illustrate the water concept. The environmental educators conduct workshops/classes at different venues, including county community recreation centers, on where water came from, water harvesting, water conservation, importance of water to the environment, etc. TRW partners with Tucson-Pima Art Council (TPAC), which has the expertise in fine arts and poetry. TPAC hire poets (how to write poetry) and artists (fine arts) to teach in the classroom and workshops. Ms. Burroughs expounded on the poetry and art contests process. The TRW received grant from the

Central Arizona Project (CAP) because of its focus on water conservation, etc. Significant funding for the program comes from TPAC. The 2012 CAP grant focuses on poet and artist to educate on watershed participants in the county recreation community centers after-school program.

### Imagine Greater Tucson

Mr. Arlan Colton, FAICP, Planning Director, Pima County Development Services, gave a synopsis of the background of Imagine Greater Tucson—where it started and where it is heading. Mr. Colton mentioned that he and Commissioner Serna serve on the board of Imagine Greater Tucson (IGT). He detailed the result of the survey process in obtaining the community's input in identifying the values of programs/activities and projects such as land use, transportation, environment, and the economy in the region. There were over ten thousand people who participated in the survey and shared their priorities as they relate to growth and development in Tucson. The survey revealed that the community values a more urban, compact, mixed use, greener, and transit-oriented future. IGT plan in 2012 to draft the vision outreach in the summer and release the vision in the fall, focus on transportation network, and approach the business community and individuals to make the vision a reality. He requested the commissioners to sign the Pledge for a Greater Tucson Region in support of the IGT and return it to Mr. Colton. He encouraged the commissioners to visit [www.imaginegreatertucson.org/proposal/survey/result](http://www.imaginegreatertucson.org/proposal/survey/result) for progress of the survey effort.

Commissioner Serna commented that IGT's unique distinction of this politicized process from all previous planning concepts is that by virtue of focusing on values, TGI's vision is something that needs to be supported. He recognized the all out effort of the great number of volunteers contributing thousands of hours and working together with IGT to bring it into fruition.

In response to Commissioner Drzazgowski, Mr. Colton said that it does not take a lot to make a change if the people are serious about it. He stated that it is IGT's intention to recognize ultimately to continue to expand infrastructure to get the message across; that it would be a win-win for everybody to become involve economically.

Mr. Baldwin stated that the department's executive staff will meet with the IGT staff to try to explore the implications to the long-term regional parks planning and services in the future.

Commissioner Serna, referring to Commissioner Drzazgowski's question about change, commented that the result of the survey is a kind of document that people can look at and know that it is unbiased.

### Next meeting date/time/location

A regular meeting is scheduled on Friday, August 3, 2012, at 9:00 a.m.

Call to the Public

John Spiker's request regarding extended park hours was not related to any of the agenda items. It will be placed on the agenda at a future meeting.

Adjournment: Motioned and seconded, the session adjourned at 11:07 a.m.