MEMORANDUM

Date: January 14, 2019

To: The Honorable Steve Christy, Member
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

Re: January 11, 2019 Memorandum from Chris Cawein, Director, Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Regarding Possible Pickleball Improvements at Canoa Preserve Park

The attached January 11, 2019 memorandum addresses the issues of constructing new pickleball facilities at Canoa Reserve Park. With a cost ranging from $650,000 to $900,000, it is unlikely that there will be any pickleball courts built at Canoa Preserve Park in the near future. Obviously, such a capital investment would be an issue the Board would need to undertake in budget deliberations.

Please note in this memorandum I also asked Mr. Cawein to confer with the Green Valley Recreation (GVR) Executive Officer to determine the process by which would allow nonmembers to utilize the pickleball facilities constructed by GVR. In sum, it looks like there are few opportunities. Green Valley residents will certainly be welcome to use the pickleball facilities now being constructed at the Kino Sports Complex.

CHH/lab

Attachment

c: Jan Lesher, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Chris Cawein, Director, Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation
Maureen Ochoa, Director, Stadium District
MEMORANDUM

Date: January 11, 2019

To: CH Huckelberry, County Administrator

From: Chris Cawein, Director

Subject: Canoa Preserve Park and Pickleball in Green Valley

In response to your memorandum dated January 9, 2018, pertaining to Canoa Park in the Green Valley Area, the following information is offered.

A total of three to five Pickleball courts were originally envisioned in the Master Plan for Canoa Preserve Park. A portion ($3.25M) of the proposed 2015 Bond Funds were to be dedicated to Canoa Preserve Park improvements, and those improvements were expected to include the development of the five pickleball courts as part of the project.

Initial cost estimates were developed as part of the Bond scoping process in 2013/2014 and the costs for developing pickleball courts were estimated at approximately $100,000 per court. Note that this cost assumed unlit court facilities, no additional restrooms or significant utility improvements at the site, only a small additional parking lot of approximately 20 spaces, and a single shade ramada. Assuming these same development parameters, while integrating soft costs and incorporating a slightly improved economy of scale beyond 5 courts, I would expect a six to eight court complex to cost approximately $650,000 to $900,000.

If funds were made available and the County pickleball complex developed at Canoa Preserve, there would be several management options available for the facility. I would propose that the most effective strategy for management of the pickleball courts at Canoa Preserve Park would be a semi-passive management model. Because Canoa Preserve Park site has only limited NRPR staff presence, we rely on our partnership with the volunteers from the Baja organization to work closely with us to help monitor and maintain the site. Under this semi-passive management model, courts would be open and available to any member of the public from dawn to dusk, 7 days per week. I would strongly consider that we make the courts reservable, by integrating them into our on line ActiveNet reservation system, and with that, we would likely be able to recoup a small court use fee for those that wished to reserve a court or the complex at a specific day and time. Additionally, should a tournament promoter be interested in the site, a Special Use Permit would be issued and would lock up all available court reservations for that requested time period. However, if the courts were not heavily in demand for tournaments nor heavily reserved thru ActiveNet, they would be available for open play. It should be noted that routine maintenance requirements for the facility would generally be expected to be minimal after construction is completed, so cost for on-going maintenance would be expected to be limited.
I discussed with Kent Blumenthal, Chief Executive Officer of Green Valley Recreation (GVR), yesterday the progress on the GVR pickleball complex site development. As you are likely aware, this is to be located on an approximate 11-acre site, now owned by GVR, that is located only 0.8 miles north of the Canoa Preserve Park. The design for the proposed 24-court complex that includes lighting and other amenities was unveiled on December 13, 2018. Initial cost estimates for the facility are on the order of $2.2M. Mr. Blumenthal indicated that progress on the project has been slow and steady and that they are in the process of discussing fundraising efforts in order to complete development of the site. Mr. Blumenthal extended an invite to a “Work Session” with their Pickleball architect (WSM Architects) and various internal subcommittees, which is scheduled to occur on January 17. I indicated that I would try to attend or have one of our Recreation staff in attendance.

With respect to the question of potential use of GVR facilities by non-members, I discussed with Mr. Blumenthal the current policies of GVR. He indicated that typically, GVR sites are not open to the general public; however, there are exceptions. Specifically he mentioned that use of GVR sites for tournaments, when non-members are participants, are allowable. He also indicated that although non-member, day-to-day use is generally prohibited, some sort of special use arrangement could likely be crafted.

Based on this information and the evolving discussion to develop County pickleball facilities at Canoa Preserve in such close proximity to the developing GVR pickleball complex, I asked Mr. Blumenthal whether GVR would consider the possibility of County infusion of capital to the proposed GVR Pickleball complex in exchange for an appropriately determined level of allowable use by the general public who are not members of GVR. He indicated that he thought such an idea would certainly be plausible. He also indicated that this is the ideal time to discuss and examine this possibility, as the project fundraising discussion is heating up. I informed him that I would explore this possibility with you and determine whether it was feasible from the County perspective and what such an agreement could look like before their next Board meeting on January 29.

This potential shared funding/shared use solution certainly appears to be the most feasible option to me, if an acceptable agreement, allowing a reasonable amount of shared use at a reasonable capital infusion cost to the County, could be reached. Locating two pickleball complexes within a mile of each other seems redundant and inefficient. Additionally, a better facility, that would support larger tournaments could be ultimately developed with more amenities to the general public as well as GVR members.

Please let me know whether you are amenable to this concept and whether I should further the discussion on a potential agreement between GVR and Pima County, or abandon that idea and continue to focus on developing an independent County-operated 6 to 8 court pickleball court complex at Canoa Preserve Park.

C: Carmine Debonis, Deputy County Administrator
    Nanette Slusser, Assistant County Administrator