



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 8, 2013  
Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Department  
3500 West River Road, Tucson, Arizona



Quorum having been established, Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

The commissioners present were Jan Johnson (Chair), Anita Kellman (Vice Chair), Richard Barker (Secretary), Charles Catino, Tom Drzazgowski, Jim Mazzocco (arrived at 9:06 a.m.), and Enrique Serna. Commissioners Peter Chesson, Michael Lundin, and Victor Rivera were absent.

Staffs present were Rafael Payan, Kerry Baldwin, Joe Barr, George Kuck, Evelyne Thorpe, Kelly Cheeseman, Lacey Roberts, Dianna Kelley, and Greg Tucker.

Guests: Tobin Rosen, Civil Deputy County Attorney  
Suzanne Shields, Director of Regional Flood Control District  
Jennifer C. Coyle, Executive Aide to Supervisor Ally Miller, District 1

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motioned and seconded the December 14, 2012 minutes were approved.

There was no response to the call to the public.

Dr. Rafael Payan, director of Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation introduced the three above named guests to those present. The commission welcomed the three guests.

### Commission Discussion/Action Request

#### Update Report: El Corazon de los Tres Rios del Norte

Suzanne Shields, director of Regional Flood Control District, stated that the Board of Supervisors had recently approved and authorized the Regional Flood Control District (RFCD) to acquire approximately 615 acres of CalPortland property located between Ina Road and Camino del Cerro. CalPortland owns the property in question from the river all the way to Silverbell Road. Pursuant to a provision within the acquisition purchase agreement, CalPortland will retain ownership of its land north of Orange Grove. The acquired acre of riparian open space is the key access point to the river and trail system, including the Loop. The acquisition will also assist the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) with its project to extend and connect Sunset Road to Silverbell and River roads. The RFCD will be responsible for river management and riparian habitat enhancement of the Santa Cruz River corridor. Project scope includes active and passive recreation such as development of soccer fields for children and adult tournaments, a mountain bike facility, dog park, model airplane park, and connection to the river park system including bridges. Ms. Shields continued that with or without the bond passage in 2014, the river project ecosystem restoration and development will continue. As stated during the last presentation, the El Corazon de los Trios del Norte project would boost the local economy as it relates to hotels and restaurants and other economic development in the region. The commission thanked Ms. Shields for the update.

Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center

Dianna Kelley, recreation program coordinator at the Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center (ETFCC), personally introduced herself. She reported on the following programs being offered at the center. Youth programs are free except for field trips and some special events. The seniors programs are also free except for field trips and as specified. These programs emphasize physical fitness and eating right for all participants.

Kids and Parent Playtime (KAPP), an eight-week program for children ages three to five. Parents are required to accompany and remain on the premises during the session. The After School Program is an “at will” drop in program for school children ages five to thirteen. The Teen Program is open to youth ages fourteen through seventeen.

The seniors programs available at the center are: ACES, a club open to senior ages fifty and older. Enhance Fitness, an exercise class for seniors sixty and over. This program is offered in conjunction with the University of Seattle. ETFCC staff must be trained and certified to teach this fitness program. Membership is not required for these two programs. The Pima Council on Aging sponsors a senior nutrition program. For a \$2.00 donation, a senior can enjoy lunch. This program requires prior registration. The senior nutrition program served 10,693 meals in 2012.

Other programs offered are a computer lab provided by the Pima County Library; community meetings, and special interest classes.

The commission thanked Ms. Kelley for her informative presentation.

Clarification in conducting Parks and Recreation Commission study session

Mr. Tobin Rosen explained the difference between a regular meeting and a study session regarding agenda item(s) that may require the commission’s action and the call to the public. He stated that a regular meeting is “as is taking place right now as agendized.” A study session is held when an issue is more complex that requires extensive discussion, that there could be a debate on the issue amongst the members, or gathering of further information and placement for further discussion or action to the regular meeting. Thus a study session is time-consuming. In response to Commissioner Catino, Mr. Tobin reminded the commission that it is a violation of the Arizona Open Meeting Law for commissioners to discuss electronically amongst themselves any possible agenda item(s). He warned the commission to stick to the agenda, whether it is a regular meeting or a study session. In regard to public participation, Mr. Tobin stated that inclusion of the call to the public is required in a regular meeting. Although a public comment is an option in a study session, it is advisable to include it on the agenda.

Dr. Payan suggested three options on how to conduct the commission’s meeting:

- conduct regular meeting on an alternate basis
- split the meeting: first half a regular meeting; second half a study session with each on specific time certain
- conduct the meeting on a case by case basis

Commissioner Serna suggested not to have a study session. Commissioner Mazzocco expressed his opinion about conducting a study session because there is seldom any agenda item(s) that requires the commission to make any recommendation for action by the Board of Supervisors, and that the agenda items are merely a clearing house of NRPR's information. Commissioner Drzazgowski concurred with Commissioner Mazzocco's position. There will be no further discussion on this matter.

### Mary Henderson Property

Dr. Payan reported that the county is in the process of acquiring the Mary Henderson property. He stated that when Mary Henderson passed away, the property was offered to the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum to preserve and protect the building and operate and provide environmental and passive nature-based recreation to the public. The museum was not interested and it was then offered to the Nature Conservancy, which also declined the offer. The rejection of the offer opened the opportunity for the county to pursue its acquisition. Dr. Payan stated the project scope would include the Painted Hills, Starr Pass, and Tucson Mountain Park trails network. Mr. Rosen stated that the court's approval to amend the Mary Henderson trust is necessary to complete the acquisition of the property.

Commissioner Mazzocco commented that he knew Mary Henderson and the county's effort to acquire the property is a great opportunity, and its proposed use by Pima County is in alignment of what the late Ms. Henderson desired. He asked if commission's action is needed. Dr. Payan stated that a master plan will be presented to the commission for ratification at their next regular meeting.

Mr. Baldwin stated that the Starr Pass Enhancement Fund could be used to augment the cost of restoration and development of the property.

Commissioner Mazzocco suggested naming the property and perhaps a trail after Mary Henderson. This will be an action item on the next regular meeting agenda.

### Development Division – Announcement of Transition

Dr. Payan informed the commission that Carlo DiPilato has retired. The Project Management Office now manages NRPR's capital improvement projects (CIP), except for the trails projects, which will continue to be managed by Steve Anderson, NRPR's Planning Manager. Program Manager Nancy Cole now manages NRPR's CIP) projects.

### Commissioners Report

Commissioner Kellman thanked the staff and volunteers for the assistance to the success of the Beat Cancer Boot Camp (BCBC) anniversary held in January. She stated that she's working on the BCBC's annual fund-raising event – the Challenge, a military-style 5K obstacle course. She asked the commission and the public to support the program, not necessarily as a donor but as a volunteer participant for the fitness program. She announced that BCBC is now in six states and she'll be organizing the seventh in Las Vegas, Nevada. During her out-of-state presentation, she gives credit to Pima County's support of BCBC and the impact of BCBC to the community.

Commissioner Catino announced that the BAJA (Born Again Jocks Association) is applying for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) with assistance from staff. He reported that a soft

opening of the softball fields at Canoa Preserve Park was held on January 2, 2013. Benches, tables, and a ramada have been installed and installation of the drinking fountain is underway.

Dr. Payan commented that the BAJA project is a model of a not-for-profit private-public partnership.

Commissioner Kellman commended Commissioner Catino for his accomplishments in the development of the softball sports complex. Commissioner Catino commented that it has been wonderful working with the NRPR for seven years in the planning, design, and development of the project. He thanked Pima County administration for their support and financial assistance. "I'm proud of it," he said, acknowledging the commendation and appreciation a job well done.

## DIVISION UPDATE REPORTS

### GeoMedia (Joy Mehulka)

Dr. Payan stated that the proposed virtual tour of the Loop can ultimately be expanded to include mountain parks trails; for example, the Finger Rock Trail. Commissioner Serna suggested the possibility of including information on the educational enrichment tours of Dr. David Yetman, a former member of the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Baldwin commented that the *Desert Speaks*, which is copyrighted by Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), is being promoted and is popular in other states. Dr. Payan will have staff check on providing a link of the PBS Web site on the NRPR Web site.

### Natural Resource (Kerry Baldwin)

Highlights: Pima County is currently negotiating the transfer of the A7 Ranch operation and management to a private rancher whose family has over 120 years of ranching experience. Tour of the ranch is open to the commissioners, just let Mr. Baldwin know. Pima County has acquired the M Diamond Ranch. Opportunity is being explored to access the 32-mile CAP Trail that will link with the Loop, TMP and the Santa Cruz River trail corridors. He reported that the Canoa Ranch, which was previously visited by some commissioners, has undergone improvements to the historic buildings and grounds. There are currently 17 docents who conduct guided tours of the ranch. George Proctor donated a huge collection of artifacts to be integrated at the ranch. He invited the commissioners to the dedication ceremony to be held on March 2, 2013.

### Operations (George Kuck)

Highlights: Preparation for the Rillito Racetrack horse racing season is underway. Funds have been authorized for the operations and management of Canoa Preserve Park including cost of water and electricity. Rillito River Park is selected as the first urban river trail open to bicyclists' nighttime use. In response to Commissioner Kellman, nighttime hours have yet to be specifically determined, but will likely be 24 hours a day. Dr. Payan stated that the river trail is currently being used 24 hours a day and considered a public path. Bicyclists will be encouraged to use nighttime safety equipment and mindful of wildlife corridors. Surveillance camera has been installed at Summit Park. Metal theft continues to be problematic, even with efforts to alleviate it. Metro Alliance is exploring an approach for recycling outfits to obtain personal information from individual selling metal and possibly eliminate cash payment.

Planning (Steve Anderson)

The CAP (Central Arizona Project) Trail presentation was tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

Recreation (Joe Barr)

Highlights: NRPR received a \$997,521 mid-year budget adjustment, which is annualized into the fiscal year 2013-14 budget request. NWYMCA installing a non-member entrance gate at the Kino Swimming Pool. The Manzanita BMX facility is being relocated to the Fun Spot site at the northern half of Mike Jacob Sportsark. Ted Walker Park shall be converted into a dog park facility complex. Serious leak underneath the Manzanita Swimming Pool pipes are being analyzed and shall be repaired by American Leak Detector. Four thousand school children and their chaperons who participated in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ted Walker Youth Day at Old Tucson held on January 31, 2013. Winter Jam, a youth skateboarding contest, was held at Picture Rocks Skate Park on January 26, 2013. Senior Olympic shooting events were held at the Southeast Regional Park (SERP) shooting range. The Arizona Game and Fish Hunter Education classes are being held at SERP on the last Sunday of every month.

Special Project/Task Force (Robert Vaughn) - No report.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. CAP Trail, including the TMP section
2. Link on our website to the Desert Speaks/PBS website
3. Henderson Residence Master Plan, including the Painted Hills, Henderson, Starr Pass, and TMP trail network/complex
4. Ted Walker Dog Park Master Plan
5. Pima Prickly Park second annual celebration
6. Pima Prickly Park volunteer information (Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society should be their point of contact).
7. Canoa dedication ceremony report

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:** No response from the public.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motioned and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.