



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING



May 13, 2016

Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department  
3500 West River Road, Tucson, Arizona

Quorum having been established, Chair Lundin called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m on May 13, 2016.

Commissioners present were Michael Lundin (Chair), Jan Johnson (Vice Chair), Kimberly Marohn, Anita Kellman, Victor Rivera, Peter Chesson and Enrique Serna. Karen Cesare and Richard Barker were absent.

Staff present were Chris Cawein, Robert Padilla, Kerry Baldwin, Joe Barr, Robert Vaughn, Ron Odell, Elisabeth Van Der Leeuw, Heather Ruder, Roland Duarte, Robin Hadden and Ann Khambholja.

Those present recited the pledge of allegiance.

Chair Lundin informed the commission that he wanted to discuss the addendum item first, which was the discussion of the Ann Day memorial event and the possibility of renaming a park facility in her honor.

Mr. Cawein informed the commission that a memorial event would be held at Brandi Fenton Memorial Park on Saturday, May 14, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. NRPR staff are diligently working on preparations for the public memorial event. He informed them that Supervisor Day was a strong supporter of parks during her tenure with Pima County. Mr. Cawein informed the commission that the Northwest Park, adjacent to the NW YMCA, which has a couple of ball fields and includes a dog park and other features, could be an appropriate site. She worked very hard for funding the dog park and the ramadas, and it was one of the last park actions she took before retiring. He informed them that Valerie had spoken with the family and they were very appreciative of having a park named in her honor. Chair Lundin asked what official action could be taken by the commission and was informed by Mr. Cawein that the commission could make that recommendation as per NRPR's park renaming policy, which could be presented to the Board of Supervisors. He also said that the actual name, whether it would be Ann Day Park or Ann Day Memorial Park, could be considered later. Mr. Cawein asked for a motion to rename the park. Commissioner Kellman made a motion to consider renaming the Northwest Park after Ann Day. Commissioner Serna seconded the motion. All the commissioners were in favor.

#### Consent Agenda

Commissioner Johnson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rivera, to approve the February 12, 2016 minutes. The motion passed.

## COMMISSION DISCUSSION/ACTION REQUEST

### 1. Informational update regarding the 2016 Rillito Racing Season (Jaye Wells):

Mr. Wells, a Director of the Rillito Park Foundation and Chair of the Heirloom Farmers' Market gave the commission an update on the past racing season. He began with the background on Rillito Park and informed the commission that the Foundation was formed to provide a solution to a stalemate between the local soccer and horse racing communities that jeopardized the Rillito Park and racing for years. Rillito Park consists of Rillito Downs Race Track, the J. Rukin Jelks Stud Farm Historic Site, and 11 soccer fields. The park also serves as a festival site year-round and home of the Heritage Farmers' Market. In 2012, Rillito Park was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Foundation proposes to restore the Jelks Stud Farm site and establish the Museum of the Western Horse and Rider. The racetrack was also the birthplace of quarter horse racing. Mr. Wells spoke to the commission about the renovations done to the Jelks Stud Farm, home of J. Rukin Jelks who developed the race track. He told them that there have been several receptions and parties at the site, but since it is not ADA accessible yet, it cannot be advertised. Mr. Wells gave a summary of what Rillito Park Foundation had accomplished, the top few being, resurfacing of the track – which greatly improved track safety, partnering with the University of Arizona's Race Track Industry program which provided hands on training to the students in the program, partnering with El Charro to expand the food selection which increased revenue, offering Simulcast racing wagering on major tracks which greatly increased revenue, and dark day simulcasting after the live meet ended. The negative impacts were extending the meet into late March and April which clashed with the U of A's Basketball season and hence reduced attendance. This year the season was shortened and the Foundation hopes to have another race season in October. Other negative impacts were unplanned improvements, lack of strict payroll and expense controls, limited parking and the ongoing relocation of the barns. The Foundation was forced to spend several thousand dollars to rent barns to make up for the shortcoming. Mr. Wells also informed the commission that he has been in touch with Mr. Schmidt of the Tucson Soccer Academy to work out compromises between the groups. One of them was starting racing later in the day so soccer was not impacted significantly. Another suggestion was adding a high net between the fields and the racetrack so the soccer fields could be used at the same time. Mr. Wells informed the commission that the Foundation would also like to upgrade the commercial kitchen onsite and work with the Farmers' market vendors as well. However, Mr. Wells emphasized several times that without a long term contract, the foundation could not move forward and solicit enough funding. Commissioner Marohn asked how the Foundation raised money and Mr. Wells informed her that the Martin family and Jelks Foundation had provided funding. She also asked whether soccer generated revenue as well. Mr. Cawein informed her that it was very limited due to the fee structure approved by the Board of Supervisors, but NRPR will probably address the fee scale structure in the future. Mr. Wells also informed the commission that the soccer community was open to providing more funding to help maintain the fields. Mr. Wells was asked whether the lack of parking impacted revenues. He informed them that they are looking into several alternatives including providing shuttles. Mr. Wells was asked whether people utilizing the Loop patronized the park and he told them that many did. Mr. Wells was also asked whether he had submitted applications for grants, but he replied that due to the fact that there was no assured longevity, they have not. He informed the commission that the Federal Government had grants for improving farmers' markets and that could be used to bring the commercial kitchen up to code so it could be used during the week as well. However, as there was no assurance of a longer contract, they have not applied for it. Commissioner Chesson asked whether they could increase the revenue from the museum. Mr. Wells reminded him that they had held some events there, but since is not yet ADA accessible it cannot be advertised as a venue, however, they do generate revenue from events held at the clubhouse and grandstand, and that can be enhanced. Mr. Wells

spoke about converting the Jelks House into a museum that would showcase the horse in American culture. Commissioner Chesson asked whether it could combine science as well since the horse evolved in the Americas first before becoming extinct here. Mr. Wells said that they had envisioned several exhibits which would be held there that would bring repeat visitors. Mr. Wells also mentioned they are in talks with the U of A's Compost Cats to utilize a piece of land that cannot be used at present, to collect plant waste, compost it at their site and bring back the compost to be sold. Chair Lundin thanked Mr. Wells for his presentation and ideas.

2. Informational update on the preliminary budget (Robert Padilla): Mr. Padilla provided the commission with information that showed the current fiscal year's financial summary to date that shows NRPR is on pace to bring in additional revenue of approximately \$135,000 for the balance of the fiscal year. The primary drivers are the Gilbert Ray Campground and shooting sports. Regarding expenditures, NRPR is forecasting that they will meet budget on the expenditure side. Mr. Padilla pointed out that NRPR will have a positive net fund impact of \$135,450.00. Commissioner Johnson asked for an explanation regarding the positive net fund impact. Mr. Padilla explained that due to the excess revenues generated the total budget will see a positive impact. Mr. Padilla then provided copies of the FY2016/17 recommended budget and informed them that the revenue of \$989,550 was increasing by \$25,000. The expenditures for FY 2016/17 are \$17,309,231, which represents a 3% increase from the previous year. The increase is a result of increased Motor Pool rates, leasing of hardware/software costs by the Information Technology department and increased employee health benefits. NRPR as a General Fund department is receiving an increase to its base budget for these amounts. Mr. Padilla pointed out that the three new fields at Rillito Regional Park came on board in October 2014 and the department requested a supplemental budget increase, which was denied. However, this year, the \$134,201 was included in the base budget. The additional revenue of \$25,000 is attributable to those fields because of the special events held there and lighting reimbursements from the leagues playing there. Mr. Padilla informed the commission that since Mr. Cawein and he came aboard, the budgeted revenues have increased by 18%. Mr. Padilla informed them that NRPR plans to keep increasing revenue collection estimates as programs become more efficient and defined. Chair Lundin thanked Mr. Padilla and commended him on his work.

3. Informational update on the Regional Sports Field Management App (Ron Odell & Elisabeth Van Der Leeuw): Mr. Odell demonstrated to the commission the new GIS Regional Ballfield application. This app covers the jurisdictions of the City of Tucson, Town of Marana, Town of Oro Valley, Town of Sahuarita and Pima County. Constituents will now be able to locate ballfields whether it be softball, baseball, or multi-use fields and whether the field is lit or unlit and in which jurisdiction it is located. The website includes a help document to aid navigation of the site. Ms. Van Der Leeuw demonstrated how fields could be measured and how the legend and layers buttons worked. Chair Lundin thanked them and mentioned that this would really help constituents find information.

#### DIVISION UPDATE REPORTS:

1. Operations Division (Heather Ruder): Presentation on all projects completed at Manzanita Park – Ms. Ruder presented the commission with a report on all the projects completed over the last two years at Manzanita Park. Some of the highlights were installation of a new park entry sign, seven picnic tables, various playground repairs, replacing a 10-tier bleacher, renovations and new roofs for five ramadas, irrigation system modifications and electrical upgrades to the Maintenance

shop and Concession stand. The basketball and tennis courts were repaired and resurfaced and the ball field fencing was repaired and/or replaced. The asphalt path was replaced and lengthened to approximately 1.2 miles. Repairs were made to the waterslide and pool pump room, and a new shade structure with benches and a new gate were installed at the entrance. Thus 15 projects were completed in two years and a total of \$563,300 was spent.

2. Special Projects & Trades Division (Robert Vaughn): Mr. Vaughn informed the commission about the mission of the SPT which is responsible for construction of new park features as well as the normal maintenance and repairs at NRPR properties. They also extend their services to other Pima County departments and other governmental agencies. SPT is also responsible for repairs, maintenance and special events at the historic Canoa Ranch. Several events have been held here including the 2016 Canoa Ranch Heritage Fair. A fund raising gala was also held to kick-off the commemorative tree fund raiser to replant the trees that lined the historic entry way at the ranch.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S): Informational update by the operator of Colossal Cave

ADJOURNMENT: As there was no further business to come before the commission, duly motioned and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.