



# PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES REGULAR MEETING



December 9, 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 9:33 a.m on December 9, 2016.

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

Staff present were Chris Cawein, Robert Padilla, Elisabeth Van de Leeuw, Joe Barr, Kelly Cheeseman, Grant Bourquet, Merrill Meadows, Leonard Ordway, Martina Gonzales, Steve Anderson, Robin Hadden and Ann Khambholja.

Those present recited the pledge of allegiance.

## Consent Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to approve the September 9, 2016 minutes. The motion passed.

## COMMISSION DISCUSSION/ACTION REQUEST

Informational year end summary (see attached reports):

1. Mr. Chris Cawein presented Commissioner Damion Alexander with a Philabaum award for his service to the commission.
2. Ms. Elisabeth van der Leeuw presented the commission with the annual report of the GIS division. She informed the commission that the GIS Division finished creating the base GIS layer for NRPR's land Management program, which is comprised of neighborhood, district, regional and mountain parks, as well as cultural resource parks, river parks, open space, ranches, conservation easements and other natural areas. Park plans and documents have been collected and entered into the document management system; they have also been linked to the appropriate areas and/or features in the GIS system. This will be ongoing as new plans and documents are added. During the next phase of the GIS effort, parks and river parks will be integrated into the main IT/GIS environment and served to internal County users through PimaMaps (County GIS viewer). The GIS Division is also in the process of creating a 'Parks' public facing application. This will help the public locate various park amenities as well as help the public find ramadas, playgrounds and other facilities. The Natural Resource data collection effort is also well underway, with Natural Resource staff collecting ranch infrastructure elements and adding them to the NRPR geodatabase (the goal: to be served to internal users and the public). During the presentation she mentioned that photographs were also being added to the Trails application to allow users to visualize various parks, trail heads and other places of interest. Commissioner Alexander asked how photographs could be submitted and was informed that at present, it was being done through Trail Coordinator Mark Flint. Commissioner Chesson asked if zip code information could be automatically input into the new Trails application weather information link. Ms. van der Leeuw informed him that she would research this matter further. Commissioner Chesson also inquired about updates to the system and was told that it would be an ongoing process.

3. Mr. Joe Barr introduced five program managers on his team: Mr. Leonard Ordway, Shooting Sports Program Manager, Ms. Merrill Meadows, Ajo Parks' Manager, Mr. Grant Bourguet, Aquatics Program Manager, Ms. Kelly Cheeseman, Community Center Program Manager and Ms. Martina Gonzales, Special Event Program Manager.

Mr. Leonard Ordway, Shooting Sports Program Manager, informed the commissioners that the shooting sports program had locations at the Southeast Regional Park which had a rifle/pistol range, clay target center and an archery range, Tucson Mountain Park contained a rifle/pistol range and an archery range and Ajo also had a rifle and pistol range. He informed the commissioners that the revenue from this program had grown significantly from approximately \$50,000 in 2005 to nearly \$270,000 at present. He informed them that they have the largest volunteer program with 72 active volunteers in 2015. Program participation had also increased. Mr. Ordway described the attributes of the various ranges in the county. Commissioner Johnson asked what a 'walking course' was. It was explained that archery targets were set up along these trails to allow archers to practice their skills without the formal use of measured target lengths. Commissioner Alexander asked whether the ranges had seen a decline following the restrictions at Reddington Pass, but was informed that that had not changed anything, however small sections have been opened for shooting and there are two scheduled cleanups annually. Commissioner Johnson asked whether there were entry fees for the ranges and was given details for the different shooting sports. She was also informed that NRPR sells annual archery passes for \$25.00. Mr. Ordway invited all the commissioners to visit the ranges and experience them for themselves.

Ms. Merrill Meadows, Park Manager for Ajo Regional Park informed the commission of the varied range of activities held at the park, from activities for kids to the adult community. Ajo Regional Park, besides the Community Center, has a swimming pool, art annex, ball fields and soccer field, tennis and basketball courts, a dog park, ramadas, a shooting range and primitive camping facilities. NRPR participates in many community events. Commissioner Chesson asked about open space and the trails system in the area. Ms. Meadows advised him that it was very primitive and that there are trails throughout the area. The trails are not maintained by NRPR as they fall under several jurisdictions. Commissioner Alexander inquired about mountain biking as well as a golf course. Ms. Meadows informed him that the golf course was run by a private operator and you could mountain bike. Commissioner Chesson asked whether there was any way to designate an area for ATV use. Mr. Barr informed him there was very limited ability to enforce use. Commissioner Chesson also inquired whether pronghorns were in the area and was informed that there were some to the west of Ajo in an area where there is enough food and water to sustain them. Commissioner Chesson also asked about the population of Ajo and Ms. Meadows informed him that according to the US Census, it was about 3,000, increasing in winter to about 4,500 persons.

Mr. Grant Bourguet, Aquatics Program Manager, gave the commissioners an overview of the aquatics facilities: two year-round joint use facilities are the NW YMCA and the Kino Pool at the Mulcahy YMCA, and seven other county owned pools which are open only in summer. He also mentioned the splash pad at Brandi Fenton Memorial Park which is very popular. Several low cost – high impact special events were also held at the pools over summer. Commissioner Serna asked about the lifeguards at the YMCA and was informed that the Y trains its own staff. Commissioner Rivera asked whether the pools that were open year-round were heated and Mr. Bourguet informed him that they were and were covered when not in use. Commissioner Alexander inquired about the splash pads and was informed that splash pads like the one at Brandi Fenton Memorial Park work best on their own. The one at Picture Rocks which was near the swimming pool was not used as much.

Ms. Kelly Cheeseman, Community Center Program Manager informed the commission that NRPR has seven active community centers, one unmanned center at Mt. Lemmon and two leased centers. They are all open year round and offer a variety of programs catering to preschoolers as well as to seniors. Ms. Cheeseman informed them about a few of the programs offered as well as special events offered. She informed them that she was the liaison for APRA and NRPA and that through their positions as commissioners, they too have been enrolled in those associations.

Ms. Martina Gonzales, Program Manager for Special Events at Mike Jacob Sportspark and Rillito Regional Park, informed the commission that she was in charge of issuing permits for special events that ranged from school picnics to horse and dog shows, car shows, to the Celtic Festival and Spring Fling. She also informed them that several organizations held fund raising walks and runs at Rillito Park, which kept walkers safe and off city streets.

Addendum items:

Mr. Cawein informed the commission about the discussions pertaining to the Rillito Racetrack contract which will probably be extended until 2021 as the Bert Martin Foundation proposes to donate \$1 million. Thus the extension of the contract may also stimulate additional donations to Rillito Racing. NRPR along with representatives of Attractions and Tourism have examined the list of recommended projects and found that the group was not proposing to spend on the previously recommended projects. For that reason, the proposed contract amendment will contain several stipulations that include select County required capital improvement projects like building structural improvements, accessibility, electrical and plumbing repairs and improvements.

Mr. Cawein also addressed the commission regarding the renewal of the operating agreement with the operators of Mike Jacob Sportspark. He informed them that the current operating model is a hybrid, where the county performs turf and field maintenance and two operators are responsible for field scheduling, tournament play, fee collection and concession operations. This has not been the most efficient model and some of the shortcomings are lack of any significant capital improvements, lack of cooperation between the lessees, lack of synergy between the concession operator and league operator leading to losses in revenue enhancement, efficiency and innovation. The lack of county authority to schedule and perform preventative maintenance has also resulted in a reduced ability to maintain a safe playing environment. Due to these factors, as well as the difficulties in the near future to access the park due to the ADOT project on I-10, staff is considering alternative operating models. County Administration has concurred and recommends that staff negotiate a month-to-month operating agreement with the present operator for a period of six months, and during that time, staff will conduct a competitive request for proposals to select a single entity to operate the park. Up to \$1 million in capital improvements in funding received from ADOT can be utilized in cooperation with the future operator.

A motion was made by Commissioner Alexander and seconded by Commissioner Kellman to table the following two items and include them in the next meeting:

- Commission discussion regarding qualities and characteristics needed for the position of the Natural Resources Division Manager
- Informal update regarding the call for nominations for the Chuck Catino Volunteer Award

**DIVISION UPDATE REPORTS:**

There were no reports.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S):**

**ADJOURNMENT:** As there was no further business to come before the commission, duly motioned and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.