

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

Regular Meeting – July 11, 2019

Meeting Location: Edgewater Brewery

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Nick Allan
William Findlay
Beau Flores
Marc Litzen
Gary Schroen

Board Members Absent: Abby Landmeier
Phil Pe'a
Byron Wiehe

City Staff Present: Rob Schoeber, Director Parks and Recreation
Traci Wieland, Deputy Director Parks and Recreation
Rob Davis, Parks Supervisor, Forestry
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist

Item 1: Meeting called to order by Gary Schroen at 12:03 p.m.

Item 2: Introduce new Board Members

Board members introduced themselves to the newly appointed board members, Nick Allan and Beau Flores. Officer elections (for Chair and Vice Chair) will be held at the August meeting.

Item 3: Approve minutes from the May 2, 2019 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

Gary Schroen made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 2 meeting. The motion was seconded by Marc Litzen and carried unanimously.

Motion approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 5 No 0

Item 4: Las Colonias Park Update

Rob Schoeber talked with Board members about the construction progress in Las Colonias Park. Work continues at the East end of the park and the recreation features are under contract. The roads and sidewalks are all completed. The construction of the butterfly lake is nearly complete though the raw water project that is supplying irrigation water has been delayed. The park will likely not be ready for grass seed until spring. Park amenities still to be completed include the plaza area which will be a great gathering spot surrounded by pad sites for restaurants. The plaza itself will have astro turf installed. The dog park is also yet to be completed. Staff are installing a very drought tolerant, deep rooted, low growing grass product which holds up to high traffic.

Three restroom facilities are being built in the park; one by the dog park, one north of the plaza area and one between the butterfly lake and boat ramp. There is an additional structure being built behind the amphitheater which will provide an additional public restroom as well as more green room space for performers.

The river recreation feature will have a second inlet to double the capacity of the slough that was excavated in 2016. This is not a kayak park, though there will be a little whitewater, room for stand-up paddle boarding, tubes and duckies.

Board members inquired about filling lease space since the ballot measure to change the City Charter failed. Staff may make another request of the Department of Energy or take a more specifically worded question back to the ballot to allow 99 year leases only at Las Colonias Park. Currently there are two businesses who have leased space in the Business Park.

Item 5: Personnel Updates

Rob Schoeber advised the Board that the new Parks and Recreation Director, Ken Sherbenou has been hired and will begin work on August 5. Ken comes to Grand Junction from the Recreation District in Montrose. Rob's last day will be August 2. Rob talked with the Board about some shifting within the Parks division. Traci, as Deputy Director, oversees both Parks and Recreation. Mike Vendegna is overseeing Cemetery Operations, Randy Coleman is now the supervisor over turf, irrigation and horticulture, and Rob Davis is the new Forestry and Code Enforcement supervisor. Rob was most recently the Forester for the City of Denver.

Rob Davis talked with the board about the elm seed bug. They are a non-native, invasive species who do not yet have natural predators in our ecosystem. Staff is working closely with the Colorado State University Agriculture Extension office to determine the best way to prevent and eradicate these bugs. Removing healthy trees is not recommended.

Rob Davis also shared with the Board that the Rotary has donated 100 trees which have been planted along a new path in Canyon View Park. There are over 40 species planted in the new grove and it is a wonderful addition to the park.

Item 5: For the Good of the Community

Gary Schroen advised the board that the City is looking for input into the Comprehensive Plan. There is a meeting on Tuesday, July 16 at 6:00 p.m. at the Avalon for the community to provide feedback.

The river trail, behind the Park Operations building has collapsed into the river. Staff are (and have been) working with the Army Corps of Engineers about this particular section of trail.

Rob Schoeber advised the board that staff had received a call about bones above ground, on a grave at Crown Point Cemetery. The county Sheriff, Coroner, City staff, and CMU Anthropology department all helped with the identification and investigation. It has been determined that an infestation of squirrels is burrowing underground, disturbing the graves, and moving the bones.

Staff also advised the board that there is an increase in vagrancy activity around the City, especially in City parks. This is having an impact on shelter reservations (and revenues) and continues to be an issue the entire City struggles to manage.

Item 6: Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 12:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Little
Administrative Specialist