

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes October 21, 2004

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Chairman Goss at 12:03 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Bernie Goss
Dennis Derrieux
Lenna Watson
Reford Theobald
Bob Cron
Tom Dixon

Board Members Absent:

David Detwiler
Cindy Enos-Martinez (Ex-Officio)

Parks & Recreation Staff Present:

Joe Stevens, Director
Don Hobbs, Assistant Director
Tressa Fisher, Administrative Specialist
Shawn Cooper, Parks Planner
Mari Steinbach, Recreation Superintendent
Traci Altergott, Recreation Supervisor
Shon Birch, Recreation Coordinator
Doug Jones, Golf Course Superintendent
Travis Bunkelman, Golf Professional

Guests:

Lisa Troung, City Youth Council
Dan Walker, Meadow Gold
Chuck Thompson, Meadow Gold
GJ 101 - Tour Guests (5)

Chairman Goss welcomed the guests from Meadow Gold Dairies and the GJ 101 - Tour.

Item 2: Approve Minutes

Bob Cron moved to approve the September 16, 2004 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes.
Lenna Watson seconded.

Motion adopted by Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 6 No 0

Item 3: Finalist for Gold Medal Award

Joe Stevens announced the Grand Junction Parks & Recreation Department recently won the 2004 National Gold Medal Award for excellence in the field of Parks & Recreation management. Mr. Stevens and Ms. Mari Steinbach recently attended the NRPA conference in Reno Nevada, at which the winner of the national award was announced. Joe Stevens stated the Gold Medal Award

is the most prestigious award in the parks and recreation profession. Joe Stevens stated the award winning video will be made available to community upon request, and will also be broadcast by Channel 12.

Item 4: Recognition of Meadow Gold Dairy

Traci Altergott introduced Chuck Thompson and Dan Walker, representatives from Meadow Gold Dairy. Mr. Walker and Mr. Thompson were invited to the meeting in order to be recognized for Meadow Gold Dairy's generous contributions to the Parks & Recreation Department. Traci Altergott reported Meadow Gold Dairy has been sponsoring the youth basketball program, which has approximately 1,200 children per year, since 1982. Ms. Altergott stated the company contributes approximately \$6,500 per year, totaling approximately \$100,000 during the past 22 years. Traci Altergott said Meadow Gold Dairy's donations have not been exclusive to the youth basketball program, as they have donated to various other programs and events, including the teddy bear picnic and softball appreciation week. Ms. Altergott stated the Parks & Recreation Department is proud to have Meadow Gold Dairy as a sponsor, and presented the guests with a Certificate of Appreciation and City of Grand Junction Parks & Recreation sweatshirts. Chuck Thompson thanked the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board for the invitation. Mr. Thompson said Meadow Gold Dairy wished to continue supporting Parks & Recreation programs because they are family orientated, and are important to our community, as this is where their employees live and play. Chuck Thompson stated he was very glad Meadow Gold Dairy allows them to contribute and that they appreciate the recognition. Dan Walker also thanked the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board for the invitation. Mr. Walker said he really appreciates the Parks & Recreation employees, saying how nice it is to work with such professional people. Dan Walker stated he is very grateful to be involved with the Grand Junction Parks & Recreation Department.

Item 5: Introduction of Shon Birch, Recreation Coordinator

Traci Altergott introduced Shon Birch, the new Recreation Coordinator who replaced Eddie Mort. Shon Birch is a Central High School and UNC graduate. Mr. Birch is very heavily involved in athletics and was most recently employed with the Parachute/Battlement Mesa Parks & Recreation District. Welcome Shon Birch!

Item 6: Master Plan Update for Lincoln Park

Joe Stevens reminded the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board of the upcoming Lincoln Park Master Plan open house scheduled for 4:00 – 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 26, 2004 at Two Rivers Convention Center. Shawn Cooper reviewed the following five concepts, which will be presented at the open house:

Concept 1: This plan follows the Sink Combs Dethlefs study, and would include additional storage square footage on the barn, along with a new stadium ticket plaza area, administration office expansion, and new parks maintenance space. The plan would eliminate the loop road and would include updating the parking lot to meet existing codes (resulting in a loss of spaces). The plan allows for an expansion of the aquatics area, will keep the horseshoe pits, and would allow the ability to build a restroom facility between the horseshoe pits and the tennis courts.

Concept 2: This plan follows the Sink Combs Dethlefs study, and would include changing the golf course to an executive course, eliminating all par 5's, and relocating the driving range to a North – South location, moving it closer to the clubhouse. The maintenance yard would be relocated, the loop road would be eliminated, and the parking lot would be expanded. The plan

creates the ability to increase the aquatics area and to expand the park offices. A road connecting at 14th Street (near Johnson's House of Flowers) would be created to improve the traffic flow. The horseshoe pits would be removed, which the Horseshoe Association has recently requested, as they would prefer to be located at Canyon View Park. Tennis courts would remain, possibly eight courts, while still allowing room for a new restroom facility located near the tennis area.

Concept 3: This plan follows a portion of the Sink Combs Dethlefs study, and would change the golf course to a Par 3 course, which would free up 15 additional parkland acres. A new clubhouse would be built, and the possibility of lighting the driving range would exist. The old clubhouse would become the Recreation Administration offices. The barn would be relocated, providing space for a festival area at the front of the barn. This plan also allows for an expansion of the aquatics area. The West entrance would line up with Teller Avenue and a new road connecting at 15th Street would be included. A new football stadium would be constructed, allowing for a very large parking lot to be built at 12th Street and North Avenue (doubling the parking from 450 to approximately 900 spaces). A new 10 lane track would be built, with a football/soccer stadium. A minimum of four tennis courts would remain. This plan would provide a central parking area and would basically create a new park with a fairly large amount of "unscheduled" space.

Concept 4: This plan is similar to Concept 3, including a new clubhouse, however, would change the golf course into a "Learning Center", freeing up approximately 30 acres of parkland, and would also include a driving range. The West entrance would align with Teller Avenue, entering into a large parking area. The barn would be eliminated and an activity center 3 - 4 times larger than the barn would be built. The track would be relocated, leaving a synthetic soccer/football field in its place. (The track would either be moved to another park or could be relocated inside Lincoln Park, without a synthetic turf.) The tennis courts would be moved to the South end of the park (along Gunnison Avenue), a new restroom building would be constructed, and the horseshoe pits would remain as neighborhood park amenities. The parking lot would be expanded to over 600 parking spaces, a small maintenance shop would be located behind the V.A. Hospital, and the aquatics area would be expanded.

Concept 5: Suggestions were made at the September 13, 2004 City Council workshop, which led to the development of a fifth plan. The plan is a combination of Concepts 3 and 4 and would include eliminating the loop road and align the West entrance with Hill Avenue. The barn would remain in its current location and would have more space for additional programming. The South entrance would be relocated, allowing room for a larger aquatics area.

A GJ 101 - Tour guest asked why the costs are not included with each concept. Joe Stevens responded the agreement with the consultants does not include cost to research each and every concept, stating the first objective is to determine the preferred concept then request the estimated costs. Tom Dixon echoed Mr. Stevens's comment, stating cost will become a factor once the options are narrowed down. The five concepts will be presented to the public at the October 26th open house. Once a preferred plan is determined, it will go back to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board prior to making a recommendation to City Council. Shawn Cooper encouraged everyone to visit the Parks & Recreation website and to e-mail him with any questions or comments at shawns@gjcity.org.

Item 7: Report on Golf Course Operations and Trends

Joe Stevens reported golf rounds are flat or are declining. Mr. Stevens stated ten years ago Tiara Rado had over 100,000 rounds per year, while this year Tiara Rado will have 82,000 rounds. Due to the declining trend, the golf courses have to be more innovative with regards to golf operations. Mr. Stevens stated Tiara Rado Golf Course is still very viable and can remain as an enterprise operation, however, he said confidence about the 9-hole Lincoln Park Golf Course is not as optimistic. Doug Jones stated a decline in rounds occurred in the 2002 season, when Redlands Mesa was built and Adobe Creek opened their new nine hole course, causing the City's courses to lose approximately 12,000 nine hole rounds. 2003 was a little better for Tiara Rado, but rounds at Lincoln Park have consistently dropped each year. Mr. Jones said Tiara Rado's rounds are really based on the weather, as Lincoln Park rounds continue to decline regardless of weather. Doug Jones stated nine hole golf courses are less and less popular each year, as most people do not want to play nine holes twice, they want to play 18 "different" holes. Another major issue related to Lincoln Park Golf Course is the really old irrigation system. Repairs are having to be made to the system on a daily bases, causing a great concern. Travis Bunkelman distributed copies of a Denver Post article (See attached) which states golf in Denver has been in a down slide for about 5 years, experiencing a decrease of approximately 10%. The article reported there are not less golfers, just more golf courses. Travis Bunkelman stated Grand Junction has the same situation occurring, with all the new local golf courses, and the upcoming plans for a new course in Montrose (4th course in Montrose). Travis Bunkelman stated golf courses around the country are struggling, and some have even shut down. (Example: Ridgeway's golf course recently filed for bankruptcy.) The problem does not appear to be related to the economy, as restaurant and pro shop revenues continue to increase. Travis Bunkelman said the courses are currently trying to identify ways to conserve funds, without making the courses less appealing or without cutting the customer service. Travis Bunkelman stated the golf courses are currently focusing on working with hotels for package deals, in hopes of increasing the amount of out of town players. Next year, they intend to focus on increasing the number of junior and women golfers. Suggestions have included offering a reduced or free round of golf for any juniors playing with an adult. Tiara Rado also plans to continue offering the "no intimidation" golf, as it continues to be successful. Bob Cron asked if anyone is tracking the total rounds in the Grand Valley. Travis Bunkelman responded that the City, Chipeta and Redlands Mesa all keep really good records, but unfortunately the other courses in town do not share their numbers. Lenna Watson said she has a friend who suggested offering a seasonal pass at a discounted rate, in hopes of drawing out the avid golfers during the week, and to offer a special day at a cheaper rate, which might entice the older golfers. Travis Bunkelman stated it is very difficult to offer a reduced rate, as the fertilizer prices have increased 12% this year, and the gas prices also continue to increase. A GJ 101 – Tour representative asked why a resident discount is not offered for daily passes. Doug Jones responded the golf operations are not subsidized by tax dollars, therefore, they are not subject to a residential discount. Mr. Jones stated the season pass discount is offered as a courtesy only. Joe Stevens stated the golf courses are currently taking some actions to assist with revenues, such as making "interest only" payments on the #17 green (currently not paying any principal), and recommending to extend the gas powered golf cart contract for another year. By continuing with the existing contract, the golf courses should save approximately \$25,000 - \$30,000. Reford Theobold expressed his concern that there may not be any real easy solutions, as the trend is not positive for golf in general, which makes the need to expand another nine holes questionable, and will generate a lot of conflicting issues with regards to the Lincoln Park Master Plan. Bernie Goss

congratulated Doug Jones and Travis Bunkelman on the good work they've done, thanking them for their efforts. Mr. Goss stated he has heard really good things about both courses.

Item 8: Dedication of Canyon View Park - East

Bernie Goss reminded the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board of the Canyon View Park – East opening ceremony, scheduled for Saturday, October 23, 2004 at 10:00 a.m.

Item 9: Staff Reports

Mari Steinbach reminded the Board members of the upcoming “Pool and Ghoul Festival” on Friday, October 29th, which will have a haunted house with a pirate ship theme, and the Harvest Festival on Saturday, October 30th.

Item 10: Other Business

Lisa Troung reported the City Youth Council is currently working on the New Year's Eve dance. The group is in need of adult chaperones for the dance and is currently requesting volunteers.

Reford Theobold provided a brief update on the Lilac Park improvements. Bookcliff Middle School implemented the grant last week. The first step of the project consisted of the students spending the day planting 37 lilacs and preparing three beds. Mr. Theobold said the kids enjoyed working on the project, were very enthusiastic, and did a great job. Thank you Bookcliff Middle School!

Bob Cron told the Board how great the green grass looks at Wingate Park. Mr. Cron stated he was recently approached by the area's neighborhood action group, regarding safety concerns for those parents parking to pick-up their kids along Buffalo. The action group feels this is a dangerous situation and would like to request no parking signs be posted. Bob Cron stated the group will be taking their request to the County for assistance.

Bob Cron also discussed the Arts Center outgrowing their current space on 7th Street and their desire to relocate to a downtown location. Mr. Cron suggested the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board consider allowing the Arts Center to relocate to Whitman Park. Bob Cron said the art facility could be located in the center of the park, across from the museum, still allowing plenty of room for the park element (green landscaping) around the outside. Although Bob Cron stated he is unsure of the ramifications, he feels the idea has merit and requested the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board consider his suggestion.

Item 11: Adjourn

Chairman Goss asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dennis Derrieux moved and Tom Dixon seconded. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Meeting adjourned at 1:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tressa Fisher
Administrative Specialist