

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes December 16, 2004

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Chairman Goss at 12:17 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Bernie Goss
Lenna Watson
Reford Theobold
Tom Dixon
David Detwiler

Board Members Absent:

Dennis Derrieux
Cindy Enos-Martinez

Parks & Recreation Staff Present:

Joe Stevens, Director
Don Hobbs, Assistant Director
Tressa Fisher, Administrative Specialist
Shawn Cooper, Parks Planner
Mari Steinbach, Recreation Superintendent

Guests:

Kelly Arnold, City Manager

Item 2: Approve Minutes

Reford Theobold moved to approve the November 18, 2004 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes. Lenna Watson seconded.

Motion adopted by Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 4 No 0

Item 3: Lincoln Park Master Plan Progress Report

Joe Stevens stated the consultants are now at a point where they need feedback in order to proceed. The most problematic issues for staff are related to golf. Mr. Stevens said, to date, the public feedback has indicated that many people do not oppose the golf course being eliminated, as long as the area remains an open green space (similar to a central park). Joe Stevens stated that one of the questions that need to be answered is “how significant is the golf course?” Kelly Arnold summarized the December 14, 2004 Executive meeting, stating the group was overwhelmed by the magnitude of the cost for the project as a whole. Mr. Arnold stated Councilman Gregg Palmer has requested additional information on golf course learning centers. Kelly Arnold expressed the importance of the primary stakeholders supporting the entire plan. Mr. Arnold also raised the question as to whether the major issue was “golf” or “green space”, stating, it appears, the majority of the public feel green space is more important. Mr. Arnold suggested the master plan provide some type of guarantee that a certain amount of property forever be dedicated to green

space. Kelly Arnold also suggested the master plan guarantee some golfing improvements at Tiara Rado, should the plan include the elimination of the Lincoln Park Golf Course. David Detwiler expressed concern regarding the dire need to invest in the irrigation system in the near future, and asked if selling a portion of the park to help pay for a new 9-hole at Tiara Rado was a possibility. Mr. Detwiler stated a guarantee of preserving a certain amount of open space could be included in the sale. Kelly Arnold responded he could not answer Mr. Detwiler's question at this time, but said, theoretically, the idea did make sense financially. Tom Dixon stated that since the December 14, 2004 meeting, he has given more thought to the master plan and now has some concern as to why other locations aren't being considered for many of the amenities at Lincoln Park. Mr. Dixon asked why ideas such as moving all of the tennis courts to Canyon View Park, or the swimming pool to Matchett Park, etc. has not been suggested. Tom Dixon stated that if substantial amount of funding is going to be put into other park properties in the future, perhaps the Board should be considering the other locations when developing the master plan. Tom Dixon, also expressed concern about adding an activity center to a park that is already over utilized. Mr. Dixon stated, at this point, he has lost some interest in the Lincoln Park Master Plan, as, perhaps, there are better opportunities on the horizon. Reford Theobald expressed the importance of following through with the original plan and said the irrigation issue and the JUCO funds should be driving the decisions at Lincoln Park. Mr. Theobald said even if the City cannot contribute to Lincoln Park, JUCO plans to. Lenna Watson expressed concern regarding the tennis courts, and agreed that if Canyon View Park courts are expanded, tennis courts would no longer be necessary at Lincoln Park. Reford Theobald agreed that Lincoln Park is currently overused, but said there is also a financial advantage of having multiple amenities/facilities in one park, as the parking lots, etc. can be used for multiple purposes, rather than building a parking lot at each individual park. Lenna Watson stated the Lincoln Park Master Plan should be broadened, to be an all-inclusive parks master plan, including the plans for all City park properties. Joe Stevens responded a comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan has already been done, unfortunately, the shelf life of a master plan is always a concern. Mr. Stevens stated the Parks & Recreation Department is doing what they can to develop parks, however, they have been directed to put an emphasis on neighborhood parks, and there is no additional funding in the CIP dedicated to parks in the near future. Bernie Goss suggested the Lincoln Park Master Plan issue be revisited at a future meeting.

Item 4: Staff Reports

Mari Steinbach reported on the "stellar" special events held over the past weekend. The Recreation Division hosted over 1,100 people at several special events, including the Chocolate Walk, Holiday Lights KOOL Kruiise, and the Candy Cane Hunt. Ms. Steinbach also reported on the two upcoming events, Pictures with Santa, in which all proceeds will go towards the Recreation Scholarship Fund, and the City Youth Council's New Year's Eve dance. Mari Steinbach stated the Youth Council is currently looking for adult volunteers to chaperone the New Year's Eve dance.

Reford Theobald asked about the Mesa Youth Program, as to whether it is the same program, just under different management. Mari Steinbach responded the programs will remain the same with performances taking place at the Avalon Theatre, Lincoln Park Barn and/or Mesa State.

Item 5: Other Business

Joe Stevens briefly discussed financial issues regarding the Lincoln Park Golf Course. Reford Theobald asked if the golf employees should become “seasonal” employees. Joe Stevens responded that golfers feel they pay for, and expect, PGA professionals, therefore, the golf course will continue to employ professionals. Mr. Theobald suggested the City courses start using volunteers for tournaments, etc. and offer the volunteers golf in exchange for their time, similar to what other golf courses are doing. Joe Stevens stated the golf courses are planning on developing a new tier strategy, which will make cost effective changes in the way they do business without the public noticing. Example: Replacing all Rangers with volunteers.

Joe Stevens discussed the phenomenal year the Parks & Recreation Department has experienced. In addition to winning the National Gold Medal award, the Department was once again selected by the Daily Sentinel for the “Best in the West” (best use of local tax dollars) and the Forestry Division was recently selected as the winner of a National Arbor Day award for Arborfest.

Joe Stevens thanked the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board members for their hard work and dedication during the past year.

Item 6: Adjourn

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

Meeting adjourned at 1:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tressa Fisher
Administrative Specialist