

# **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes**

## **May 19, 2005**

### **Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Chairman Goss at 12:04 p.m.**

#### Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Bernie Goss  
Lenna Watson  
David Detwiler  
Dennis Derrieux  
Tom Dixon  
Jack Neckels  
Doug Thomason (Ex-officio)

Board Members Absent:

Reford Theobold

Parks & Recreation Staff Present:

Joe Stevens, Director  
Tressa Fisher, Administrative Specialist  
Shawn Cooper, Park Planner  
Mari Steinbach, Recreation Superintendent  
Traci Altergott, Recreation Supervisor

Guests:

Sheryl Trent, Assistant to the City Manager  
Mandy Vindiola, Programs Coordinator  
Penny McCartney, Mesa County Animal Services  
GJ 101 Tour Guests

### **Item 2: Approve Minutes**

Dennis Derrieux moved to approve the April 21, 2005 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes. Lenna Watson seconded.

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

### **Item 3: Introduction of Guests**

Joe Stevens said he had invited one of the guests (Mandy Vindiola) under false pretenses. Mr. Stevens had asked Mrs. Vindiola to provide a brief update on the City's Wellness Program; however, Mr. Stevens actually invited Mandy to the meeting in order to present her with an award

for being one of two City employees who successfully completed the 1<sup>st</sup> annual "Highline Hustle" triathlon. The May 14<sup>th</sup> event included a 300 meter swim (in 62 degree water), a 16 mile bike ride, and a 3 ½ mile run. Joe Stevens also recognized Mari Steinbach, who was the first Parks and Recreation staff member to complete the triathlon, as well as David Detwiler, who was the first Parks & Recreation Advisory Board member to compete in the triathlon. Mr. Stevens stated the May 15, 2005 triathlon was a big success, which would not have been successful without the hard work and dedication of Parks & Recreation employees Stacy Pike and Traci Altergott. Joe Stevens stated that Stacy Pike spent a considerable amount of time coordinating the event and, personally, raised over \$2,000 in donations. Good Job Stacy!

#### **Item 4: Introduction of Doug Thomason, Newly Confirmed City Council Representative to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**

Bernie Goss welcomed new Parks & Recreation Advisory Board member Doug Thomason. Mr. Thomason is City Council's new liaison on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. Chairman Goss stated, on behalf of the Board, that he appreciates Mr. Thomason's time and presence.

Mandy Vindiola, City Programs Coordinator, briefly reported on the City's Wellness Committee. Mrs. Vindiola said the City of Grand Junction is very unique in having its own employee Wellness Committee and that the City is currently moving in the direction of combining forces with other community wellness initiatives, including Mesa County, St. Mary's Hospital, and CDOT. Mandy Vindiola stated the City is "on the verge of some really good things happening" with regards to its wellness program.

#### **Item 5: Resume Dog Park Discussion**

Joe Stevens introduced Penny McCartney, Director of Mesa County Animal Services. Ms. McCartney thanked the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board for inviting her to the meeting. Penny McCartney stated that she received 5 contacts regarding dog parks during her 1<sup>st</sup> week on the job. Ms. McCartney stated the requests seemed frivolous at the time; however, she now looks at the issue much differently. Penny McCartney said the City of Grand Junction and Mesa County are becoming much more urbanized, with a growing number of condominiums, apartments, etc., which do not provide adequate space for dog owners to allow their dogs to play. Director McCartney stated Animal Services is in place to protect the animals as well as the rights of the citizens who are not pet owners. Ms. McCartney distributed a handout which illustrates the positive social, physical, and mental health, benefits of dog parks. (See attached) Penny McCartney stated there are approximately 13,000 dogs living within City limits, and approximately 27,000 dogs within Mesa County. Director McCartney stated the many benefits of a dog park include the fact that the dogs are less likely to be aggressive, and that adequate exercise leads them to be better neighbors (less barking). Penny McCartney expressed her concern that if the dog owners perceive their needs are being ignored, they will continue to find ways around the rules. Ms. McCartney said Animal Services no longer has the man power to patrol Mesa County looking for dogs and is currently "complaint driven", which often allows loop holes for the dog owners. Penny McCartney said the safety concerns are growing, as Animal Services is currently seeing and hearing people complain that off leash dogs are a constant danger to other visitors in the parks. Director McCartney expressed the importance of strong enforcement, as well as the

necessity for Animal Services to have the right to enforce/issue citations for any dogs that are not under control, regardless if the incident occurs within or outside of a designated dog park area, as dogs must be under control at ALL times. Director McCartney also said Animal Services does not have to catch the dog in order to cite the owner. (If a description can be given of the dog, the officer can cite the owner at a later time.) Penny McCartney stated the current approach by Animal Services is a "zero tolerance" policy for off leash dogs, unfortunately, as soon as they drive into the parking lot, they can hear the clicking of collars across the park. Ms. McCartney stated the current ordinance is causing enforcement problems. The "at large" definition presently reads "At large means to be off the premises of the owner or custodian and not under direct physical control of the owner or custodian by means of a leash or other mechanism of control. This requirement does not apply to any dog while actually working livestock, locating or retrieving wild game in a lawful season for a licensed hunter, assisting law enforcement officers, participating in obedience training, dog show or an obedience trial, **or while being trained for any of these pursuits.**" Director McCartney described a recent case that was thrown out in court, in which a man claimed he was training his dog to sit when it ran off his property and attacked another dog. Penny McCartney said Animal Services has recently received permission from Mesa County to move forward with trying to get the ordinance changed. Ms. McCartney also reported on recent discussions with BLM, who is currently working on identifying outlying areas that could be approved as off leash areas, and who have stated they would be very supportive of an official dog park. Lenna Watson asked how often citations are given to people with unlicensed dogs. Director McCartney responded citations are issued on a regular basis, stating approximately 32% of households have dogs, with only 20,000 of them licensed. Joe Stevens said the dog park issue become a hot topic again, due to the continued off leash issues in the City parks and City Council's recent request for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board to discuss the development of a dog park. Mr. Stevens stated that Cindy Enos-Martinez had asked the Board for a recommendation at the April 21, 2005 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting. Lenna Watson suggested including a "user fee" along with the licensing process, which would allow for dog park usage. Penny McCartney said other areas have implemented a similar process, including the option of a daily pass for visitors, etc. Doug Thomason stated City Council will be discussing the dog park issue at their June retreat and would like a recommendation and/or ideas for changing the ordinance. Mr. Stevens said the original plan was to designate the area on the North end of Canyon View Park as a dog park. David Detwiler stated he felt it was still unclear as to whether or not the public will support the Canyon View Park location. Joe Stevens said there were past concerns from dog owners, who said they would not use the designated area if it did not have a water feature; however, many dog owners have expressed a designated area, with or without a water feature, would prove to be successful. Bernie Goss asked Doug Thomason to share the Board's concerns with Council, letting them know that in the meantime the Board will conduct further research in hopes of determining if there are dog owner groups interested in supporting the Canyon View Park location. Director McCartney stated, normally the problem with dog parks is that they become too popular, and that she has never seen a case where the dog parks are not used. Dennis Derrieux said he has "warmed up" to the dog park idea substantially; however, he would not want to spend the money if the dog owners will not be happy with the location. Joe Stevens reported the Board once considered the area of Watson Island along the Riverfront Trail, however, the wildlife advocates were not supportive of the area being developed into a dog park. Shawn Cooper said the Board also considered portions of Las Colonias, yet ran into several issues, including parking, as the property is within City limits and would be subject to the City's parking regulations. Bernie Goss requested the Parks & Recreation staff proceed with researching whether

or not there is a desire for the Canyon View Park location and for the Board to discuss the issue again at the June Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting.

#### **Item 6: Update on Senior Recreation Center Improvements**

Traci Altergott provided a brief update on the improvements at the Senior Recreation Center. Ms. Altergott reported the architect, DKO, is in the process of closing their local office. DKO will be continuing with the design from their new location. Traci Altergott stated the closure will not be too much of an obstacle, as they cannot do any construction until September anyway. Ms. Altergott stated the building committee hopes to obtain the plans and cost analysis in the next 2-3 weeks and plans to reconvene in mid June.

#### **Item 7: Update on Lincoln Park – Moyer Pool Improvements**

Shawn Cooper reported on the status of the new splashground. The original plan was to open the new feature by Memorial weekend; however, the equipment is not scheduled to be shipped until May 27, 2005, conflicting with the grand opening date. Mr. Cooper stated the concrete is currently ready to pour, and all of the underground work has been completed. Shawn Cooper stated he is very optimistic that once the equipment arrives, it should only take a day or two for the installation. Mr. Cooper said if all goes as planned, the splashground should be ready to open the week after the pool's grand opening. Doug Thomason expressed that a delayed opening will build excitement and anticipation, as it will have its "own" grand opening. Joe Stevens reported the concession facility will also be going with a "lion" theme, changing its name to "The Lion's Den".

#### **Item 8: Other Business**

Don Hobbs briefly described a rather unique challenge the stadium staff will face this year. Mr. Hobbs reported that, as a result of the excellent 2005 baseball season, Mesa State College was selected to host the regional baseball tournament. Due to this unexpected event, the stadium staff will only have a total of four (4) days to prepare for the JUCO season, compared to their usual three weeks of preparation time. Don Hobbs stated the biggest impact this will have is the amount of foot traffic and play on the fields, which will unavoidably cause a few problematic areas on the field. Mr. Hobbs stated the JUCO administration is aware of the potential problems; however, they are very supportive and understanding, and have expressed their excitement for Mesa State College. Mr. Hobbs discussed some of the regional tournaments requirements, including the stipulation that a batting cage must be provided, and that each team must be offered one hour of practice time on the field.

Bernie Goss discussed his previous request for all Board members to provide him with a Parks & Recreation Advisory Board job description list. Jack Neckels said he approached his list from the role/function of the Board, keeping in mind that providing "advice" is a key element. Discussion ensued. Chairman Goss requested the issue be carried forward to the June Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting.

**Item 9: Future Meetings Agenda**

No other items were discussed

**Item 10: 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 1:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tressa Fisher  
Administrative Specialist