

# **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes**

## **November 16, 2006**

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

#### Roll Call

Board Members Present: Tom Dixon  
Dennis Teeters  
Lenna Watson  
Reford Theobald  
Jack Scott  
Nick Adams  
Doug Thomason (Ex-Officio)

Board Members Absent: Dr. William Findlay

Parks & Recreation Staff Present: Joe Stevens, Director  
Don Hobbs, Assistant Director  
Tressa Fisher, Administrative Specialist  
Shawn Cooper, Park Planner  
Traci Altergott, Recreation Superintendent  
Doug Jones, Golf Superintendent  
Rob Stong, Golf Professional

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

Lenna Watson moved to approve the October 19, 2006 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes. Dennis Teeters seconded.

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

Tom Dixon introduced the new members of the Parks Improvement Advisory Board; Jack Scott, Nick Adams, and Reford Theobald. Welcome new Board members!

### **Item 3: Report on Golf Course Operations**

Joe Stevens introduced Golf Superintendent, Doug Jones and Golf Professional, Rob Stong. Mr. Jones showed a PowerPoint presentation in which he discussed the last year's maintenance. Doug Jones talked about the replacement of the Lincoln Park irrigation system, in which the golf course was spending approximately \$11,000-\$12,000 per year on repairs. Doug Jones stated Larry Rodgers, who is a nationally known irrigation designer in Denver, and Foremost (the Contractors) both did an excellent job with the upgrade. The entire project did not have any problems, stayed within the budget, and was completed four weeks ahead of schedule with very little disruption to the golfers. Mr. Jones stated staff member Tom Humphreys also did a great job assisting with the project. Doug Jones said the new irrigation system has 1,100 heads, 150 miles of wire, 2 miles of

irrigation cable, 12 miles of pipe, and 15 field controllers. Mr. Jones stated what has normally taken 10-12 hours a day to water the course has now been reduced to 6-8 hours, as the new system provides much better coverage. The new irrigation system installation has been receiving good reviews from the golfers.

Doug Jones also discussed the large amount of vandalism the golf courses have suffered throughout the year. Damage has included, but is not limited to, a shed that has been broken into three times and now requires bars across the door, damaged drains, oil, gas, and a "dough" type substance poured on the greens, water balloons filled with Roundup, names dug into the tees with beer bottles, and hotwired golf carts.

Mr. Jones reported on disease control efforts, which has consisted of a preventative spray being applied twice a year. Doug Jones said the spraying has improved the quality of the turf considerably and the turf is going into the winter season very healthy. Mr. Jones discussed the success of the Audubon Sanctuary Program at Tiara Rado Golf Course, which is the only location for Eastern, Western, and Mountain blue birds concurrently. The large amount of birds has drastically reduced the amount of money spent on pesticides, as the birds have almost eliminated the need to spray for grubs. (The golf course used to spend \$5,000 a year spraying for grubs.) Doug Jones reported Tiara Rado Golf Course also has a variety of wildlife, including screech owls, a badger, a mountain lion, a bear, wild turkeys, deer, a coyote, and a bobcat.

Rob Stong reported on the Pro Shop sales through October, stating Lincoln Park was up \$9,000 and Tiara Rado was up \$16,500. Mr. Stong said Lincoln Park was down a little in cart sales, which he said could have been contributed to the irrigations repairs. Rob Stong said the golf courses are anticipating the 2007 numbers of rounds to increase considerably, due to the large amount of baby boomers who are beginning to retire. Tiara Rado is up \$2,600 in cart sales for the year. Rob Stong stated Pinon Grill has grossed around \$500,000 so far this year, bringing \$4,150 of additional income to the courses (5% per contract).

Mr. Stong stated the Men's Club at Tiara Rado Golf Course now has approximately 300 members and Lincoln Park's has close to 150 members. Tiara Rado's Senior Men's Club has about 90 members; Lincoln Park Golf Course does not have a Senior's Club. Rob Stong reported the Tiara Rado Ladies Club has approximately 160 members currently; Lincoln Park has 90 members.

Rob Stong talked about Joe Dolan, Director of Instruction, saying Mr. Dolan is doing an incredible job and has brought a lot of energy to the program. Joe Dolan is hosting Tuesday and Thursday clinics, which often have 20-30 golfers at each one. In addition, Mr. Dolan offers a short game clinic on Wednesdays, which generally has 15-20 golfers in attendance. Rob Stong reported on the success of the Junior Program that now has a waiting list each season. The spring program had approximately 60 junior players and the fall program had around 70 junior players. Joe Dolan offers a 1 to 5 ratio of players to professionals, allowing the kids to learn on the course and the range. Joe Stevens stated the lesson instructors are contracted with a percentage of proceeds going to the City, making it a "win-win" situation for everyone involved.

Mr. Stong said the 2006 day to day operations ran very smooth and that the pedestrian/canine issue at Tiara Rado Golf Course is now pretty much nonexistent. The course now has paid Rangers who patrol the course, as well as assist with various maintenance issues (trash removal, etc.) Rob Stong stated one of the biggest changes for next year will be the replacement of the cart

fleet, as they are converting from gas carts to electric carts. Mr. Stong said the transition will cost more upfront; however will save money down the line as the electric carts are more economical and have less moving parts resulting in less maintenance. Rob Stong reported the current fleet is seven years old and by April 1, 2007 they hope to purchase 70 new carts for Tiara Rado Golf Course and 20 new carts for Lincoln Park Golf Course.

Rob Stong reported on the recent staffing changes, stating Eloy Vendegna was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant at Lincoln Park, Brian Franco was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant at Tiara Rado, and Robert O'Hara was promoted to ¾ time Assistant at Lincoln Park. Mr. Stong stated the outside staff consists of mostly retirees who are doing an excellent job providing continuity and quality customer service. Jack Scott asked if the golf courses have had any injuries this year. Rob Stong responded there have not been any serious injuries this year at either course.

Doug Jones stated the beginning fund balance for Lincoln Park Golf Course is \$34,089; Tiara Rado Golf Course is \$87,474. Mr. Jones said the season ticket revenues are divided 38% to Lincoln Park and 62% to Tiara Rado.

Doug Jones reported the rounds at Lincoln Park continue to decrease approximately 5% every year. A large contributor to this decrease was the opening of Chipeta Golf Course. Mr. Jones stated Tiara Rado had the best February and May it has had in the last five years and that the other months profits have fluctuated depending on the weather. Doug Jones said, overall, the rounds have continued to increase at Tiara Rado since the swampy year of 2004.

Mr. Jones reported the \$21,933 debt for the pump station will be paid off in 2008 and the \$42,258 learning center debt will be paid off in 2014. He also said Tiara Rado Golf Course is currently being considered for the national NTEP trials, which are turf research plots that test a variety of new turf grasses by various university researchers. The project is funded primarily through seed companies and grants.

#### **Item 4: Other Business**

Tom Dixon asked about the status of the housing and golf extension proposal at Tiara Rado Golf Course. Joe Stevens said there has been an ongoing discussion regarding the 80 acres adjacent to Tiara Rado Golf Course and that the latest proposal has merit, but zoning issues must be determined independent of golfing interests. Mr. Stevens said the process involves adjacent homeowners, and zoning and land use issues will have to be addressed before moving forward. Doug Thomason stated the City has clarified its position and may withdraw from the proposal.

Tom Dixon expressed concern regarding there not being any new park projects on the radar screen for the near future. Mr. Dixon stated Councilman Gregg Palmer has expressed his support in moving forward with future land acquisitions and improvements. Tom Dixon stated he had a recent conversation with Commissioner Tillie Bishop regarding a possible park district, which he said was voted against 15-20 years ago. Chairman Dixon said the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board members need to start thinking of ways to contribute to that concept, along with future land acquisitions and development. Tom Dixon said he has requested a joint luncheon with City Council for sometime in December or January, in hopes of discussing this issue further. Discussion ensued regarding the various undeveloped park properties.

Doug Thomason provided an update from the November 15, 2006 Parks Improvement Advisory Board meeting, stating the Board is strongly considering artificial turf at Stocker Stadium. Joe Stevens stated the idea of artificial turf has merit and that it may be a good idea for Suplezio Field as well, due to the amount of play both facilities are getting from Mesa State and School District #51. Mr. Stevens said the Parks Improvement Advisory Board has directed Andy Rodriguez with Mesa State, to research whether or not the City can piggy back along with the upcoming Mesa State soccer field contract. Reford Theobold stated the proposed new schools will put additional pressure on the fields. Mr. Theobold expressed concern regarding "hidden" costs, such as for improving the soil conditions. Joe Stevens agreed, stating the comfort level is not quite there yet, as they could easily spend ½ million dollars on soil amendments. Mr. Stevens said the timeframe is being driven by spring activities and the new Mesa State soccer field. Reford Theobold stated China is now manufacturing artificial turf, which is bringing the costs down considerably. Doug Thomason agreed, saying technological advances are reducing the price, so the installation may not be as time sensitive as it was initially. Joe Stevens said staff is hoping to coordinate with Mesa State, let them negotiate the pricing, and work towards a "guaranteed maximum price" in order to avoid any surprises down the line. Mr. Stevens said the product and installation must meet a standard that everyone has agreed to. Joe Stevens stated the Parks Improvement Advisory Board may have to spend \$25,000-\$30,000 on specifications in order to move forward. Dennis Teeters expressed his concern with how the installation would effect the track season, and concern regarding the condition of the soil on the North end of the field, stating a piece of equipment was buried during the installation of the new track. Shawn Cooper stated artificial turf at Stocker Stadium would also allow the option for soccer to be played at Lincoln park. Mr. Cooper said it would be a tight fit, but there is room for an official high school or college soccer field, providing the School District with lit soccer games and an opportunity to generate more revenue. Joe Stevens discussed the increased need for artificial turf on Suplezio Field, should the contract with the Golden Baseball League be approved by City Council. Reford Theobold stated 95% of Mesa State's baseball games are played at Suplezio Field, which has considerably reduced the window between college baseball and JUCO. Joe Stevens reported Don Hobbs had discussed the size of the dug outs during the Parks Improvement Advisory Board meeting, as the dug outs should be expanded if the field goes from natural to artificial turf. Tom Dixon asked if the funds are available for artificial turf, why not put the money towards improvements at the Canyon View baseball field to help reduce the volume of use at Suplezio Field. Joe Stevens responded it would be a hard sell as Mesa State is located across the street from Lincoln Park and would prefer to play at Suplezio Field. Tom Dixon said he agrees with artificial turf for the football field, but said many of the baseball complexes who have installed artificial turf are now going back to the natural turf.

Joe Stevens reported the fall softball season did not end until November 5, due to the record number of rainouts this year. The season normally would have ended the middle of October.

Joe Stevens suggested the December 21, 2006 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting be held at Matchett Park in conjunction with the "Mortgage Burning" ceremony. Mr. Stevens said, in addition to the "mortgage burning", festivities will include a hot dog roast and hay wagon tours of the park property. The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board agreed to meet at Matchett Park.

#### **Item 5: Correspondence**

No correspondence items were discussed

**Item 6: Future Meetings Agenda**

No future agenda items were discussed

**Item 7: Adjourn**

Chairman Dixon asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Reford Theobald moved and Doug Thomason seconded. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Meeting adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tressa Fisher  
Administrative Specialist