

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

November 6, 2008

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Reford Theobald at 11:57 a.m.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Jack Scott
Reford Theobald
Tawny Espinoza
David McInay
Yvette Carnine
Dr. William Findlay
Bruce Hill (Ex-Officio)

Board Members Absent:

Lenna Watson

Parks & Recreation Staff Present:

Rob Schoeber, Director
Mike Vendegna, Interim Assistant to the Director
Tressa Fisher, Administrative Specialist
Larry Manchester, Interim Recreation Superintendent
Traci Wieland, Interim Parks Superintendent
Doug Jones, Golf Superintendent

Guests:

Mike Nathe, ACE Golf Foundation

Item 2: Approve Minutes

Jack Scott moved to approve the October 2, 2008 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes. David McInay seconded.

Motion adopted by Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:

Yes 6 No 0

Item 3: Lincoln Park Presentation

Rob Schoeber introduced Mike Nathe, who provided a brief history on the ACE Golf Foundation, which is a 501c3 established eight years ago. Mr. Nathe shared proposed plans for the Lincoln Park Golf Course (See attached), and stated ACE has already contacted numerous local businesses, including Mesa State College, School District 51, Chamber of Commerce, members of City Council, and more during the last 3-4 months. Mike Nathe said ACE plans to go public with the proposal sometime in the next couple of weeks. Mr. Nathe stated the proposal, which includes a two tiered lighted facility and learning center designed to accommodate special needs, has received a very favorable response so far and minimal opposition. Mike Nathe stated the facility will be the 1st of its kind on the Western Slope. Mr. Nathe said ACE is interested in the Lincoln Park location due to its centralization, and said the plan will not only keep golf at Lincoln Park, but should increase golf participation. Mike Nathe stated the proposal is not strictly designed for juniors, as the plan includes 6 holes with practice facilities, two

chipping greens, and a putting green. Mr. Nathe said the proposal will also allow for more open space, picnic areas, etc. and will eliminate 99% of golf balls going off course onto North Avenue and/or surrounding homes. Mike Nathe also briefly discussed security, stating the entire facility will be fenced in. Mr. Nathe discussed the current issues related to the golf industry, including time, money, and intimidation, stating the proposed facility would be a less expensive, family orientated course, yet would still remain open to public. Mike Nathe stated, if approved, ACE intends to keep five holes open during the construction phase. Mr. Nathe also stated, to make up for the lost holes, ACE has agreed to commit to partner with the City to build an additional 12-18 holes at Matchett Park or Pear Park. Mike Nathe stated ACE is not asking for a bond issue or taxes to build the facility, stating they are a nonprofit organization that intends to raise the money through fund raisers.

Rob Schoeber asked if ACE has taken into consideration whether or not the City would lose revenue by having to reduce golf rates for current members. Mike Nathe said ACE would not be responsible for setting the rates, and said the lost revenue should be replaced if an additional course is built at another location. Mr. Nathe distributed the "Alternative Golf Facility Case Statement" for review. (See attached) Mike Nathe stated ACE realizes the City recently spent a significant amount of money on the Lincoln Park irrigation system, and said the group would like to utilize the irrigation as much as possible by rerouting lines. Mr. Nathe expressed the proposal is very preliminary, and that ACE is open for input and/or suggestions.

Reford Theobald asked Mr. Nathe what his expectations were from today's Board meeting. Mike Nathe said today's presentation was for informational purposes only, in hopes of preventing surprises when ACE goes public with their proposal. Mr. Nathe stated ACE intends to contact the press in the next few weeks, and is scheduling two public meetings for feedback. Reford Theobald strongly suggested ACE contact members of the Lincoln Park Men's and Women's Clubs prior to going public, as they are the main "users" of the course. Mike Nathe stated ACE has discussed the proposal with several staff members at the Lincoln Park Golf Course, but has not yet spoken to any of the specific clubs. Tawny Espinoza asked what the hours of operation would be for the proposed facility. Mike Nathe stated the facility will be open to public and that ACE intends to work closely with the Parks and Recreation Department regarding the schedule. Dr. William Findlay asked about the status of the option of extending the course at Tiara Rado Golf Course. Doug Jones stated the concept of building an additional nine holes at Tiara Rado is no longer being explored. Mr. Jones said the City still owns the property; however there are no immediate plans for development at this time.

Bruce Hill asked for clarification as to who would operate and maintain the facility once completed. Mike Nathe responded ACE will need to work out the details with Laurie Kadrach and the City Attorney, as the property would remain City land. Mr. Nathe stated ACE strictly wants to be a self sustaining facility and is not looking for a revenue source. Mike Nathe stated ACE is hoping to work out a viable solution for everyone involved. Mike Nathe said ACE wants to build the facility for the City, but also allow special access for junior golfers. Mr. Nathe stated ACE intends to raise all of the funds necessary to build the facility, indicating there are many foundations involved that will provide a significant amount of money. Mike Nathe suggested the City operate and maintain the facility, and a small percentage of revenue goes to ACE for the cost of operations. Rob Schoeber asked Mr. Nathe if he is aware of potential funding for the additional course at Matchett Park, similar to the funds being donated to the proposed Lincoln Park project. Mike Nathe responded that was a "great question" and said he does not know the answer. Mr. Nathe suggested the possibility of building only six holes at a time, should funding be an issue.

Doug Jones asked if ACE has contacted the Western Colorado Golf Foundation (WCGF) to discuss the impact the project will have on the RMO. Mike Nathe said ACE had contacted WCGF and discussed the possibility of moving the RMO to the Bookcliff Country Club. Bruce Hill discussed the fact that the property would have to remain the City's, as park property cannot be disposed of without a public vote; therefore, the City cannot give the land to ACE. Councilman Hill agreed with Reford Theobold, stating ACE should request feedback from the numerous user groups before going public or presenting the proposal to City Council for approval. Mr. Hill expressed he likes several aspects of the proposal; however, said many of the changes involve the park as a whole and could cost a considerable amount more than what ACE has budgeted for.

Reford Theobold stated there have been proposals over the years in which the organizations failed to make a good "first impression" with the users. Mr. Theobold cautioned ACE regarding moving too quickly in their enthusiasm and possibly undermining their opportunity to make the necessary "good" first impression. Mr. Theobold said, unfortunately, good intentions are often downplayed when projects are pursued before contacting the users. Bruce Hill stated while he also suggests ACE slow down to contact the users, he appreciates the group's efforts.

Item 4: Project Updates

Mike Vendegna provided an update on the Canyon View Park tennis courts, stating the project is well underway and is moving forward on schedule. Mr. Vendegna said the majority of the project should be completed by the end of December; however, there was a miscommunication regarding the surfacing of the tennis courts. Mike Vendegna stated the contractor was under the impression the courts were to be surfaced in mid October; however, the manufacturer will not guarantee the product unless it is installed when the temperature does not drop below 50 degrees for over 24 hours. Mr. Vendegna stated, based on this information, the City has agreed it would be best to wait until spring to surface the new courts. Mike Vendegna stated the contractor is taking full responsibility for the miscommunication and payment will be held until the entire project is completed. Mr. Vendegna stated the situation will not affect current play, as the existing courts will remain in use during construction. Rob Schoeber suggested a general press release to notify the public of the current status.

Mike Vendegna reported the restrooms at Duck Pond and Sherwood Parks are complete. Mr. Vendegna said, although some of the landscaping will have to be completed in the spring, the complexion of the entire building at Duck Pond Park has been changed. Mike Vendegna also stated a three tier landscaped wall is being constructed at Duck Pond Park and should be completed by the end of next week, weather permitting.

Traci Wieland reported new playgrounds have been ordered for the softball area at Canyon View Park, as well as Williams, Duck Pond, and Spring Valley II Parks. Mrs. Wieland stated the Department has applied for a DOLA grant for the playground surfacing, in hopes of installing a "pour in place" sport court surface at Canyon View and Duck Pond Parks versus the traditional wood chips or rubber surfaces. Rob Schoeber reported on the Intergovernmental Agreement with Chipeta Elementary, stating there are currently some safety issues with the playground, as well as the fact the new surface is discoloring the children's' clothing. Mr. Schoeber also reported the City will be taking over full maintenance of Washington Park and East Middle School. Rob Schoeber said the Department intends to have the playground at Washington Park inspected for safety prior to taking over the maintenance, as it was reconstructed from another location. Mr. Schoeber stated the Parks Department will be hosting a playground safety class next year, and plans to send numerous employees to obtain "playground

inspection” certifications. Dr. William Findlay stated he recently noticed a crack in the slide at Lincoln Park. Rob Schoeber stated the Department will check on the slide ASAP.

Larry Manchester briefly reported on the success of the Chipeta Elementary School gymnasium, stating the Recreation Department is already programming for winter and spring classes at the new location. Mr. Manchester also reported on the status of the Lincoln Park waterslide, stating the contractors are currently completing the project by rebuilding the retaining wall, landscaping, replacing the entry tub in the top area, and finishing some minor replacements and repairs. Larry Manchester said the project is scheduled to be completed this fall, but will not be tested until spring.

Traci Wieland reported on the upcoming renovations at Melrose Park, dependent on the availability of funds. Mrs. Wieland stated the Parks Department has scheduled a community meeting for November 18, 2008, in order to involve the park users from the very beginning. Traci Wieland discussed the potential for user frustration regarding the existing rocket, should the public assume the rocket is going to be torn down. Mrs. Wieland stated the Department is hoping to utilize the 1% for the Arts program to somehow “preserve” the rocket, although it will no longer serve as a play structure. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of the community donating funds towards preserving the rocket. Traci Wieland reported the Department has applied for a \$108,000 community development block grant, in which the funds would be used towards restroom renovations.

Rob Schoeber reported the City has received notice that GMYSA will no longer continue administering the programming of Long Family Memorial Park, effective January 1, 2008. Mr. Schoeber stated he was not aware of any request from Mesa County for the City to take over the administration responsibilities at this time.

Mike Vendegna provided an update on the Burkey Park improvements. Mr. Vendegna said the Department has completed approximately 95% of the improvements, including the rock along Patterson Road and the split rail fencing. Mr. Vendegna stated the bark mulch trail should be completed by the middle of December.

Item 5: Budget Review

Rob Schoeber distributed an outline of the 2009 Parks and Recreation budget (See attached), which was presented to City Council on October 5, 2008. Mr. Schoeber said the budget is fairly flat, and will only consist of a 5% increase overall (mainly in salary).

Rob Schoeber also reported the Grand Junction’s Suplizio Field was the runner up for Sports Turf Managers Association “Field of the Year” award. Mr. Schoeber commended Marc Mancuso for his hard work and dedication to the application process, stating the City intends to reapply for the award next year.

Item 6: Future Meetings Agenda

The Board agreed to discuss the Lincoln Park presentation further at the December Board meeting. Rob Schoeber stated ACE was ready to go public until he advised them to slow down a bit, asking them to avoid catching City officials and the users off guard.

The Board also agreed to discuss the “Election of Officers” and “Meeting Locations” at the December meeting.

Item 7: Other Business

Dr. William Findlay stated the Urban Trails Committee has been working to restore the natural habitat of Watson Island, and has also discussed the possibility of installing disc golf, benches, etc. Dr. Findlay asked what involvement the City would have with property’s development. Mike Vendegna responded the City property is tied in with the Riverfront Trail, which is maintained by the City. Mr. Vendegna stated the City has discussed turf, benches, tables, etc.; however, the goal currently is to remove the tamarisk. Mike Vendegna stated the City intends to review possible amenity options once the tamarisk removal project is completed.

Item 8: Adjourn

Reford Theobald asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jack Scott moved to adjourn and Dr. William Findlay seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tressa Fisher
Administrative Specialist