

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes December 4, 2008

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Chair Lenna Watson at 11:57 a.m.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Lenna Watson
 Reford Theobold
 Dr. William Findlay
 Tawny Espinoza
 David McInay
 Yvette Carnine
 Jack Scott
 Bruce Hill (Ex-Officio)

Board Members Absent:

Parks & Recreation Staff Present: 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

Item 2: Approve Minutes

Reford Theobold moved to approve the November 6, 2008 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes, with a correction to page three, paragraph two. Jack Scott seconded.

Motion adopted by Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 7 No 0

Item 3: Election of Officers

Lenna Watson opened the floor to nominations for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Chair. Jack Scott nominated Lenna Watson. Dave McInay seconded. There were no other nominations and the nominations were closed.

Motion adopted by Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 7 No 0

Lenna Watson was unanimously selected as the Chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.
Congratulations Lenna!

Chair Lenna Watson opened the floor for nominations for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Vice-chair. Jack Scott nominated Reford Theobold. Lenna Watson seconded. There were no other nominations and the nominations were closed.

Motion adopted by Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Yes 7 No 0

Reford Theobold was unanimously selected as the Vice-chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. *Congratulations Reford!*

Item 4: Meeting Locations

Lenna Watson expressed the need for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members to continue meeting at different locations. Discussion ensued regarding the winter months and the available indoor locations. Doug Jones suggested the Tiara Rado Golf Course Club House as an indoor option. Mike Vendegna suggested the Board meet at Melrose Park sometime late spring or summer. The Board agreed to meet at the Tiara Rado Golf Course Club House for the January meeting.

Item 5: Lincoln Park Presentation

Mike Vendegna reported ACE golf released a press release on December 4, 2008. Mr. Vendegna said Parks and Recreation staff received a copy of the press release, which was the same information ACE had given the Parks and Recreation Board at the November 6, 2008 meeting. Discussion ensued regarding the importance of the public understanding the proposal is “not” being driven by the City. Reford Theobold asked if ACE had contacted the user groups prior to the press release. Doug Jones responded, to his knowledge, no one from ACE has talked to the men’s or women’s club members. Yvette Carnine, who is a member of the women’s club, also said she had not heard of any conversations with ACE. Lenna Watson asked if the golf courses should post some type of information flyer for their customers. Bruce Hill discouraged the golf courses from providing any information, stating the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board had already highly encouraged ACE to contact the local users prior to moving forward. Mr. Hill stated, to date, he was unaware of ACE conducting any organized meetings with the golfers. Reford Theobold agreed, stating the more the City becomes a “messenger”, the more they will be perceived as the driving force behind the concept. Dave McInay also expressed concern regarding public participation being overlooked; stating it does not appear ACE has had the necessary discussions with the user groups.

Bruce Hill stated he likes many aspects of the concept; however, expressed concern regarding the need for more planning with regards to the long term issues. Mr. Hill stated, while the City does not have the funds to allocate to the proposed project at this time, they could possibly fund some minor improvements to the existing course. Doug Jones discussed numerous improvements in the ACE proposal that could be made at the Lincoln Park Golf Course, stating the course has plenty of land available. Mr. Jones also said there is also plenty of room at Tiara Rado Golf Course for a chip and put course. Doug Jones expressed concern regarding the proposed ten acres of rubber that would replace the current “oxygen producing” turf.

Doug Jones also discussed the current programming ACE offers. Larry Manchester stated the program encourages play for kids, with tee markers, at very reasonable prices. Doug Jones said Lincoln Park could also build tee markers that would not affect play on most of the existing holes. Dr. William Findlay expressed the importance of the City being able to make improvements to the existing course, should ACE’s proposal fail. Reford Theobold stated ACE is not the only youth group in town, and said the City may also consider starting their own youth program. Doug Jones responded the City did have its own program; however, struggled with people using the program as a daycare center. Mr. Jones said the City has now combined its youth program with ACE.

Discussion ensued regarding the additional costs of the proposal (such as the cost of moving the maintenance shops), as well as the lost income that could occur. Doug Jones said the Lincoln Park Golf

Course has been rated by the Colorado Golfer magazine as the 1st or 2nd rated nine hole golf course in the state.

Item 6: Project Updates

Traci Wieland reported on the November 18, 2008 neighborhood meeting at Melrose Park, stating approximately 50 people were in attendance. Mrs. Wieland said the Parks and Recreation staff provided a very informal atmosphere, allowing the public the opportunity to talk to staff versus the staff talking to them. Traci Wieland said there appeared to be a large interest in a new shelter and restrooms. Mrs. Wieland said there were numerous public requests the staff had not thought about, such as removing or thinning out the large group of bushes, in which kids have been hiding in and getting into trouble. Traci Wieland also said there is a Melrose Park on-line survey available on the City's website, from now until early January. Mrs. Wieland said she will bring the results of the survey to the next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting.

Traci Wieland reported the Parks and Recreation Department did receive the \$108,000 block grant for the Melrose Park restrooms and shelter, which should be completed by early summer. Mrs. Wieland stated the people who attended the neighborhood meeting expressed their desire to remain involved in the process throughout development. Dave McInay, who also attended the neighborhood meeting, complimented Traci Wieland and the Parks staff on conducting a very successful meeting, stating the entire concept was focused on "listening" to the public. Mr. McInay said his perception was that the public really appreciated the meeting format. Dave McInay also discussed the public comments regarding renaming the park to "rocket park" or to include "rocket" somewhere in the name. Traci Wieland said staff has recently researched where the name "Melrose" originated, yet they were not able to identify a person the name was associated to. Mrs. Wieland said the park may have been named after a subdivision.

Discussion ensued regarding the safety issues with the existing rocket. Mike Vendegna stated, while no one has been hurt to date, the rocket should no longer remain a play structure. Mr. Vendegna said the rocket is very hazardous, as the metal beams are rusting out and can no longer be repaired by the welders. Mike Vendegna stated the entire structure would have to be rebuilt, which would cause issues with the insurance inspectors, as they would then be changing the "engineering design". Traci Wieland said other cities with similar play structures have already removed, or are currently in the process of removing, them from their parks. Mrs. Wieland said the plan is to preserve the rocket by utilizing the 1% for the Arts program, and to also install new "rocket" themed play equipment. Reford Theobald suggested inviting an astronaut to attend the grand opening of the park, should the park include additional rocket themed amenities.

Item 7: Other Business

Bruce Hill reported on the budget presentations made to City Council and commended Rob Schoeber for his presentation of the Parks and Recreation budget. Mr. Hill also discussed a comment Rob Schoeber had made regarding Grand Junction being approximately 100 acres short of developed park land compared to other communities. Councilman Hill expressed he was proud of previous councils' ability to acquire designated park land and said, while he does not foresee any significant resources coming available in the near future for park development, he does not want the smaller things to go unnoticed. Bruce Hill referred to the very successful partnerships being made with Mesa State and School District 51, such as the new track at GJHS, Pear Park, Bookcliff Activity Center, Chipeta Elementary School, etc. Mr. Hill said City Council has identified a unique opportunity for the City to help guide the community towards numerous recreational properties, stating 72% of Mesa County is public land.

Councilman Hill said the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board should consider exploring the topic of how to develop gateways to additional partnerships with BLM, the forest service, etc., and to possibly work with VCB on educating the public on the resources available within our entire community.

Bruce Hill commented on the great improvements that have been made at Burkey Park, stating he has received numerous letters of thanks and appreciation. Mr. Hill said “partnership” projects will most likely be given much more consideration from City Council versus requests for the City to develop an entire park. Reford Theobold suggested the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board establish guidelines as to what Grand Junction expects for park property, versus attempting to obtain a “text book” comparison against other area park needs. Mr. Theobold stated the guidelines could serve as a “target” and should also take into account potential changes, such as Clifton’s annexation. Mr. Theobold said Denver has numerous mountain parks and suggested exploring how they encourage the use of surrounding areas without increasing their expense. Tawny Espinoza discussed the difficulty of promoting physical activity in Grand Junction, stating the Mesa County Health Department has not been able to obtain a list of amenities (facility guides, maps, etc.) that encompasses the whole valley.

Lenna Watson expressed the desire for the Board to begin working on a way to redefine the acreage needs for our community, and to find ways of promoting the existing amenities of the community as a whole. Dr. William Findlay discussed the popularity of Matchett Park, stating the undeveloped property is currently getting a lot of use (people biking, walking, etc.). Jack Scott requested the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board begin working on reprioritizing park development. Bruce Hill stated the prioritization of park property would be a great topic for a joint meeting with City Council.

Reford Theobold requested Lilac Park be discussed at the next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting, stating over half of the lilacs planted by the middle school kids have since died. Mr. Theobold expressed the importance of not neglecting the property, stating it is a gateway to the city. Reford Theobold stated the voters feel the maintenance of Lilac Park is an important project; therefore, the City should too.

Item 8: Future Meetings Agenda

Lincoln Park presentation
Melrose Park survey results
Lilac Park

Item 9: Adjourn

Lenna Watson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. William Findlay moved to adjourn and Dave McClain seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tressa Fisher
Administrative Specialist