



Approved June 28, 2023

**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

**COMMUNITY DESIGN STUDIO - NAVE
7506 EAST INDIAN SCHOOL ROAD
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251**

PRESENT: Jonathan Budwig, Chair
Larry Hewitt, Vice Chair
Nancy Doty Brady, Commissioner
William James, Commissioner
Louise Lamb, Commissioner
Bridget Schwartz-Manock, Commissioner (left at 5:46 p.m.)
Richard Siegel, Commissioner

STAFF: Mike Lopach, Human Services Manager
Taylor Reynolds, Project Coordination Liaison
Stephanie Tippett, Parks and Recreation Manager
Greg Bestgen, Director of Human Services

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission was called to order at 5:01 p.m. A formal roll call was conducted, confirming members present as stated above.

Public Comment

No comments were submitted.

1. Approve Draft Summary Meeting Minutes April 26, 2023

Chair Budwig called for comments/corrections. Two grammatical corrections were made.

COMMISSIONER DOTY BRADY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 26, 2023 MEETING AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER JAMES SECONDED THE

MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0) WITH CHAIR BUDWIG, VICE CHAIR HEWITT AND COMMISSIONERS DOTY BRADY, JAMES, LAMB, SCHWARTZ-MANOCK AND SIEGEL VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

2. Neighborhood Enhancement Grant Proposal: Parks & Recreation

Taylor Reynolds, Project Coordination Liaison, stated that no public comments have been received for this item. Taylor Reynolds, Project Coordination Liaison, provided an overview of the program, consisting of \$30,000 funded by City Council for Fiscal Year 2022/2023 to implement the purpose, powers and duties of the Commission. Thus far this fiscal year, \$10,250 has been distributed to neighborhood initiatives. Eligible projects for grant funding include alley improvements, landscape enhancement and maintenance, neighborhood signage and perimeter wall maintenance. The requests for this agenda item are specific to landscape enhancement and maintenance projects. Criteria includes location, accessibility, general need, existing conditions and maintenance. Remaining available funds total \$19,750 for this fiscal year. Staff reached out to Parks and Recreation staff for fund use recommendations. Recreation Staff provided a list of three projects for funding, which would be otherwise unfunded with the department's existing budget.

An overview of Parks & Recreation's recommended projects for funding was provided:

- Miller & McKellips Roads Landscape Enhancement
- Granite Reef Road Bus Stop Landscape Maintenance
- Hayden Road Landscape Maintenance

Staff recommends that the NAC approve the allocation of Neighborhood Enhancement Grant funding in an amount not to exceed \$19,750 to assist with funding of landscape enhancements or landscape maintenance projects within southern Scottsdale.

Commissioner Lamb commented that at this time, an elderly male resident has been physically working to clean up the parcel located at the Miller and McKellips project area. As a City-owned property, maintenance is the responsibility of the City.

Commissioner Doty Brady asked for a project funding breakdown. Mr. Yaron stated that at the time of the writing of the report, there were not many bids submitted and prepared and as such, it was brought to the Commission as an open-ended request. The remaining funds would be utilized as needed, with staff providing an update in the fall. It is anticipated that the total cost for all bids is less than the remaining available funds. Stephanie Tippett, Parks and Recreation Manager, clarified that a portion of the budget is for use of special mowing equipment and labor costs for low flow areas. For the Miller and McKellips project parcel adjacent to Vista del Camino Park, no budget dollars are available this year to address the overgrowth. She cited the significant rise in costs over the previous year.

In response to a question from Commissioner James, Ms. Tippett said that the work will be completed by existing City subcontractors and City staff. Commissioner James commented that grant awards in the past have been in response to community requests and he could not recall a time that the NAC funded a City department project. He inquired whether there should be consideration as to where the request comes from and whether it is appropriate for grants to be awarded to City departments. Mr. Reynolds stated that

the NAC has partnered with Parks & Recreation in the past to provide landscape enhancements, including along Indian Bend Road. There have also been partnerships with Operation Fix-It and Parks & Recreation for butterfly gardens and landscape enhancement within parks proper, which were not the result of a request from a singular neighborhood.

Commissioner James asked whether any of the projects will include the installation of irrigation. Ms. Tippett confirmed that the irrigation systems team is currently looking at the piece of land on McKellips adjacent to Vista del Camino. The intent of the project is to ensure that the City can pull water for new landscaping in the area. A staff team is trained to install new irrigation. The funding would cover the cost of parts and materials.

Commissioner Siegel referred to program criteria and requirements for the grant program, which states, "Projects must be within non-HOA neighborhoods, where existing funding mechanisms are not available." This request seems to go against this principle, as the City of Scottsdale has funding. Mr. Reynolds stated that these projects include unbudgeted items and there is no funding in place for completion. Staff did review the criteria against the request and felt that it meant the intent of the requirements.

Vice Chair Hewitt asked what the Commission can do going forward to ensure that the full funding amount is used as intended. Mr. Reynolds stated that reach-out to internal staff occurred as a result of the lack of qualified requests for grant funding from members of the community. While there have been requests from the community, none have been from non-HOA residents. The first criteria disqualifies applications from HOAs. This is one of the few times that the funding cycle has come to an end with this level of available funding still assigned. Unfortunately, the funding does not roll over to the following year.

Commissioner James referenced the potential for a strong El Nino season, which will result in another year of overgrowth and inquired whether budgeting has taken this into account. Ms. Tippett stated that the budgeting processes occurs nearly a year and a half in advance. City Council has just adopted next fiscal year's budget. The budget will take the City through June of 2024, so there will be no additional funding next year. The budget is zero-based, meaning that any budget additions must be included in a capital improvement project or other significant qualifiers. Increases in winter rain, labor costs and supplies are all challenges.

Commissioner Lamb commented that she has mixed emotions about approving the grant funding. If the funds will not otherwise be spent, she will reluctantly approve funding, however, she would like something in writing that the City will take care of the Miller & McKellips property in the future. Commissioner Seigel agreed. He would like staff to provide a written funding update in the future. Mr. Reynolds reiterated that staff would provide additional details in the fall. This will include a memo report and costs for each of the projects.

Commissioner Schwartz-Manock suggested that for next year, the Commission and staff work more actively with the neighborhood code enforcement team to seek out opportunities to fund neighborhood projects.

COMMISSIONER SIEGEL MOVED TO APPROVE THE GRANT PROPOSAL AS PRESENTED IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$19,750. VICE CHAIR HEWITT SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0) WITH CHAIR

BUDWIG, VICE CHAIR HEWITT AND COMMISSIONERS DOTY BRADY, JAMES, LAMB, SCHWARTZ-MANOCK AND SIEGEL VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

3. Brick by Brick Program

Greg Bestgen, Director of Human Services, provided an overview of the program, which was developed by Scottsdale's Human Services Department to assist people experiencing homelessness while introducing the broader public to the benefits of earthen building. Participants in the building produce compressed earth blocks (CEB), adobe-like bricks for use in Scottsdale capital projects and other areas throughout the community. The activity combines volunteerism, community development, economic vitality and environmental initiatives to develop awareness on the use of sustainable material to build quality energy-efficient structures. Mike Lopach, Human Services Manager, discussed details about the block making machine, materials and production process.

In response to a question from Commissioner Siegel, Mr. Lopach stated that the bricks weigh approximately 22 to 23 pounds.

Commissioner Siegel asked whether selling the bricks is permitted. Mr. Lopach confirmed that there is approval from the City to sell the bricks; this is coordinated through the purchasing department. A potential auction of blocks is being developed, with the proceeds going to Human Services to fund programs.

Mr. Lopach added that there is also involvement with the National Science Foundation grant. Much work is being done nationally and internationally in terms of utilization of earthen building systems. Scottsdale is one of the few producers of compressed earth blocks in the United States. Mr. Bestgen added that Scottsdale will be giving a presentation at the upcoming Earth USA conference in Santa Fe.

Commissioner Doty Brady asked whether homeless individuals are being paid wages sufficient to become self-reliant. Mr. Lopach stated that 125 individuals have participated in the program. All of them receive daily meals as well as cash at the end of their shifts. They are also already connected with navigation and services from Phoenix Rescue Mission. Approximately one-third of participants have received either temporary or permanent housing.

Chair Budwig asked if the machine has different molds to accommodate different needs. Mr. Lopach confirmed that there is an entire system of designs. There are two primary blocks. Within the mold packages are other variations.

4. Scottsdale Neighborhoods Overview

This agenda item was requested by Commissioner Schwartz-Manock, however, she had to leave the meeting early and there was agreement to defer the item.

COMMISSIONER SIEGEL MOVED TO DEFER THIS AGENDA ITEM TO THE NEXT MEETING. VICE CHAIR HEWITT SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0) WITH CHAIR BUDWIG, VICE CHAIR HEWITT AND COMMISSIONERS

DOTY BRADY, JAMES, LAMB AND SIEGEL VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES. COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ-MANOCK WAS NOT PRESENT.

5. NAC Meeting Dates in July and August 2023

COMMISSIONER DOTY BRADY, MOVED TO CANCEL MEETINGS FOR JULY AND AUGUST, 2023. VICE CHAIR HEWITT SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0) WITH CHAIR BUDWIG, VICE CHAIR HEWITT AND COMMISSIONERS DOTY BRADY, JAMES, LAMB AND SIEGEL VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES. COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ-MANOCK WAS NOT PRESENT.

6. Identification of Future Agenda Items

The following items were identified for future agendas:

- Update on grants approved at today's meeting
- Volunteer opportunities
- Presentation the Paiute Center
- City budgeting process

7. Staff Updates

The next meeting is June 28, 2023.

8. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved by Vice Chair Hewitt and seconded by Commissioner Siegel, the meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

AYES: Chair Budwig, Vice Chair Hewitt, Commissioners Doty Brady, Hewitt, James, Lamb and Siegel.

NAYS: None

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