



**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**WORK STUDY SESSION**

**MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2015**

**CHAPARRAL DRINKWATER BUILDING**  
8102 E. Jackrabbit Rd., Scottsdale, AZ 85250

**PRESENT:** Harry Schlegelmilch, Chair  
Virginia Harris, Vice Chair  
Michael Bouscher, Commissioner  
Todd Davis, Commissioner  
Sherry Woodley, Commissioner  
Anne Wurth, Commissioner

**ABSENT:** Ron Chambless, Commissioner

**STAFF:** Terry Erickson, Parks and Recreation Manager  
Kira Peters, Parks and Recreation Manager  
Reed Pryor, Parks and Recreation Director  
Brett Jackson, Parks and Recreation Manager

**Call to order**

Chair Schlegelmilch called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Members present as noted above.

**Public Comment**

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

## **1. 2015/2016 Agenda Focus**

Chair Schlegelmilch announced that this meeting would be an open discussion so they would dispense with Robert's Rules of Order. Mr. Reed Pryor, Parks and Recreation Director, facilitated the discussion.

### **Cost Recovery**

Commissioner Woodley inquired about cost recovery models, goals and expectations. Mr. Pryor agreed that staff could provide that information for a discussion, adding that Ms. Erickson is working on tracking the revenues, costs and attendance at special events. Commissioner Davis agreed it is important to share this information. Staff should be prepared to present the business aspects.

Commissioner Woodley elaborated that she is interested overall in cost recovery and economic impacts. More information helps to evaluate the value of various events and programs. She agreed that there is no simple way to gauge economic impact of the smaller events, but spring training and the golf tournament do have a measurable economic impact.

Commissioner Wurth said staff should also be able to present the philosophy behind the programs. Some events do not bring in revenue for the City but have a value to residents, so it may be acceptable that they do not generate revenue.

Mr. Reed said they will not know the full cost of hosting the Arizona United Soccer Club until they know the costs to change the Stadium field back to baseball. He feels there may be a small cost to the City, but this has been very well received and good for downtown businesses.

### **Staff Development**

Vice Chair Harris said she and Mr. Pryor have talked about getting to know Parks and Recreation staff, and that the format of having to give a presentation at a formal public meeting is stressful. One possibility is for a Commissioner to occasionally attend a staff meeting to get to know staff and show the Commission's interest in and appreciation of their work.

She suggested that the formal verbiage at Commission meetings might be unnecessary. Mr. Pryor said according to Robert's Rules of Order, staff should be using formal titles when addressing the Commission. However, the Commission could relax that somewhat if they chose to do so. He had observed varying levels of formality at the City Council meeting the previous evening. Chair Schlegelmilch said some people may wish to be more formal. He suggested that as Robert's Rules is referenced in the bylaws, it would be appropriate for the Chair to remind everyone at the start of each meeting that the strictest formality does not have to be observed. Mr. Pryor agreed that they can remind staff going forward that this is the Commission's preference. Strict formality can be cumbersome. He suggested that at the start of a presentation, the speaker should say "Chair Schlegelmilch, Vice Chair Harris, Commissioners." When replying to questions or comments they should address the individual Commissioner by name.

Mr. Pryor said he thinks having a Commissioner attend occasional staff meetings is excellent. Ms. Terry Erickson, Parks and Recreation Manager, said holiday meetings or meetings at which staff are being recognized would be especially welcome. Mr. Pryor said meetings of all maintenance staff or recreation coordinators would be an opportunity to connect with large groups of staff.

Chair Schlegelmilch commented that those planning to attend these events should respond to staff in advance because of the open meeting law. Commissioner Davis suggested that the whole Commission attend the annual safety meeting and staff appreciation holiday event, and that staff check with the City Attorney's Office to ensure compliance with the open meeting law.

Mr. Pryor said Commissioners are welcome to attend events. Ms. Erickson said she has started having managers and staff create very brief profiles with their photo so that staff become more familiar with each other. She offered to send samples to the Commission and see if they would also like to be included.

Commissioner Davis said before an official meeting begins a short rolling slideshow of activities at nearby parks would make the Commission familiar with them. He suggested challenging staff to create YouTube videos of their park. Ms. Erickson said this could be easily done and could be aired on the City's YouTube channel.

### **NRPA Accreditation**

Mr. Pryor said staff will soon start the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) accreditation process again and asked to what extent the Commission was interested in becoming involved. Ms. Kira Peters, Parks and Recreation Manager, said Commissioners could be a fresh pair of eyes when staff is reviewing the application. Mr. Pryor agreed. Ms. Peters added that last time the evaluators criticized the department for not having advocate groups for specific parks. Showing how involved the Commissioners are might be helpful. Commissioner Davis suggested that Commissioners could take on areas of particular interest, for example trails, dog parks or sports activities and become advocates for those areas.

Commissioner Davis asked how the Commissioners can become involved with the NRPA or the State association, APRA. Mr. Pryor said the NRPA forum contains helpful information and helps staff with benchmarking. The Chair and Vice Chair receive the NRPA monthly newsletter from staff. Chair Schlegelmilch offered to bring his copy to share with other Commissioners. Commissioner Davis is a member of APRA and is joining NRPA. He is attending the annual conferences of both groups. He has volunteered to help facilitate the APRA boards and commissions day in Tucson in August. He offered to scan relevant information for circulation to the Commission. Mr. Pryor said the Department will send a Commissioner to attend the boards and commissions day at the APRA conference. Usually this is the Chair or Vice Chair.

Commissioner Davis said APRA is working hard to improve the boards and commissions involvement. Last year the boards and commissions told APRA that it needs to help them better understand their role with their respective cities. Commissioner Woodley said she would be interested in attending if that were possible. She asked whether the NRPA magazine is online. Ms. Erickson said staff signs up for NRPA virtual sessions each year. Staff are invited to come and some Commissioners could also attend.

Commissioner Davis suggested staff could present national issues that relate to Scottsdale to the Commission at monthly meetings.

Commissioner Harris suggested tapping into park volunteers. Ms. Peters agreed that alerting service groups to specific needs for volunteer help could be productive. Commissioner Davis said he has been working on a collaborative project with the Chamber of Commerce, the Scottsdale Foundation, the Scottsdale Parks & Recreation initiative and Scottsdale Community College on an educational website, Keep Scottsdale Fit, which will show everywhere in Scottsdale where people can hike, bike and be active. Younger people want to volunteer but are not aware of where to turn. He suggested that the Department web page spotlight volunteering opportunities.

### **Meeting Packets and Format**

Commissioner Davis requested better executive summaries when groups are requesting sponsorships. He suggested creating application forms to ensure that all pertinent information is provided in a consistent format that the Commission can review ahead of time. Ms. Erickson suggested this would work for the youth sports field allocation applications. She has started providing information in the Commission updates about how the aquatic teams are doing.

Commissioner Wurth said information on all items the Commission is to take action on should be provided to them ahead of the meeting. She requested that photo simulations included with cell phone tower applications be as clear as possible so they can understand what the proposed tower will look like, given that the Commission is concerned with aesthetics. Parks and Recreation Manager Mr. Brett Jackson pointed out that companies have to provide before and after pictures for their planning application. Commissioner Woodley asked that applicants include photos of existing installations of the model of faux palm proposed for each application.

Commissioner Davis suggested reducing paperwork where possible, while respecting individual preferences. Chair Schlegelmilch recalled that in the past the electronic packets sent prior to each meeting were bigger. He suggested sharing all staff presentations ahead of the meeting so Commissioners can review and prepare. This could be sent later than the agenda if necessary. Hard copies of the packet could be available at the meeting for those who do not bring a device with them. Of course staff may sometimes make last-minute changes to presentations before the meeting. Commissioner Woodley said photos can be printed in grayscale since they will see the color photo in the presentation at the meeting.

Mr. Pryor requested input on possible field tours. Ms. Erickson suggested supplementing a tour with a slide presentation of the smaller neighborhood parks. This would also give staff an opportunity to create PowerPoint presentations. Commissioner Davis recalled the fun, energetic atmosphere that prevailed when he worked in the Department in the 70's. Ms. Peters said many Recreational Leader 2s would welcome the opportunity to present to the Commission. She would like to encourage these younger professionals to get more involved and meet with the Commission. Ms. Erickson suggested the McCormick Ranch parks would make an ideal topic for a slide presentation.

## **Trends and Plans**

Commissioner Wurth commented that it seems odd to some that the McCormick Ranch parks are actually City property. Ms. Erickson said they were donated to the City by the developer. Mr. Pryor recalled that in the past landowners had to dedicate open space, but increasingly this is private and just for the development. The cost of maintenance may be a drawback for the City. Ms. Erickson said this does mean that City parks are spread throughout the entire City. Mr. Pryor added that three parcels in northern Scottsdale are designated for parks, but the Department does not have funding for them at this point. There is interest from a developer in acquiring one parcel at DC Ranch for commercial development.

Ms. Erickson noted that many new developments have provided small parks. Commissioner Davis noted that developers have to include open space, and homes near parks are worth more. In northern Scottsdale his observation is that people are used to driving to recreational programs, although they enjoy hiking and cycling.

Discussion ensued on the interest in establishing a dog park at Thompson Peak Park. Many HOAs do not allow dogs to run. The existing dog parks are used extensively.

Commissioner Wurth inquired if the Department plans to build any more pocket parks. Mr. Pryor said they are not. The vacant parcels are about ten acres. Chair Schlegelmilch said larger parks seems to be the trend because new communities now contain their own green spaces. Mr. Pryor said the three parcels are all in the master plan and the amenities are planned. When funding becomes available staff will conduct public outreach.

Mr. Pryor noted that City Council would be voting on the budget at their meeting tonight and also discussing the bond. He did not anticipate any issues with the budget. However, members of the public were expected to address Council on the bond.

## **Future Indoor Sports Facility**

Chair Schlegelmilch said in August it will be important to hear full details about the FY 2015/21016 budget. He requested that perhaps at the second August meeting staff present a pre-feasibility study for an indoor recreation facility. This should be presented at a meeting in the Kiva. He suggested that looking at the Avondale facility would be a good starting point. He would like one or two indoor soccer fields, and four to six indoor basketball/volleyball/pickleball courts. He asked that they start thinking about this in a preliminary way, understanding that this facility would have to be financed with a bond. The number one need identified in the Community Services Master Plan was indoor facilities.

He elaborated that at this point he just wants an initial pre-feasibility study presented. What would such a facility look like, how large, what amenities would staff recommend? It is time to start the conversation, understanding that it will take years to develop.

Vice Chair Harris said although at this point they do not have funding, there is a need for an indoor multi-use facility. Mr. Pryor said there are various possibilities for land, either using a parcel owned by the City or working with a private developer. Vice Chair Harris noted there are opportunities for some kind of private/public partnership. The Avondale

facility belongs to the City of Avondale but a private company handles day to day operations under a contract.

Vice Chair Harris said several people have asked her where they can learn to play pickleball so they can use the open pickleball courts. Commissioner Davis adding this information to the eScottsdale fit map, showing both public and private facilities. Commissioners could research and add information to the map as they learn of fitness opportunities.

Mr. Pryor said that staff has just received the final draft of the Master Plan and are reviewing it. He undertook to send out the document to the Commissioners over the summer via email.

Mr. Pryor announced that they will be interviewing candidates for the marketing position shortly.

### **Youth Sports Field Allocation Policy**

Commissioner Wurth mentioned that she wanted to revisit a portion of the youth sports field allocation policy. She asked if there is currently a hardship exception. She had seen that some applicants seemed to be facing serious hardships. Ms. Erickson undertook to review the applications they had received. Organizations were asked whether they offer reduced rates to low income players and how many players are given the reduced rate.

Commissioner Wurth said she was thinking of the late applications. Apparently some of the applicants were truly facing very difficult circumstances and the Commission might like to allow a few exceptions. She asked whether the current language in the policy allows for that. Vice Chair Harris recalled one group appealed because they had just lost their board of directors. Ms. Erickson said staff has determined they cannot accommodate any additional partners at this point. They have 26 partners and a list of 37 groups that would like to become partners. It will not be possible to add any partners for the next while.

Commissioner Davis said he would like to ensure that the definition of who uses the fields is clear. He would like to know whether the non-profits who allow children whose families cannot pay the fees are all able to use the fields. Ms. Erickson said some of the non-profit partners offer reduced rates while others do not. Many of the organizations have recreational fees and competitive fees and depend on the recreational fees to support their programs. Commissioner Davis said the topic of offering quality opportunities to low income families will be discussed at the NRPA conference and is an emerging issue. Chair Schlegelmilch suggested Ms. Erickson could compile a list of all the partner organizations that accommodate low income families. Mr. Jackson interjected that Little League has a rule that they will not turn anyone away for lack of funds.

Commissioner Davis elaborated that he has no problem with paying coaches a stipend. He is concerned that low to moderate income families may not have the chance to develop a skill. They may need to challenge the partner organizations to provide these opportunities equitably. Perhaps groups that are offering equitable opportunities should get an extra point in favor of field allocation. He shared the situation of one of his

students who is sacrificing so that his daughters can play club volleyball in junior high school. When he inquired about getting the girls into the high school team, the coach told him only players from the coach's club would be in the high school team. He opined that the Commission needs a full understanding of what non-profit really means in this context.

Vice Chair Harris recalled that when the partnership program began two years ago staff had done a good job of presenting the issues. She noted that some of the groups in southern Scottsdale did not have enough Scottsdale residents to qualify and could not find coaches or board members. Even if fees are waived, there is nothing the Commission or the Department can do to solve those issues.

Commissioner Davis suggested improving program delivery by offering sports coaches for these groups. Ms. Erickson said the City's basic programs have always been recreational. Once people have learned the basics, those who want to advance typically join clubs. Chair Schlegelmilch said that is typical of parks and recreation departments generally.

Commissioner Davis said he was considering either changing this model or finding a group that will ensure opportunities for lower income youngsters. He noted that the opportunity for college sports scholarships very much depends on access to club level coaching. Maybe they could consider partnering with schools.

Ms. Erickson said the City might be able to forge more of a partnership with the partner organizations and encourage them to help develop deserving young players. Commissioner Davis suggested that perhaps a Phoenix organization might be prepared to help develop a club in southern Scottsdale if approached with the possibility of field allocation. He added that this could extend to dance and theater as well as sports.

Commissioner Bouscher inquired what percentage of the 26 partner organizations are not open to everyone who wants to play. Ms. Erickson said the organizations are required to submit information on members' residency each year. Some organizations will not provide the names of members to the Department, citing privacy concerns.

Chair Schlegelmilch suggested devoting part of a series of meetings to reviewing partner organizations by sport, looking at their application and the most recent statistics submitted to the Department, to gain an understanding of each group. Groups can be invited to attend. He added that comparison could provide leverage on groups that refuse to provide players' names. Ms. Erickson agreed this would make the process more transparent. The partners are now being held accountable.

Commissioner Davis urged having groups complete a standardized form to make comparison easier going forward. He wanted to know which groups are paying their coaches, saying that when coaches volunteer, this is a true non-profit that serves the citizens. He stressed he does not have a problem with coaches being paid, but there need to be affordable fees for families. Ms. Erickson pointed out that the organizations submit their financial information but not their budget. Commissioner Davis said having the information provided makes it easier for the Commission, as asking direct questions in public at a meeting may be awkward.

Chair Schlegelmilch cautioned that there is a difference between a non-profit program and a non-profit organization. A non-profit organization such as the United Way can still pay salaries.

Commissioner Davis said he wonders whether they have missed out on an opportunity to help moderate income families obtain higher level training in art, theater or sports. He opined that should be the Commission's focus. Chair Schlegelmilch said the really good players do get into clubs which may be in other cities or in northern Scottsdale without having to pay. The problem with high school coaches is not really within the Commission's purview. He opined that the high schools are aware of what is happening and do nothing to stop these practices.

Commissioner Woodley reminded the Commission that resources are finite and it is important to have a good, defensible scoring mechanism. Ms. Erickson reported that staff has encouraged the Little Leagues to join together, since some Little Leagues can get field allocation and others cannot.

Chair Schlegelmilch reminded the Commission that if they would like items added to the agenda they should contact him and he and Mr. Pryor will decide whether the agenda can be amended. Commissioner Davis said an hour and a half is a good meeting length, neither rushed nor overly long.

Mr. Pryor announced that staff would conduct a tour of the building.

## **2. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, the work study session adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz