



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
McDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

February 5, 2015

**Florence Ely Nelson Desert Park
8950 E. Pinnacle Peak Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85255**

MINUTES

PRESENT: James Heitel, Chairman
Fred Klein, Vice Chairman
Con Englehorn, Commissioner
Mike Milillo, Commissioner
Jace McKeighan, Commissioner
Robert Frost, Commissioner
Susan Wheeler, Commissioner

STAFF: Bill Murphy
Kroy Ekblaw
Scott Hamilton
Liz Hildenbrand
Yvonne Massman
John Loleit

GUESTS: Dustin Darveau
David Hay
Howard Myers
Mike Nolan

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Heitel called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members present as noted above.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the Regular Meeting minutes of December 4, 2014

Approval of the Work Study Session minutes of January 22, 2015

COMMISSIONER FROST MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 4, 2014 MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AND THE JANUARY 22, 2015 WORK STUDY SESSION MINUTES. COMMISSIONER MCKEIGHAN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

5. MCDOWELL SONORAN CONSERVANCY UPDATE (Discussion begins at 5:03; approximately 1 minute into the meeting)

Mr. Nolan updated the Commission on ongoing MSC projects. He said that the Kovach Family interpretive signs are in production and are expected to be installed during the first part of March. A celebration focused on the new trail and Wildflower Day is planned at Lost Dog Trailhead on Saturday, March 28th.

The Ecological Resource Plan will be completed in February. Once completed, a presentation will be agendized.

Two members of MSC are working together with the City on the Cultural Archeological Study for the resource management plan. The monetary gift the MSC received from the Charros will be applied towards some of the out-of-pocket expenses of mapping historical areas around the ranch area.

The MSC is working on the MSC Archives. As part of that project will be consulting with Joan Fudala and evaluating documents to decide whether they should be scanned and donated to the City of Scottsdale Library's digital collection.

Applicants have been received for the Field Institute director position and interviews will be starting soon.

MSC is coordinating with the City's Risk Manager to ensure that MSC's insurance is in accordance with the City of Scottsdale.

Concierge training is ongoing. Concierges from 41 resorts around the Valley have participated thus far.

Melanie Tluczek will be speaking about the Citizen Science Program at the Parks and Science National Conference next week. The speaker for the conference was chosen through an application process.

The 50th new Steward orientation, scheduled for February 14th, is sold out.

6. **HUNTING UPDATE** (Discussion begins at 5:11; approximately 9 minutes into the meeting)

Howard Meyers commented about the proximity of bow hunters to the hiking trails near Little Granite and the dangers that could become of greater concern with the increased use of the trail. He urged the City to install signs explaining that bow hunting is permitted in these areas and offering contact information where users can obtain additional information from both the City of Scottsdale and Arizona Game and Fish.

Mr. Ekblaw noted that, while it is not a requirement for hunters to register, last year the City started the online hunting registration process to start tracking the number of hunters. The first year there was little advertising and there were 26 registrants. The second year there was additional advertisement and the City had 95 registrants.

Dustin Darveau, game specialist for Arizona Game and Fish, gave an update on the preliminary data from the deer and javelina survey. His presentation included a breakdown of the 2015 survey results including the total number of deer and javelina observed, buck to doe to fawn ratio, the average javelina herd size, and the population compared to the 2014 survey. He reviewed the survey analysis, noting that the deer density for the Preserve is five deer per square mile of habitat, indicating a stable population over the last three years. He showed the Commission a GPS map of the flight path taken by the helicopter that was observing the wildlife.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Darveau talked about deer and javelina nuisance calls and the mitigation efforts that are being taken to curb those issues, including community education. He said the bow hunting success rate typically averages approximately five percent and has not been calculated yet for this year..

7. **ACCESS AREAS UPDATE** (Discussion begins at 5:39; approximately 37 minute into the meeting)

- Future unplanned access areas and projected costs for budget planning

Mr. Ekblaw gave a presentation reviewing the existing and proposed access areas, trailhead improvements, boundary control improvements, and priorities that the MSPC sent to City Council in May. He noted that to the question of options for remaining dollars, the Commission has identified long-term operations, maintenance, promotion, education, outreach, and "other." Cost projections are through the end of the funding period in 2034.

Discussion ensued regarding priorities, cost to build trailheads, trails, boundary improvements, trailhead upgrades, and the possibility of a voter approved plan for funding future maintenance.

Mr. Ekblaw noted that now that a consultant has been brought in, the Commission can expect ongoing updates on Fraesfield and Granite.

8. **STAFF REPORTS** (Discussion begins at 6:03; approximately 1 hour and 1 minute into the meeting)

- **Land Acquisition (6:03)**

Mr. Ekblaw gave an update on the zoning cases. He noted that the open houses in December had a turnout of over 300 people. The open house last week focused on Legend Trail had a good turnout and most of the questions were focused on the State Land zoning case. Mr. Ekblaw said that the acquisition timing is uncertain because the Governor is in the process of replacing the State Land Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner and has recently appointed the Department's financial officer as the Acting Commissioner. In anticipation of moving forward once a Commissioner is appointed, a presentation outlining the background of the zoning cases will be given to the Scottsdale Planning Commission in three weeks so they will be aware that the cases will be coming forward and the Parcel 1 and 1a due diligence work will be sent to the State so they can begin the appraisal process

- **Trails Update (6:09)**

Mr. Ekblaw said that consultants are working with staff and the construction consultants and some trails in the 2C area are under construction. Working team members will be invited some time during the next week to offer their feedback. Progress is expected to be made on the trails before the end of the season and will continue in the fall.

- **Future Deer Tracking Study (6:12)**

Mr. Hamilton explained how deer tracking collars work with GPS to track the animal's movements and habits. Tracking can aid in understanding preferred areas and seasonal preferences of the animals. The collars would stay active for a two-year period for each animal and Game and Fish will conduct the tracking and processing of data. Funding is available to collar 16 deer starting next year and it is hoped that additional funding sources will be found so that up to 32 animals can be collared.

Commissioners were given the opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Darveau said that a wealth of information can be collected by tracking the deer. He agreed that the data would be public information available to hunters; however, the data will not be current because it is only uploaded to the system every six weeks. GPS coordinates and collar frequencies would not be released to the public.

- **DDC Update (6:21)**

Mr. Ekblaw announced that City Council will be holding a work study session on March 24th at the request of the Council and City Manager to discuss their interest in pursuing a Desert Discovery Center and, if so, their thoughts on location, potential sources of funding, and long-term operational management expectations. Chair Heitel noted that the MSC has requested that if some kind of center is built in the Preserve, they be included as a stakeholder.

Howard Meyers suggested that a land bridge be included as part of the capital improvement plan. He noted that users are having problems at the gooseneck when they reach Dynamite Crossing.

It was the consensus of the Commission to add a placeholder for wildlife crossing improvements to the Trails Master Plan as part of the ecological resource plan.

Commission members were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Murphy said that the application process for both the position at Pinnacle Peak and Claire's position is in progress. Ms. Hildenbrand added that the interviews for the position at Pinnacle Peak are scheduled for February 19th.

9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Discussion begins at 6:29; approximately 1 hour and 27 minutes into the meeting)

COMMISSIONER ENGLEHORN NOMINATED JAMES HEITEL TO CONTINUE IN HIS POSITION AS CHAIR OF THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION. VICE-CHAIR KLEIN SECONDED THE NOMINATION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR HEITEL ABSTAINED.

COMMISSIONER WHEELER NOMINATED ROBERT FROST FOR THE POSITION AS VICE-CHAIR OF THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION. COMMISSIONER MILILLO SECONDED THE NOMINATION.

COMMISSIONER ENGLEHORN NOMINATED FRED KLEIN TO CONTINUE IN HIS POSITION AS VICE-CHAIR OF THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION. THE NOMINATION DIED FOR LACK OF A SECOND.

VICE-CHAIR KLEIN NOMINATED CON ENGLEHORN FOR THE POSITION OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION. THE NOMINATION DIED FOR LACK OF A SECOND.

THE VOTE ON COMMISSIONER WHEELER'S NOMINATION OF ROBERT FROST FOR THE VICE-CHAIR POSITION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). COMMISSIONER FROST ABSTAINED.

10. REVIEW OF BYLAWS

Vice-Chair Klein suggested that under the Member Attendance section the language be changed from "if members are absent from three consecutive meetings" to "if members are absent from five consecutive REGULAR meetings within a 12-month period."

Commissioner McKeighan suggested that the bylaws reflect that meeting audio be included in the language regarding the definition of meeting minutes.

It was the consensus of the Commission to agendize a discussion and possible action on the suggested changes for the next meeting.

Mr. Ekblaw noted that the City Attorney's office would be consulted about potential changes prior to the next meeting.

11. MSPC 2014 ANNUAL REPORT (Discussion begins at 6:37; approximately 1 hour and 35 minutes into the meeting)

Commission members requested that the following amendments be made to the MSPC 2014 Annual Report:

- Highlight the long-term operations, including funding capacity and remaining land acquisition, as a separate bullet point
- Add a section outlining the efforts of the committee that worked on the North Area Trails planning
- Recognize the efforts made in the education and promotion area
- Mention that an Annual Preserve Day was established
- Mention that a Wildflower Festival was planned
- Add information about the approval of creating an online presence for Preserve activities

12. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

There were no further comments from Commissioners.

13. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

There were no further suggested future agenda items.

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

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