



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

Thursday, May 5, 2016

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

MINUTES

PRESENT: Bob Frost, Chair
Mike Milillo, Vice Chair
Steve Dodd, Commissioner
Bobby Alpert, Commissioner
Jace McKeighan, Commissioner
Cynthia Wenstrom, Commissioner
Con Englehorn, Commissioner

STAFF: Bill Murphy
Kroy Ekblaw
Scott Hamilton
Liz Hildenbrand
Yvonne Massman
Robert Graves

GUESTS: Mike Nolan
Linda Searles

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Frost called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members present as noted above.

Chair Frost welcomed new staff member Robert Gray and new Commission Member Bobby Alpert.

Commissioner Alpert introduced himself and discussed his background and interest in the Commission.

Commission Members took turns introducing themselves.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Discussion begins at 5:08; approximately 8 minutes into the meeting)

COMMISSIONER WENSTROM MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 13, 2016 MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. VICE-CHAIR MILILLO SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

5. MCDOWELL SONORAN CONSERVANCY UPDATE (Discussion begins at 5:09; approximately 9 minutes into the meeting)

Mike Nolan said that Path Finders will end for the season in the middle of May and patrols will cut back hours. The annual meeting between the MSC and the City of Scottsdale is scheduled for May 20th, 2016 at Florence Ely Nelson Desert Park from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Commission members are welcome to attend.

6. SOUTHWEST WILDLIFE CENTER (Discussion begins at 5:11; approximately 11 minutes into the meeting)

Linda Searles, Executive Director of Southwest Wildlife, gave an overview of the mission and goals of the Southwest Wildlife Center. The center takes responsibility for rehabilitating injured and orphaned native wildlife, respond to public safety calls involving wildlife, and is available to citizens to discuss ways to mitigate wildlife conflicts. The facility's nature center offers the public a wildlife education opportunity. The center recently completed renovations to the veterinary hospital. The veterinary hospital offers interning opportunities to veterinary students. Ms. Searles noted that their SUP was approved unanimously; only one neighbor was in opposition.

Mr. Ekblaw noted that City Council will be considering recommendation of a resolution indicating that the City of Scottsdale believes the Southwest Wildlife Center provides a valuable service on May 17, 2016. Once the resolution is passed, it will be forwarded to the County as necessary. Commission members were encouraged to voice their personal support to City Council in advance of their taking action.

Mr. Ekblaw offered to arrange for a tour of the facility at a future date.

7. PRESERVE PROMOTION PLAN IDEAS FOR 2016/2017 SEASON (Discussion begins at 5:16; approximately 16 minutes into the meeting)

Mr. Murphy said that he met with Vice-Chair Milillo and Commissioner Dodd in March to discuss a promotion plan. He discussed the measurable goals, which correlate with the General Plan.

Promotional goals include to educate and inform the community on the Sonoran Desert Environment and to foster community stewardships for the natural environment and encourage community partnerships with cooperation from management agencies and professional schools to develop educational materials. Community Services and Library resources will be utilized to provide educational programs about the Sonoran Desert, and City staff is collaborating with the Conservancy on educating the public through signage. Both the City and the Conservancy are working towards expanding partnerships with organizations such as the Salt River-Pima Maricopa Indian Community and the Tonto National Forrest. An annual report will be developed and will be shared with the MSPC in June each year. A mid-year update will be presented to the Commission in January. Mr. Murphy presented web view statistics for people searching for information on the Scottsdale Sonoran Preserve.

8. SUNRISE RESTROOM CONCEPT DISCUSSION (Discussion begins at 5:22; approximately 22 minutes into the meeting)

Mr. Hamilton gave an update on community input received regarding the concept of installing a restroom at the Sunrise Trailhead. Pathfinders suggested that the restroom be put at the north trailhead instead of the south trailhead because it would serve more people. The lower trailhead already has a shade ramada and the community neighboring the northern trailhead are in opposition of installing any kind of shade ramada that might impede their view. The Hidden Hills HOA has voted to NOT support a restroom.

Mr. Hamilton noted that the community of 14 homes adjacent to the southern Sunrise Trailhead has reported having issues with trail users parking along the area adjacent to their homes and walking through landscaping to access the trail. The City will be working with residents on options for mitigation signage.

Commission Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments. Mr. Hamilton said that the Hidden Hills HOA is combined for both Hidden Hills communities, one is gated and the other is not gated. If a restroom is installed it will be locked on a timer that activates at sunset when the trail closes. Ms. Hildenbrand said that she receives quarterly reports from the Police Department regarding Preserve activities; however, the report does not include activities that extend into the neighborhoods. Commission members commented on the increased use of the trails and suggested that additional parking opportunities be considered as part of planning and development of restroom facilities.

9. PRESERVE AUDIT (Discussion begins at 5:38; approximately 38 minutes into the meeting)

Mr. Murphy gave an update on the activities related to the audit report findings that were completed in February. The auditor suggested that Preserve Costs be located in one cost center. Cost centers will be combined as part of the budgeting process beginning in the Fall.

The contract between the City and the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy will be updated and brought to Council for approval. Donated lands will be properly recorded.

10. STAFF UPDATES (Discussion begins at 5:42; approximately 42 minutes into the meeting)

- **Trails Update (5:42)**

Mr. Hamilton said that Area 8 trails have been completed and directional signs and "use at your own risk" signs have been installed. Trails to the east of Area 8 have also been completed and will be signed next week. The "use at your own risk" signs will be removed once the new maps have been printed. Mr. Hamilton explained the Black Diamond areas and the signage associated with those areas.

Mr. Ekblaw noted that APS will be making a connection to the underground conduit coming from the south along 118th and Dixileta in the next 30 to 90 days, which could cause temporary closures of parts of that area.

- **State Legislative Activity (5:45)**

Mr. Ekblaw reported that the fireworks legislation failed with a 14 to 16 vote in the Senate. Another attempt to put it on the docket is anticipated. Commissioners will be kept apprised of any activity.

- **Endowment Proposal to CC – May 10th (5:47)**

Chair Frost said that he and former Commissioner Heitel will join Mr. Ekblaw in making a presentation on the endowment proposal to City Council during their May 10, 2016 work study session between 4:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Ekblaw reviewed the presentation that will go to City Council which includes a summary of Preserve costs and understanding of the operation and maintenance costs and the Preserve Tax funding and endowment concept cost projections. Chair Frost asked that staff be prepared with information on the interest dollars and the projected dates that they will become available.

- **Land Acquisition Update (5:51)**

Mr. Ekblaw reported that the State Land case will go before the Planning Commission on Wednesday, May 11, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. Commissioners are welcome to speak as citizens. The item is expected to go before council in mid- to late- June.

- **Conservation Open Space District Text Amendment and Preserve Zoning cases (5:52)**

Mr. Ekblaw said that he expects to be prepared to bring information forward on the conservation open space district text amendment and preserve zoning cases in June.

- **COS and Conservancy Annual Meeting to review 2015-2016 Season - May (5:53)**

Ms. Hildenbrand said that based on Commissioner interest in attending the annual meeting, she will post a notice of quorum.

11. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS** (Discussion begins at 5:54 p.m.; approximately 54 minutes into the meeting)

Mr. Ekblaw said that in reference to the Desert Discovery Center, Howard Meyers submitted a petition to amend the Charter to allow for public vote on construction of anything other than trails, trailheads, or the land bridge on Dynamite Boulevard, and use of Preserve tax funds for anything other than land acquisition or trails and trailheads within the Preserve Boundaries. City Council by a 4-3 vote agreed that they will consider the request at a future date.

12. **AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS** (Discussion begins at 5:55 p.m.; approximately 55 minutes into the meeting)

Mr. Ekblaw said that the opportunity for input on the Desert Discovery Center closes on May 12th. Once data is compiled, an item will be agendized for a future meeting.

The promotion plan will be agendized once additional details are available.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

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