



**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
VIA LINDA SENIOR CENTER  
10440 E. VIA LINDA  
SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85258  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2009**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Robert Frost, Chair  
Jeanne Alspaugh, Vice-Chair  
James Duchene, Commissioner  
John Faramelli, Commissioner  
Ron King, Commissioner  
Stan Koczka, Commissioner

**ABSENT:** George Adams, Commissioner

**STAFF:** Officer Craig Abernethy, Scottsdale Police Department  
Tim Barnard, CIP/Planning Coordinator  
Jan Cameron, Parks and Recreation Manager  
Susan Conklu, Transportation Planner  
Jeanne Jones, Community Services Department  
Reed Kempton, Principle Transportation Planner  
Dave Meinhart, Transportation Planning and Transit Director  
William Murphy, Parks and Recreation Director  
Doug Nesselroad, Parks and Recreation Director  
Lorelei Oien, Administrative Secretary  
Sergeant Jeromie O'Meara, Scottsdale Police Department  
Mari Steinbach, Parks and Recreation Manager

**GUESTS:** Donna Orlick

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Frost called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

A formal roll call confirmed members present as stated above, noting the presence of a quorum.

**3. MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Chair Frost called for a moment of silence.

**4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

- **Regular Meeting of March 4, 2009.**

**COMMISSIONER KOCZKA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 4, 2009 REGULAR MEETING. COMMISSIONER KING SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0).**

**5. AD HOC CITIZEN TRAILS TASK FORCE: DRAFT FINAL REPORT**

**Reed Kempton, Principal Transportation Planner, for the Trails, Bikeways and Sidewalks Program will give a presentation that will provide an overview of the Ad Hoc Citizen Trails Task Force recommendations for trail implementation, policies, trail classifications, design guidelines, funding, maintenance, and enforcement.**

Mr. Kempton reported that the Ad Hoc Citizens' Trails Task Force recently completed an update to the City's Trails Program. Since August, an average of 29 participants met twice a month to craft a series of recommendations to Council. The first recommendation was on implementing the Neighborhood Trails Program. They said the City should prioritize trails, work with the community to purchase easements and determine whether they are properly located. A substantial majority supported condemnation as a last resort. They felt that property owners should be financially responsible for removing obstructions in the easements, unless the City permitted those obstructions in the first place. The City should acquire new land for trails, especially if doing so would connect or complete important trails. There was a strong feeling among Task Force members that the City has given up too much to developers over the years, and they suggested a policy be created to correct that.

Mr. Kempton said the Task Force also developed new scoring criteria to determine trail priorities. The trail system was divided into 360 segments in six geographic areas. The top 60 segments overall were identified as top priorities, as were the top 10 in each area. They identified secondary and tertiary priorities as well. Staff intends to use this list to physically evaluate priority segments to determine their status and identify any safety issues.

The group also provided input on trail design guidelines, standards and classifications. Overall, trail tread and easements got wider, and the grades became less steep for each classification. They chose to combine neighborhood and local trails, and create a new classification called minimally improved or rugged trails. This classification would essentially

allow trails that do not meet ADA guidelines, either because the terrain is too steep, or there is an equivalent alternative route.

The Task Force felt that any future bond elections should include funding for trails, and that the City should continue to look for increased funding for maintenance and enforcement activities. They recommended that the City maintain trails adjacent to individual properties, while requiring that HOA's and other commercial entities maintain trails in their areas. Penalties for violations on trails and multi-use paths should be conformed, and an awareness campaign initiated to educate the public on trail etiquette.

Commissioner King asked about the balance of equestrians, bicyclists and hikers in the group, and whether an imbalance skewed the results. Mr. Kempton responded that at the beginning, the group was much more evenly balanced, but as the months went on, it primarily became an equestrian group. He felt that the new design guidelines will be much easier for the City to work with, and that the policies address all different modes. The report notes wherever a small group disagreed strongly with the majority. Commissioner King said the prioritization list is a valuable tool to help leaders decide how to spend the limited amount of money. He felt that condemnation should be kept as an option, particularly since it would not be used to remove homes or businesses in these cases.

Chair Frost questioned whether a lot of money would be spent on trails that only a relatively small number of equestrians would enjoy. Without knowing the number of horses in the City, it is hard to know for sure. He felt that 30-foot easements for trails would leave a big scar. Mr. Kempton responded that the trails themselves would only be 8 to 10 feet within 30-foot wide easements. The extra width allows for side-by-side use and for trails to meander around terrain and vegetation. Thirty-foot easements would only be used for primary trails, which generally are not in neighborhoods. Mr. Meinhart emphasized that the trail system is intended for all types of users, not just for equestrians. The General Plan identifies the trail system as part of the transportation network. In most cases, there will be more pedestrians using trails than equestrians.

## **6. COMMUNITY POLICING IN THE PARKS**

**Craig Abernethy and Jeromie O'Meara, Scottsdale Police Department, will give an overview on community policing in the parks to address issues such as site visibility and park and vehicle safety.**

Sgt. O'Meara said the Parks and Preserve unit is responsible for all urban parks, the Preserve, libraries, senior centers, and Scottsdale Mall. Officers work closely with the Park and Recreation Division to share information. The primary issues the unit encounters are juvenile crime, transients, vehicle burglaries, and misuse of Preserve and State Trust lands.

Officer Abernethy said the Crime Prevention Unit tracks crime trends throughout the city, and engages in community outreach projects. Criminals have been targeting vehicles at dog parks and trailheads because they know people are going to be gone for a certain amount of time. They steal purses and wallets that are left in vehicles. The largest increase in incidents occurred at Chaparral Park and Pinnacle Peak Park. Considering the number of park visitors, the burglary incident rate is not as high as comparable parks in neighboring communities. Increasing public awareness can reduce crimes of opportunity. Most burglaries occur within a few seconds. They look for credit cards or cash they can spend

quickly, or electronic items they can sell easily. The unit conducts an education effort to inform park users of the risks and how to reduce it. Flyers are placed on cars and distributed with class registration packets, newsletters, and during face-to-face contacts. Warning signs are posted at key locations.

Graffiti is usually underreported, and the parks often take care of it themselves. Eldorado Park has been hit hard lately. The majority of graffiti does not come from gangs, but from taggers who are trying to build up their reputation. The SPD trains Park and Recreation staff and volunteers on what it means to be a good witness, and how to respond to suspicious activity. Officers conduct security surveys of the parks to look for design improvements that could reduce crime opportunities. In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Faramelli, Sgt. O'Meara said that Police Department input during the initial park design phases would be extremely helpful.

For enforcement, the unit increases patrols in hot spots. Officers are encouraged to be in parks while completing their paperwork. Special surveillance details use unmarked cars and plainclothes officers, in response to patterns. Occasional zero-tolerance enforcement details are employed in high-complaint areas, but this has the drawback of affecting normal users as well. In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Duchene, Sgt. O'Meara said most crime victims were oblivious to the warning signs posted in lots. The SPD is working with the park managers to identify key locations for signs. Commissioner Koczka commended the Department for taking steps to prevent the crimes in the first place, and not just focusing on enforcement.

## **7. COMMUNITY SERVICES FEES AND CHARGES PROGRAM**

**Jeanne Jones, Senior Management Analyst, will review proposed changes to the Community Services Department Guidelines for Programming and Facility Reservation and Use Costs. The proposed changes are presented to the Commission for consideration, comment and action, prior to being considered for approval by the City Council.**

Ms. Jones said the draft Council report on proposed fee changes is scheduled to go to the Budget Review Commission on April 2, and to Council on May 19.

Commissioner Duchene recommended that the Commission approve the document. He noted one proposal to lower the aquatic fees at McDowell Mountain Ranch Aquatic Center to be more in line with other facilities. The General Manager decided not to accept that proposal, partly because of the ongoing budget difficulties. Commissioner Duchene expressed his disagreement with that decision, saying that every citizen should have access to the same types of opportunities and pay the same fees. He wanted this point noted and felt that Council should ultimately decide on the matter.

Ms. Jones clarified that the fees were not set in response to the budget situation. They were set higher initially because it costs more to operate the McDowell facility, and it has features that are not available at the other pools. The City is starting a pilot pass program that is offered at the same price for all pools. Commissioner Duchene said he understood the reasoning behind the price differential, but felt they should be equal regardless of whether the facility is new or not. Chair Frost suggested that Commissioner Duchene could vote no, with an explanation for his dissent.

Commissioner King expressed concern that setting adult league fees to recover 110% of cost sets the expectation that all park programs should also meet that standard, which would not be right. Ms. Jones responded that leisure education programs and adult leagues see high usage, and a small increase in per-user fees can generate substantial revenue at minimal impact. In response to Commissioner Faramelli's inquiry, Ms. Jones said that should the Budget Review Commission propose changes, she would return to the Parks and Recreation Commission for additional comment.

Commissioner Duchene felt that the part of the Parks and Recreation Commission's job is to be a citizens' review commission, including matters related to the budget. He does not understand what the Budget Review Commission's role will be. He clarified that he was going to vote yes on the motion, because it would send a message to the Budget Review Commission that the proposed fees enjoy the unanimous support of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Chair Frost invited public commentary.

Donna Orlick said the \$2 per visit to the McDowell Mountain Center does not seem very high, but adds up to \$520 a year for someone who goes five times a week. A private fitness center charges \$30 per month, or \$360 annually, yet provides more varied equipment and constant supervision and guidance. The reason the usage of the center is not as high as it could be is because people are getting better deals elsewhere. She suggested establishing a special price for seniors, as they do not use the equipment for as long as younger people do. Chair Frost said her comments would be taken into account when deciding next year's fee structure.

**COMMISSIONER KOCZKA MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAMMING FEES AND FACILITY RESERVATION AND USE COSTS AS SUBMITTED. COMMISSIONER DUCHENE SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0).**

## **8. PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET OVERVIEW**

**William Murphy, Parks and Recreation Director, will give a division update of the Parks and Recreation budget.**

Mr. Barnard reviewed the CIP budget for FY09/10. The budget is considered in five-year increments, and every year a new fifth year is added. Active projects carry over from one year to the next. There are ongoing projects at Grayhawk, Troon North, McCormick-Stillman, and Eldorado. Scottsdale is applying for funding from the Community Block Grant Program to complete ADA renovations at Eldorado. There is also a project to mitigate flooding at Scottsdale Stadium.

Unlike bond-funded CIP projects, projects to replace playground and public pool equipment are funded from the General Fund. Because of this, the five-year budgets have been cut back. The amount of money available through the Federal stimulus package remains unclear. Scottsdale's intergovernmental liaison is working with staff to ensure that the City gets money for eligible projects. Commissioner Duchene expressed

concern that operational costs to keep equipment going could end up being higher than replacing it.

Mr. Murphy provided an overview of the proposed reductions. The Department has already made some reductions to address shortfalls for the budget which ends in June. Additional reductions are being prepared for the FY09/10 budget. Items in the A and B categories were selected because the reductions would have a minimal impact on operations. A small amount was taken from the maintenance operations of every park to ensure that the burden was equally shared. The Parks and Recreation budget is \$23 million, and the operating budget for this year was reduced by \$337,000. The same line items that were reduced this year would also be carried over to next year.

Because of the continuing recession, more cuts are required for the next fiscal year. Recommendations from the C list category are also being submitted to the Budget Review Commission. Many of the reductions in this category would be minimized because participants in those programs would have other opportunities to choose from. Other programs were chosen because participation in them was relatively low. One proposal is to keep all the aquatic centers open from Memorial Day to the end of the year. The cost of lifeguards, seasonal staff and heating the pools is high. The reductions would affect all pools in order to be fair. The agreements with Scottsdale Synchro and Scottsdale Aquatics terminate at the end of the year. This schedule would still allow the pools to accommodate the intergovernmental agreement with the School District for their swim teams.

Mr. Murphy said the proposed reductions take \$2,375,000 out of the \$23 million budget. Five Department positions were not refilled after they were vacated. Fourteen employees in the Department have opted to take the City's early retirement incentive. The number of Department managers would drop from seven to four. The City Manager wants to have a smaller and leaner organization, which means fewer people at the top. It also means that some scattered departments would be consolidated. The Department feels it can accomplish what needs to be done. The senior coordinators will supervise more staff than they currently do. Staff faces the challenge of what to do with Grayhawk Park. Positions are budgeted for it, but they cannot be filled. Part of the restructuring includes accommodating the addition of this park into the City's inventory. The incentive offer impacts the Department's administrative staff in Community Services, which means that the directors would have no boss.

In response to an inquiry from Vice Chair Alspaugh, Mr. Murphy said he does not anticipate that the Federal stimulus package would make any funds available for classes or programs. The only possibility might be youth employment for the summer, which could benefit Youth Corps. Mr. Barnard added that the stimulus is only being offered once, and the City prefers not to add or expand programs that would have to be cut next year. Vice Chair Alspaugh inquired whether any consideration has been given to setting up a foundation for grants to support special programs. Mr. Murphy said the desire would be to dedicate a staff person just for that purpose, but at this point, that is not a possibility.

Mr. Murphy, in response to an inquiry from Commissioner Duchene, clarified that all the parks would be impacted by reductions in maintenance. Commissioner Duchene said the school fields see more use and receive more wear than City fields do. He wants to ensure that a league that uses City fields is not going to get a better deal than a league

that uses a school field. Mr. Murphy said the Youth Sports Task Force has expressed that same concern. The City stills needs to arrive at an agreement with the School District to determine whether fees should be charged by the hour, by the team or by the child. Commissioner Duchene emphasized the importance that field allocations remain equitable for all groups. He also suggested that one of the pools remain open to accommodate the youth swimming organizations. Mr. Murphy responded that staff considered many scenarios before choosing the most practical one. If the Council decides to reverse one item, they would need to take the money from somewhere else.

Commissioner Faramelli said he expected the hits to be worse, and commended staff for trying to be as fair as possible. Vice Chair Alspaugh pledged to offer her support to the staff during their budget presentations to the Budget Review Commission and Council. The other Commissioners echoed her offer. Mr. Murphy outlined key dates in the process and said staff would appreciate any support that the Commission could provide.

Commissioner Duchene said that as people tighten their belts they are relying more of City facilities. It is important to send the message that the demand is only going to increase. Chair Frost acknowledged that reorganizing a major City organization is a very difficult proposition, but expressed confidence that it would all come together.

#### **9. COMMISSIONER REPORT**

**The Commissioners will give updates on events, activities and reports from committees they have been involved with since the last Commission meeting.**

Commissioner Koczka said he visited several soccer events recently, where the users commented on the exceptional condition of the soccer fields, and the overall cleanliness of the facilities.

Vice Chair Alspaugh expressed admiration for the opportunities that the Paiute Center offers to children that they otherwise would not have. She is volunteering at the bicycle shop and plans to earn a bike. Chair Frost reported on recent activities at Scottsdale Ranch Park.

#### **10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT OF CURRENT EVENTS (A.R.S. § 38-431.02(K))**

**William Murphy, Parks and Recreation Director, will update the Commission on the status of events and activities of the Parks and Recreation, and Parks and Grounds Management Divisions. This includes, but is not limited to, updates on programming, special events, calendars, and upcoming meetings.**

Mr. Murphy reported that the Arizona Community Tree Council is going to designate the Winfield Scott olive trees on Drinkwater Boulevard as Big Trees of Arizona. Two pistachio trees on the corner of Miller and Indian School Road would also be recognized. These trees date from the founding of Scottsdale.

The Diamondbacks awarded a grant to the Miracle League to adapt a field for special needs children. Pitcher Dan Haren and APS are also contributing money to the project at Cochise School. The facility will be available for recreation programs and Little League groups as well.

Mr. Murphy said the CVB put out a bid to jointly host Men's Senior Softball with the City of Phoenix. The October event will be the first event at the new field at Grayhawk Park.

The Commission agreed to cancel the April 1 meeting.

**11. PUBLIC COMMENT**

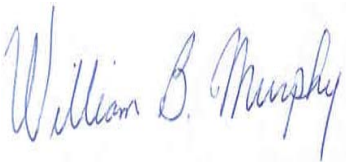
There were no public comments.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, and no need for an executive session, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

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

Meets established criteria.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William B. Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style.

William B. Murphy  
Parks and Recreation Director