



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
August 7, 2009
Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Department
3500 West River Road, Tucson, Arizona



A. CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

Quorum having been established, the Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m.

Commissioners present: Jan Johnson (Vice-Chair), Anita Kellman (Secretary), Dave Ridings, Stephanie Maben, Gary Davidson,

Commissioners absent: Richard Barker (Chair), Victor Rivera

Staff present: Rafael Payan, Carlo DiPilato, Derek Shaw, Kerry Baldwin, Joe Barr, George Kuck, Steve Anderson, Evelyne Thorpe, and Ann Khambholja

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Those present recited the pledge of allegiance.

C. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of the June 12, 2009 Minutes

Commissioner Johnson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Maben, to table the June 12, 2009 minutes; the motion passed unanimously.

D. COMMISSION DISCUSSION/ACTION REQUEST

1. Proposed State Legislation to allow slot machines at racetracks: Commissioner Maben proposed that a letter be sent to the Arizona State Legislature requesting that Rillito Racetrack be excluded from the proposed legislation. Commissioner Maben opined that since Rillito Racetrack is part of a public park and that horseracing is held there for only a few days every year, gambling activities should not be allowed at the track all year. The park is used by children and families for youth sports, practice, games, tournaments and family-oriented events throughout the year. Commissioner Ridings disagree with Commissioner Maben as he feels this is a good economic opportunity to maintain the track especially in light of the present economic recession. Commissioner Maben said that this could be revisited if and when the racetrack is moved to the Southeast Regional Park (SERP). Commissioner Ridings said that if the idea was to segregate gambling activities from families, this could not be justified by moving it to the Fairgrounds. Commissioner Davidson said that the Rillito site was a park where racing occurred, not a gambling facility. Commissioner Johnson agreed with Commissioner Ridings that added income under the proposed legislation would benefit not only the county, but racing as well.

Commissioner Maben made a motion for the Parks and Recreation Commission to forward a letter to the Arizona legislature recommending that Rillito Racetrack not be considered in any slot machine gambling bill that include Rillito Racetrack as a gambling venue other than horse racing. Commissioner Kellman seconded the motion. The motion passed (3-2) with a dissenting vote from Commissioners Johnson and Ridings.

E. Division Report

1. Administrative Services (Derek Shaw) Mr. Shaw presented the budget snapshot for periods 11 and 12. He also told the commission that NRPR had come in under budget for the past fiscal year and that the county was still awaiting more information about the State's budget which has not been approved to date. Commissioner Maben made a motion requesting that a letter be written to the Board of Supervisors commending NRPR for coming in under budget. It was seconded by Commissioner Kellman. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Development

There was no report from the Development Division.

3. Natural Resources (Kerry Baldwin) Mr. Baldwin stated that the natural resources division is very busy at this time due to the lack of monsoon rain this year and that they have been working on well management on ranch properties. The most recent open space acquisition is that of the Cline Ranch in the Whetstone Mountains which consists of 1000 acres of high quality grassland. After this purchase, most of the money allotted in the Open Space Bond program has been utilized. There are concerns that there is a sharp drop in volume at the well at Agua Caliente. Mr. Baldwin explained about the new buffelgrass eradication program that the county wants to study, and 12 one-acre test plots have been chosen in hard to access areas of Tucson Mountain Park. However, there has been some public opposition to the aerial spraying proposal. Thus, two public information meetings will be held on August 11 and 12, 2009 to address the public concerns.

3. Operations (George Kuck) Mr. Kuck reported that the transfer of Sahuarita District Park has been completed. A 4th of July Celebration was held at the Rillito Park. The City of Tucson waived its noise ordinance so the fireworks could be held at 11:00 p.m. It was well attended. There are several other events to be held at the park. Tucson Soccer Academy has planned a Family Fun Day at Brandi Fenton Memorial Park on August 15, 2009. The new soccer field lights dedication has been postponed. The concession stands at Sportspark are to be upgraded and the RFP's are due today. \$50,000 is needed to complete the concession stand repairs. The Thomas Jay Park restroom building has been closed as the 30-year old septic system has failed. NRPR has placed porta-potties while the system is replaced or connected to the sewer system. However, the cost to hook it up to the sewer system is prohibitive.

4. Planning

There is no report from the Planning Division.

5. Recreation Division (Joe Barr) Mr. Barr reported that participation is up at all the swimming pools, thus the hours of operation did not have to be cut or pools closed. However, depending on the state's budget for the next fiscal year, this will have to be revisited. The swim championships were very successful as well. The Drexel Heights Fire Department presented a proclamation declaring August to be Drowning Prevention Impact Month at the Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting on August 4, 2009. The new fee schedules, approved by the BOS go into effect today; however, the fees for the pools are effective after Labor Day. Participation has been at record highs at the shooting ranges as well. The Joan Swetland Community Center has been transferred to the Sahuarita School District. The Lew Sorenson Community Center will be transferred to the Tanque Verde School District in September. Carolyn Lewis, neighborhood community center coordinator at Rillito Vista Community Center, is retiring and that facility will close at the same time. There have been some initial discussions with various social services groups to take over the center. The community in this area is gentrified; therefore, it was listed for closure.

F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following will be included in the September agenda:

1. Restructuring of the Administrative Services Division due to Consolidation of Services
2. List of potential future cuts
3. June and August meeting minutes
4. Update on the Ice-o-plex
5. Update on a meeting with Tom Moulton regarding the Southeast Regional Park as an emergency evacuation site
6. Letter to BOS and County Administration commending NRPR in meeting their budget
7. Letter to State Legislature regarding possible gambling activities at Rillito Race Track
8. Report from the County Attorney's office clarifying the 30-day notice and that subcommittee meetings are not open meetings and Arizona Revised Statutes applicable
9. Report from Mr. Davidson on the future Bond election
10. PRC meeting dates and revised schedule of the Bond Committee meeting dates (1st Friday of the month)

G. CALL TO THE PUBLIC: No discussion.

H. ADJOURNMENT: Motioned by Mr. Davidson and seconded by Mr. Ridings, the meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

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