

**Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting**  
**January 8, 2009**  
Scheitler Recreation Center

**Board Members in Attendance:** Heidi Loshbaugh, Kathy Sandoval, Keith Pryor, Noel Copeland, Ed Done, Mary Ewing, Scott Gilmore, Dave Robinson, Betsy Kester, Florence Navarro, Dorothy Norbie, Bernie Sharp, Dianne Truwe

**Board Members Absent :** Sharon Elfenbein (excused), Dick Ott (excused), Ellie Horn, Darrell Watson, Michael Fox, Alexis Holdman

**Parks & Recreation Department Attendees :**

Kevin Patterson - Manager  
Scott Robinson -Deputy Manager  
Pete Zoschg,- Forestry  
Chantal Unfug - Senior Advisor

**Meeting called to order** - Heidi Loshbaugh

**Approval of Minutes** – unanimous

**Public Hearing :**

Pete Zoschg, city arborist, gave a presentation concerning the proposed changes to the fee structure by the Forestry Division of the Parks & Rec Department. Board members were given an explanatory handout that listed the cost increases in detail. The board was asked to approve these new regulations as written and put forth a motion that requests the manager of Parks & Rec sign them into law. The fees are principally designed to cover the costs that the city incurs doing approximately 600 tree related reviews a year.

**Updates and Presentations:**

Kevin Patterson: Budget Update

The city is trying to take a proactive approach to tightening the budget another two to two and a half percentage points. The department has sought feedback from employees concerning cost cutting measures and they have received considerable response. They are looking at core services and ways to continue them and also lower costs. Not filling vacant positions and looking at partnership possibilities are being considered to get through these tough economic times. First and foremost the department wants to be equitable, while streamlining and efficiency are their main goals. A huge effort is being made to communicate with the present employees and work with them. They are looking for ways to do things differently with the reality that there are certain things that they simply cannot do.

## Dody Erickson/ Florence Navarro: Rec Center Task Force Update

This committee has been working for over six months and they came to the board to update the members on their work and to encourage them to attend the community meetings that are still ongoing. Handouts were distributed to assist in the presentation of what the Rec Center Task Force formulated this far. The goal is to create a strategic plan that will guide decision making for Denver Parks & Rec recreation centers for the next five to ten years. The initial round of community input meetings have been completed and draft recommendations are being put forth to continue the community dialogue related to the following four key areas – Value of System, Program/ Opportunities, Location/Transportation, and Fee Structure.

The next steps for the group involve a new series of community meetings seeking input on the draft recommendations. The board was encouraged to attend one or more of these meetings which are scheduled from Feb. 3 through Feb. 11.

A discussion followed with much participation from board members. Florence Navarro explained the Recreation Center Tier Proposal which offers more hours, more flexibility, and more amenities. Fees will be increased, but they will be tied to the tiered fee system of regional centers, local centers, neighborhood centers, and community centers.

### **Discussion Items**

#### 1. New Location for 2009 Meetings –

The board is in need of a facility that can provide a room that will accommodate us during the evening hours of 6 pm to 8pm. Having good highway access is a major consideration for a meeting location. The places listed as under consideration are Aztlan, Barnum, Cook, Eisenhower, and Scheitler.

There was much discussion from the board members over whether we like to “travel” from site to site or perhaps a more permanent location, particularly during the winter months, would make better sense. Most agreed that the winter months do pose the most problems and “easy access” will increase the attendance which is a primary goal. Kevin Patterson offered to check on the availability of the facility at the City Park golf course., which seems to be fairly centrally located.

#### 2. Subcommittee Updates and staff Contact

The Parks & Rec department staff is doing some intense work around the Game Plan and the advisory board should be looking to opportunities to co-ordinate our committee schedules around the schedule of the department staff. Chairman Heidi Loshbaugh wants to get into better alignment with the department to make the best use of our time and contributions. The Engagement Committee falls first in line with Darrell Watson as chairman.

Kathy Sandoval spoke about the meeting of the Equity Committee that took place during the month. They worked toward formulating some objectives by going through the Game Plan and flushing out “equity threads”. Noel Copeland asked if the committee could meet

with a staff person to find out if they are agreeing with the initiatives that the advisory committee was highlighting. He was looking for some mutual understanding between board and the staff and an initial meeting would help their committee understand the direction they should take. Kevin liked this idea and wants the interaction to make a better use of time for both groups. The Parks & Rec staff has a similar line up of teams and he would like to see the staff teams and advisory board teams get together after the upcoming staff retreat.

Bernie Sharp spoke as the chair of the Sound Economics committee. They have met on two occasions. Fred Weiss, director of budget, was invited to the second meeting and they were pleased with the dialogue they had with him and feel that they can use this communication link in the future. It was mentioned that in the past the advisory board had tried to have a meaningful role with the budget department.

The Sustainability Committee has not met, but Keith Pryor did agree to step into the chairmanship position.

There was no report from the Engagement committee.

### **User Reflections**

Mary Ewing spoke of disappointment with the latest criticism of the Cheesman Park Master Plan. Just as it is “hot of the press” some neighbors on the east side of the park are vocalizing their dislike of the 12<sup>th</sup> avenue street closing. She hopes that the department will implement the master plan as designed. The process took approximately two years to complete and all neighbors were given equal opportunity to speak up. Scott Robinson said that they are meeting with Dist 10 councilwoman Robb and they will outreach to the folks along the east 12<sup>th</sup> avenue Cheesman Park entry.

Dave Robinson has noted the potential for conflict at Ruby Hill Park between the sledders and the snow boarders . Novice snow boarders are going over into the area designated for sledding only.

Dianne Truwe encouraged board members to take the ski train to Winter Park for only \$49 on Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>.

Keith Pryor brought up the subject of rock climbing in our mountain parks. He feels that the trespassing over private lands to get to the rock climbing sites does not allow for the pursuit of this sport. There is no access via park land to any of the popular sites. The department is trying to get easements to allow lawful access.

Ed Done asked why it appears that Washington Park has their road surfaces done more regularly than City Park. Kevin Patterson reported that improvements are scheduled at the park very soon. The Zoo has gone through some major renovation and reconstruction and they wanted to hold the resurfacing of the roads until that work was done.

Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Feb. 12 at City Park Golf