

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

March 12, 2009
City Park Golf Course

Attendees:

Copeland, Noel	Kester, Betsy	Robinson, Dave
Elfenbein, Sharon	Loshbaugh, Heidi	Sharp, Bernie
Ewing, Mary	Navarro, Florence	Watson, Darrell
Gilmore, Scott	Ott, Richard	
Horn, Ellie Gray	Pryor, Keith	

Absent:

Done, Ed (excused)
Fox, Michael (excused)
Holdman, Alexis (excused)
Nyugen, Phuonglan (excused)
Norbie, Dorothy (excused)
Truwe, Dianne (excused)

Staff:

Kevin Patterson – Manager
Chantal Unfug
Dody Erickson

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Approval of minutes from Feb.12, 2009 meeting.

UPDATES AND PRESENTATIONS

Rec Center Task Force - Dody Erickson

Dody reported that final recommendations compiled from the numerous public meetings that were held throughout the city have been sent to all Task Force members for their review. Within a week all comments and suggested changes must be returned to the department. Further review will be sought from the Mayor, the Supervisor of Parks, the Parks & Rec Advisory Board (April 9th meeting), and Public Amenities (April 22nd). Comments from all will be considered and a final plan will be drafted for the public. The goal is to have the changes better designed and not to be vague. Dody would appreciate having some Advisory Board members come to the city council Amenities Committee meeting to show our support for this project.

Public notice has been posted for the required public hearing addressing the changes to the recreation facility permit policy. This hearing will be conducted at our next advisory board meeting on April 9th at the City Park Golf Course.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Subcommittee Updates

Darrell Watson, chairman of the Equity Committee, suggested that the Board consider allowing committee meetings at least on a quarterly basis to be held 30 minutes prior to the regularly scheduled meetings. He thinks this would solve the problem of how to get everyone to agree on a meeting date and time. This suggestion received support from several board members. Heidi will discuss the possibility with Kevin Patterson and “try to balance it out”. The discussion will be continued at the April meeting.

Noel Copeland has agreed to take Kathy Sandoval’s chairmanship position on the Equity Committee for the interim.

Kevin Patterson announced the staff members that will be working with our committees.:

Jude O’Conner – Sustainability
Fred Weiss – Sound Economics
Equity – Scott Robinson
Engagement – Chantal Unfug

This is an attempt to “marry up” the staff committees and the Advisory Board committees. Lists of committees and staff consultants will be sent out to all soon.

Other announcements by the Manager included the issue of future furloughs at the department, the rumor that spring break camps would not be open this year, and the adjustments that are being made to recreation schedules due to the mandatory once a month Friday closings. The ten percent loss in city sales tax is forcing policy changes in the city that compensate for the loss of revenue. For every percentage point of sales tax loss it costs the city a million dollars in revenue. The money is just not there and this is happening across the country.

The Civic Center guidelines were finally passed by the Landmark Commission. A link on the Parks & Rec web site will allow us to follow the projects in Civic Center Park as they move forward.

The department is embarking on a Dog Park Master Plan. The initial thrust was a study of the five existing dog parks and looking at what has gone well with them and what is not working. Now they want department planners to come up with a plan. Enforcement of dogs off leash has increased with a series of “stings” at parks where the problem is most serious. They are looking at increasing the fines for second offenders to \$150 and improving the low 12% rate of dogs that are licensed in Denver. The internal task force has met and an external committee will kick off

in May. A survey has been posted on the web site which gives the public an opportunity to speak out.

The new bicycle rental program has recently been proposed to the department. They must first make sure that there is not a conflict with our existing bike rentals in certain parks. The department has not said yes or no to this idea.

The fountains will be operational unless drought and increasing water rates (30%) make it unfeasible to do so. It is inevitable that the department and the city must find ways to reduce water usage as much as possible. Parks & Recreation is the biggest water user in the city. Gray water is being used in several locations and a water study is underway.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM