

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

July 14, 2011

Wellington E. Webb Building

Attendees:

Jay April
Paul Burton
Noel Copeland
Mary Ewing
Michelle Fenton
Scott Gilmore
Conor Holis
Florence Navarro
Keith Pryor
Paul Ryan
Bernie Sharp
Darrell Watson

Absent:

James T. Allen (JT)
Ellie Gray Horn - excused
Richard Ott – excused
Ryan Ross
Derek Sandos - excused

Denver Parks and Recreation Staff in attendance:

Chantal Unfug
Dody Erickson
Fred Weiss
Arthur Gilkison

Introduction and Welcome – Darrell Watson

Darrell Watson called the DPRAB meeting to order.

The May minutes of the DPRAB were approved.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Managers Report – Chantal Unfug, Manger DPR

Denver Parks and Recreation has hired Kathy Malone as the Director of Marketing. She has worked in various Divisions within the city handling communication issues. Legislative duties are also included.

Renaming of NE Denver Community Park

The organization leading the effort to rename the NE Denver Community Park conducted additional community outreach to educate the public about why they want to rename the park for Rev. Jesse Boyd. They contacted 9 community organizations and 6 are supportive of the name change, 2 are neutral to the name change, and 1 is opposed to the name change. The

Mayor's office (Mayor Bill Vidal) supports the proposal. The PDRAB in a good faith effort voted in favor of the name change. This was done with the most current information at the time of the vote. The proposal will now proceed to City Council. The DPRAB would have not have called a vote if they had known the Councilwoman Carla Madison had rescinded her support until more community input was obtained.

Chantal Unfug expressed how great it has been to work for the Department of Parks and Recreation. Dody Erickson has accepted the position of Interim Manager of Denver Parks and Recreation. Darrell Watson on behalf of the DPRAB offered Chantal congratulations on her new position on the Western Slope and wished her the best of luck.

DPR Budget Update – Fred Weiss

Denver Parks and Recreation is estimating the will come under budget by \$900,000 to 1 million dollars, which translates to between 2% to 3% percent under the projected budget. Budget office forecast for the upcoming year but fixed cost continues to increase.

Mary Ewing what positions have been abolished. Where the positions eliminated spread out across the board which would include: recreation, parks, and administration? As DPR eliminates vacant positions, how do we maintain equity among departments and across city? Once 2012 reductions to budget are made, how do we minimize impacts to core services provided by DPR.

Dody discussed how DPR uses a staffing model based on hours programming at regional, local and neighborhood recreation centers. Look at the needs of each individual center and determine staffing. Recreation centers are also sharing supervisors. The staffing model is based on many different factors.

Seasonal help has not decreased. The department has reorganized to target seasonal work to make sure the department is efficient as possible.

At this time the new Central Park Recreation Center is operating at a profit. A few centers across the city due quite well creating revenue. Those additional centers are: Washington Park and Montclair. The Golf Division of DPR is doing OK. 38% percent of their 2011 budget is spent and they are at 36% of their expected revenue generation for 2011. Golf falls under the purview of DPR.

The proposed Recreation Fee Structure passed City Council this week on Monday. Youth fees were lowered but senior, young adult, and adult fees were all increased \$9. An amendment was added to the proposal to do an annual CPI (consumer price index) adjustment. Manager can adjust fees according to CPI forecast. Concerns were expressed about the CPI. Solid Waste has forecasted CPI increases through 2014. DPR has no CPI forecast; staff will look at it annually in April then discuss possible increases with DPRAB and City Council.

The definition of families for family memberships is members of the same household with the same address. Current memberships will expire after a 12 month calendar expires. Individuals with current memberships will have to pay for fitness classes.

Core Services Survey

Chantal reviewed the Core Services Survey that was given to DPR staff (administration, parks, recreation) and DPRAB members. The total number of respondents was 162. The results vary depending on if answers were coming from recreation staff versus park staff. The survey does highlight what staff feels what core services are for the public depending on what their job is. The survey results are available through DPR administration.

DPR Ranger Program

Susan Fry, Natural Areas Manager and Jacob Wells, Head Ranger introduced the DPR Ranger program to the DPRAB. The original park Rangers were part of the Park police in the 1980's. Part of DPR Game Plan is to have people watching the parks. In 2006, DPR hired 10 seasonal rangers. At this time there are 3 full time rangers (1 mountain, 1 west, 1 east) and 10 seasonal rangers. The Natural Areas program would like to have four full time rangers that match the 4 maintenance districts. These four full time rangers would be complemented by seasonal rangers. The DPR Rangers can issue administrative citations and fines. The Park Rangers are unarmed but are connected to Denver Police Department dispatch. Rangers do not work at night.

Rangers have had created a positive presence and contact in the parks (57,000 contacts) where they talk to park users. This included 7,500 violations contacts, parking and dog off leash are the only things Rangers can issue citations for. Rangers are also able to track current trends that are happening within in the parks and report back to appropriate staff. The Rangers serve in lots of capacities from resource protection to dealing with homelessness issues. At this time there is a volunteer courtesy patrol (bicycle only) that consists of 40 volunteers. There are two trainings a year and the volunteer courtesy patrol focuses on outreach in high impact areas: Platte River, Cherry Creek, Washington Park, and City Park.

In the future the Ranger Program will focus on the possibility of issuing more administrative citations, participating in additional trainings. DPR will be updating the rules and regulations which have seen no changes since 1993.

Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting:

When: September 8, 2011

Time: 5:30pm – 7:30pm

**Where: Wellington Webb Building
201 West Colfax
Conference Room 4G2**

Enter: Security Entrance on Court Street and 15th Street