



Denver City Council

Public Amenities Committee
Meeting Summary

Date: March 21, 2006 Time: 11:00 a.m. Location: Council Conference Room

Members Present: Lehmann, Johnson, Linkhart, Robb
Members Absent: None
Other Council Present: None

1. **Poetry in Denver**

Poet Laureate

Tina Poe-Obermeier, Interim Director, Office of Cultural Affairs, noted that April is National Poetry Month, and Denver is celebrating the month in two ways. First, she introduced Chris Ransick, Denver's second Poet Laureate, appointed recently by Mayor Hickenlooper. Mr. Ransick said it is exciting to hear people talking about poetry and literature. As an educator and a father, he is looking forward to working in the schools.

Julia Rodriguez, coordinator of the program, said that they are planning two years of events. Scheduled events include writing workshops at Skinner Middle School and the Denver School for the Arts, the 5 Points Jazz Festival and the Cherry Creek Arts Festival.

Councilwoman Lehmann asked Mr. Ransick to read one of his poems, and he selected *Poem for Baseball Season* in honor of the arrival of spring (attached). Councilwoman Lehmann suggested that Council members could use his poems for their newsletters and websites.

"Poetry in Motion" Enhancing the Transit Experience

Ms. Poe-Obermeier announced the second celebration of National Poetry Month is that Denver has joined the "Poetry in Motion" program in conjunction with RTD. Starting in April, illustrated poems will be placed in buses and rail cars where advertisements are usually displayed. Local poets and artists contributed their works to the program. "Poetry in Motion" began in London and was replicated in New York City in the early 1990s. Denver joins 14 other cities in the "Poetry in Motion" movement.

Open Doors Denver

On April 22 and 23, seventy-eight buildings and sites will be open to the public during the second annual Open Doors Denver. Several tours guided by architects and other experts are scheduled, and new for this year are walking tours of Denver's Public Art installations. Information is available at www.DenverGov.doorsopendenver.

2. Parks Ranger Program

Susan Fry, Director of Parks Ranger Program, said that the program is designed to positively enforce the rules and regulations in the parks, provide information to users, and provide additional “eyes on the parks”. Permitting activities, athletic fields, concession sites, outdoor pools, trails, and mountain parks will be covered.

The 2006 budget includes \$120,000 for the program. Hiring is in progress, and possible candidates are people with flexible schedules, such as students, teachers, and seniors. The goal is to hire ten rangers by April 1 for the season, May 1 - October 31. Rangers will patrol on foot, on bikes (10 from the Police impound), and in vehicles (borrowed from other agencies). Shifts will cover 7 days per week and weekends and evenings. They will work closely with the Police Department, Animal Control, and Excise & License (permitted concessions and illegal “huckstering”). Rangers, wearing identifiable uniforms, will be able to issue citations.

Training, critical to the success of the program, consists of 60 – 80 hours including first aid, parks rules & regulation, unarmed self defense, conflict resolution, authority limitations, radio and patrol procedures. The Police Academy trainers will be used for parts of the program.

Ms. Fry said starting May 1, the contacts will be 720-913-0675 or Park.Ranger@ci.denver.co.us.

3. Golf Bonds Update

Eric Hiraga, Senior Financial Management Analyst in the Treasury Division, said that the bond sale ordinance, passed by Council in December, allowed a 90-day window for the sale. On March 7, the City went to market for a successful sale of the full \$7.4 million. The City benefited by delay of the sale from earlier this year, as the interest rate of 4.79% was lower than expected. The proceeds are in the Golf Enterprise Fund, secured by revenues from the golf program.

Fred Weiss, Director of Administration & Finance for Parks & Recreation, said that the 5 major projects identified for the funds are upgrade of the Aqua Golf course; irrigation system replacement at Kennedy, Overland, and Willis Case; and a new club house at Willis Case.

4. 2007 Capital Improvement Program Process

Tom Hawkey, Parks & Recreation, reviewed the Department’s internal process regarding the Capital Improvement Program (attached). The team, which includes Budget & Management, reviews projects and priorities in the Six Year Plan and identifies new projects. The team then meets with the managers, planners, parks superintendents and recreation center directors. This process results in the proposal to discuss with the Councilmembers. The annual capital budget is approximately \$8.5 - \$9 million. Of that, about \$1 million goes to lease payments and other fixed obligations.

Meetings for Councilmembers to discuss the list and their wants and needs will be held in April.

Councilwoman Lehmann suggested that the members invite their Parks & Recreation Advisory Board appointees to the meeting. Councilman Linkhart asked if the Board is involved in the process. Mr. Hawkey said he presents the final proposal to the Board.

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5. Policies on Gifts, Naming, Corporate Sponsorships, and Co-Sponsorships

Committee Action

The Committee requested clarification on:

- on the role of Council in approving the various types of gifts, naming, and sponsorships;
- the policies regarding site sponsorships; and
- the policy regarding departmental requests for sponsorships, especially regarding when a request is issued and when a single company is approached.

Summary of Discussion

Full text of the proposed policies is available at DenverGov.Parks_Recreation/givingpolicies.pdf.

Tiffany Moehring, Director of Marketing & Communication, introduced Jep Seman, Chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. He told the Committee that the Board held a public meeting on March 9 to discuss the proposed policies. Between 30 and 40 people attended; 10 or 15 addressed the Board, and there were four themes:

- Do not commercialize our parks and public spaces;
- Do not clutter public spaces with acknowledgments;
- Strive for equity across the system so that all parks in all areas of the city benefit; and
- Do not use this revenue source as a substitute for dedicated funding sources.

Susan Baird, Project Manager, said the proposal consists of two updated and two new policies:

- Gifts – updated
- Naming – 1 updated and 1 new
- Sponsorships - new

The process of developing the policies has been:

- Task Force worked Nov. 2004-Nov. 2005
- Task Force included Board members, Council aides, Parks & Recreation staff
- Board held public meeting March 9
- Council Committee meeting March 21
- Board will review again on April 13
- Final review and approval by Manager
- Final approval and publication before end of 2006

Denver's parks and recreation system is the result of decades of giving by individuals, foundations, organizations and corporations. Many gifts have been acknowledged with structures, such as the McLellan Gateway at City Park. The Green Valley Ranch Recreation Center is the result of a partnership among the City, Oakwood Homes and DPS.

The City is faced with aging infrastructure and increased acreage at a time of decreasing budgets. Deferred capital needs total \$90 million. Annual budgets cannot fund these needs. Councilwoman Robb said that most capital needs are a taxpayer responsibility.

The policies are an attempt to reach a balance between protecting our public spaces and meeting needs. The existing policies needed to be strengthened and made consistent. Patrick Wheeler,

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Assistant City Attorney, said that a set of conditions for gifts and naming were added for consistency and to create a logical nexus.

Design standards for acknowledgments were needed for consistency. A small inscription plate designed to be mounted on a bench, fountain, play equipment or anything else will now be used.

Ms. Baird stressed that there is no intention of renaming anything. Naming parks, buildings or portions thereof is of special concern. The existing public petition process when the community wants to suggest a permanent name will remain in place. But there were no policies in place for naming in conjunction with a gift. The proposed policy includes a 45-day notice to the registered neighborhood organizations, review by the Advisory Board, and a public hearing at Council.

Corporate sponsorship is a new area, and a new policy is needed. The public seems to have less sensitivity to this kind of temporary naming and acknowledgement than for green spaces. Sponsorship could include financing or in-kind support for very specific events, programs, or sites. There must be absolute clarity between the financial support and the event, and no direct advertising is permitted. Site specific, appropriate banners or signs might be appropriate.

Councilwoman Robb said that the policies regarding site sponsorships are not clear. She added that the policy regarding departmental requests for sponsorships needed more discussion, especially regarding when a request is issued and when a single company is approached.

Councilwoman Johnson asked if the Board was comfortable with the proposed policies. Mr. Seman said the Board's initial concerns were the same as those of the department, and he thought the Board was comfortable that those concerns had been addressed.

Councilwoman Robb noted that this is a department policy and there is no Council approval of the actions, just as acceptance of dedicated park benches do not go through Council now. Mr. Wheeler said that real property gifts must be accepted by Council.

The Committee members said it was somewhat confusing to tell what Council would approve. Councilwoman Lehmann suggested a matrix showing which gifts/naming go to the Board and which go to Council.

Councilwoman Lehmann said she discussed with the Mayor her concern about the number of various entities developing this type of policy, such as Theatres & Arenas, Parks, Denver Public Library, DPS and probably others. She wants to avoid having agencies competing against each other for sponsorships or having policies that vary and are therefore confusing. The Mayor did create a group to work together on this, and it met for the first time on March 20.

6. Other information

Councilwoman Robb announced that the Parks & Recreation, Cheesman Park Advocacy Group and she will host an open house on April 13 at 1290 Williams to initiate planning efforts for the park. Prior to that, the restored historic Cheesman Park Rustic Shelter will be dedicated at 5:30 at the shelter.

Gretchen Williams
03-25-06