



**Public Amenities Committee
Summary**

Wed. Dec. 10, 2008

10:30 a.m.

Conference Room 391

Committee Members Present: Lehmann, Chair; Madison, Vice-Chair; Johnson
Other Council Present: Robb

Agenda: Denver County Cultural Council appointment
Manager's discussion
Wellshire Golf Concession Contract extension
Denver Botanic Gardens fee increases

1. Denver County Cultural Council

Committee Action

The Committee approved the appointment of Erin Bassity to represent Denver Office of Cultural Affairs on the Denver County Cultural Council (DCCC).

Summary of Discussion

Jane Potts, DCCC Program Manager, introduced Ms. Bassity, selected by the Denver Commission for the Arts to represent it on the DCCC. Ms. Bassity is Marketing Director for the Western States Arts Federation. Her educational background includes a Masters in Communications. She said Ms. Potts had given her a thorough briefing on the DCCC grant review process, and she is ready to take on the responsibility.

Ms. Potts said several SCFD Tier III individuals were named among Denver's 150 Unsung Heroes, recognizing them for their important work they do.

Individual	Tier III Organization
Wil Adams	Rocky Mountain Arts Association, Executive Director
Arzella Dirksen	Denver Urban Gardens, Board Member
Ray Espinoza	Chicano Humanities & Arts Council, Founding Member
Grace Gillette	Denver March Pow Wow, Executive Director
Arthur Jones	The Spirituals Project, Founding Director
Leona Lazar	The Art Students League, Executive Director
Stevon Lucero	Chicano Humanities & Arts Council, Founding Member
Tom & Cleo Parker Robinson	Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, Business Manager & Founder
Lucy Roucis	PHAMALY, Troupe member
Chip Walton	Curious Theatre Company, Producing Artistic Director
Sid Wilson	Black American West Museum, Founding Member

2. Manager's Discussion

Kevin Patterson, newly-appointed Manager of Parks & Recreation, said his goals for the department include:

- working more closely with the community;
- working more closely with Council members;
- improving communications; and
- ensuring that the Game Plan and other plans are executed, partly by better matching the planning goals with the budget process.

Mr. Patterson referred to the Committee's discussion on Nov. 12 of the Denver Mountain Parks Master Plan, during which adoption of the plan was discussed. The department prepared a Planning Document Hierarchy of Adoption in 2007. Mr. Patterson said the hierarchy indicates that system-wide master plans, such as the Mt. Parks plan, would not be adopted by City Council. The Game Plan, as a department plan, was adopted by Council as a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan. It sets broad policy goals, as does Blueprint Denver, which also was adopted by Council as a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan. In his interpretation, master plans for such components of the system as restrooms, playgrounds, and mountain parks would not be subject to adoption by Council.

3. Wellshire Golf Concession Contract

Committee Action

The Committee approved filing a bill to amend the concession contract regarding the Wellshire Golf Course and Clubhouse.

Summary of Discussion

Mr. Patterson said one of his goals is to provide consistency for the department's many concession agreements. In return for long-term agreements, the concessionaire needs to make investments in the properties. The Wellshire contract needs to be modified, and he hopes the new contract structure will become a model for all future concession contracts.

LaCharles Keese, Deputy Financial Officer, said the current agreement at Wellshire is old, and it needs to be realigned. The department will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for management of Wellshire this week, with proposals due by Dec. 31. The RFP review and contract negotiations process will take some time, so the current contract needs to be extended. The proposed amendment extends the contract for 5 years with the caveat that the City may terminate the agreement with 30-day notice if the current contractor is not selected. The proposed amendment also:

- extends time for the concessionaire to make \$1.25 M in improvements as required in the current concession license;
- reimburses the concessionaire for \$20,000 in emergency repair work;
- modifies the compensation schedule; and
- describes the RFP process.

The Committee questioned the Dec. 31 response date, expressing concern that does not allow enough time for a wide variety of proposals. Mr. Patterson, Mr. Keese, and R.D. Sewald of the Mayor's Office, indicated that it is important to keep to the original schedule due to particular circumstances of the current concessionaire group.

3. Denver Botanic Gardens Fee Increases

Committee Action

The Committee approved filing a bill increasing the entrance and facility rental fees at the Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG), effective Jan. 1, 2009; requested that the ordinance be distributed as soon as possible; and requested information on the proposed membership fees (which are set by the Board, not by Council in ordinance).

Summary of Discussion

Florence Welch, Chief Financial Officer, DBG, discussed the proposed fee increases for admission at York Street and Chatfield and facility rental fees. The fees have not been increased in six years, and additional revenue is required to cover the costs of the Certificates of Participation issued for the capital improvement project – new parking garage and visitors' center.

The proposed admission fee changes are indicated below by strike-out and underline. Ms. Welch explained that DBG has been adding an "exhibit fee" to the price of admission when special exhibits are installed, which was most of the time. The increase appears to be larger than it actually is because those special fees will no longer be added.*

Regular fees, York Street; single admission:	May-Sept.	Oct.-April
1. Adults (ages 16 to 64 years).....	\$8.50* <u>12.50</u>	\$7.50 <u>11.50</u>
2. Students (with ID).....	5.00* <u>9.00</u>	4.00 <u>8.00</u>
3. Youths, 4 years to 15 years (accompanied by a paid adult)	5.00* <u>9.00</u>	4.00 <u>8.00</u>
4. Children under 4 years (accompanied by a paid adult).....	No charge	No charge
5. Senior citizens (65 years and older)	5.50* <u>9.50</u>	4.50 <u>8.50</u>
6. Botanic Gardens members.....	No charge	No charge

*plus exhibit fee of around \$3-4

	Denver Botanic Gardens at Chatfield fees; by vehicle:
1.	\$5.00 per car (1--5 people) <u>\$10.00 per car</u>
2.	\$8.00 per bus (6--15 people) <u>\$2.00 per person per bus</u>
3.	\$15.00 per bus (16--30 people)
4.	\$30.00 per bus (31+ people)

Facility rental fees are also proposed to be increased. As with admission fees, DBG considered the facility rental fees at comparable facilities. Even with the proposed increases, DBG is competitively priced. A comparison of rental fees for comparable facilities is below:

Facility	Time (Saturday evening)	Charge
Green Farm Barn at DBG-Chatfield	4:00 – 11:00 pm	\$1050
The Barn at Evergreen	4:00 – 11:00 pm	\$1490
Dover House at Lionsgate	4:00 – 11:00 pm	\$3200 - \$4500
Red Barn at Marshdale (Evergreen)	5:00 – 11:00 pm	\$2100
McArthur Manor at Lone Tree	10:00 am – 12:00 midnight	\$5000 (DGB for that time would be \$2450)

Members expressed concern that increased admission fees would reduce attendance. They asked if the membership fees were being increased as well, and if DBG aggressively markets memberships. Ms. Welch responded that the memberships were being increased slightly, but she did not have exact figures. She subsequently provided the information below. She said the new visitors' center will provide more opportunity to market memberships.

Membership Type	2008 Rates	2009 Rates
Individual	\$40	\$45
Individual Plus One	\$50	\$55
Family/General	\$70	\$80
Family Plus/General Plus	\$160	\$170
Supporter	\$325	\$350
Patron	\$625	\$650
Four Season's	\$1,000	\$1,250
Director's Circle	\$2,500	\$2,500
Garden Leader	\$5,000	\$5,000

Councilwoman Robb noted that if the increased admission fees do not cover the COPS, the DBG will have to charge for parking. Parking charges are undesirable to the surrounding neighborhood, which anticipates visitors won't pay to park in the garage and will park in the neighborhood.

Margaret Danuser, Finance Dept., told the Committee that the parking garage is the lynchpin of the master plan for all of the capital improvements. A conservative annual growth estimate of 2% was used in calculating the revenue for the COPS payment. Actual revenue growth over the last 20 years has been 4% to 6%.

Ms. Welch said that attendance has been increasing. Trail of Lights at Chatfield has attracted more visitors than Blossom of Lights has in past years. If most visitors to Trail of Lights are from the southern part of the metro area, it is possible both venues will be lit in future years. DBG is trying to diversify its revenue streams.