

Minutes

Denver Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

February 14, 2018

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm by President Leslie Twarogowski.

Board Members Present: Noel Copeland, Frank Rowe, David Richter, Shane Wright, Wende Roche, Leslie Twarogowski, Jack Paterson, Brande Micheau, Thad Jacobs, Florence Navarro, Marla Rodriguez, Fran Coleman, Felipe Vieyra, Jay Rust, Laura Cary

Absent: Ben Wilking, Marcus Pachner

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the January 18 meeting were distributed. A correction to attendees was made to include Thad. Marla made a motion to accept the draft and it was seconded by Frank; the motion passed with Wende abstaining.

Committee Reports

Mtn Parks/Shane: Committee met with the Mtn Parks team up at CCC and viewed the progress made for the HistoriCorp occupancy this summer. They had dialogue and shared ideas/visions to enhance activity throughout the mountain park system.

GAMEPLAN/Florence: Flo reported the ongoing task of gathering public input and other data and incorporating it into the plan. One on one meetings are taking place with city council members. Happy reiterated the ongoing effort to align policy between all of the DenveRight components. David asked what physical form the effort is in; Happy indicated a comprehensive draft document does not yet exist. Laura Morales added that the online survey will conclude end of March.

39th Ave. Canal Project/Leslie: The design committee met has been meeting with the contractors. She reported a 1 minute video worth viewing (denvergov.org) which provides a good virtual representation of park and the connectivity throughout the Platte to Park Hill project. Happy added that the design working group and the city's handling of the timing of construction would ensure proper environmental oversight.

General Public Comment

Ean Tafoya reported dialogue with the bike community and the mayors of Golden and Lakewood about integrating bike trails. Another effort is aimed at expanding Harvard Gulch Trails. Happy referred to the policy background of zoning parcels adjacent to parks.

Executive Directors Report (Happy Haynes, with John Martinez)

Happy reported the progress being made for the City Park Master Plan update. There's an open survey process which fosters development of draft principles. The Fairfax Pocket Park development process which DPR is spearheading has included several recent community meetings. She also reports the successful first month of the Carla Madison Rec Center and the community's utilization of it. The public input process is about to begin for future improvements to the St. Charles Pl. Park, with a meeting scheduled on the 27th. John reported on the contract process of the three 'transition' rec centers governed by outside groups; Globeville is RFP process is complete, Johnson should be concluded in 2-3 months, and then College View's RFP should be addressed in the fall. Shane commented he is not in favor of outside organizations managing DPR facilities. A naming proposal for downtown children's playground is being drafted.

Presentations

Denver Zoo Fee Increase Proposal, Denny O'Malley, Director

Denny, with input from Andrew Rowan, outlined the proposal to increase public entrance fees effective sometime this summer. No changes have been made since 2014, yet as Happy observed, much has changed throughout the country concerning a new perspective towards animal welfare as well as conservation. This theme was repeated throughout the presentation. A variety of comments and questions were posed by the board. Thad and Fran inquired about membership fees. Jay asked about nutritional and water quality impacts on the budget; a full time animal nutritionist has been hired and this is somewhat rare in the U.S. Marla questioned whether fee increases will affect attendance (yes, probably around 5% the first year). Frank asked about possibility of tiered fees for Denver residents v. non-residents (difficult to implement). Wende asked about rental fees being discounted for corporate v. non-profit orgs (yes, there is some sensitivity to this in current policy). Florence noted the percentage increases are skewed in-season v. winter (some animals & programs often are unavailable in colder weather). Brande also commented on the rate structure. Shane questioned why it's difficult to compare Denver rates with other cities; Happy provided perspective of finding truly comparable Zoo facilities in addition to selecting suitably appropriate regional cultural marketplaces. Jay commented that future increases must be on an as-need basis, not tied to CPI (or traditional) metrics.

The board voted unanimously to approve the recommendation of the Denver Zoo Fee Increase Proposal as presented to PRAB.

PRAB Retreat (Sat., Feb. 24, 9am-1pm, Carla Madison Rec Center)

Laura would like to lead a mapping exercise in order to encourage community engagement by the board.

Leslie suggests we talk about the budget/finance and our philosophy

Thad would like to revisit the goals from two years ago

Florence recommends we discuss the role of a board member

Jay would like to discuss the involvement and input into the game plan

Fran expresses her disappointment over the Overland Golf Course concert. Can we discuss how community input is gathered? By opening it up to the entire city electronically, the neighborhood's concerns can get diluted.

Shane asks about what is our procedure to bring up topics at our meetings.

Other Board Announcements

Noel – INC, Greater Park Hill Community are sponsoring a community forum to discuss Parkhill Golf Course (155 acres of open space) on March 10 at 1PM at the Park Hill Congregational Church.

Shane – would like to bring the issue of the 16th Street Mall trees to the board. Happy says the appropriate department is Forestry. Jay commented that there are ways to relocate trees.

Leslie commented that spraying her ash tree cost about \$180

Thad shared with the board that Scott Gilmore's father passed recently. We send our condolences.

Adjournment

Leslie adjourned the meeting.