

## Draft Minutes

### Denver Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

July 11, 2018

#### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:42pm by Vice President Marla Rodriguez.

Board Members Present: Noel Copeland, Wende Reoche, Laura Cary, Leslie Twarogowski, Brande Micheau, Jay Rust, Jack Paterson, Shane Wright, Marla Rodriguez, Ben Wilking

Absent: David Richter, Fran Coleman, Frank Rowe, Marcus Pachner, Tashmesia Mitchell, Felipe Vieyra, Florence Navarro

#### Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the June 2018 meeting were distributed. Happy requested to change under Committee reports the 39<sup>th</sup> St. Channel Project (from “canal”). Laura motioned to accept the minutes as amended and was seconded by Jack; the motion passed with Ben abstaining.

#### Committee Reports

None.

#### General Public Comment

Katie Fisher/INC: A community member reported there are no posted park hours at DeBoer Park. People are using the park well into the night; there hasn't been any vandalism, it's just been excessive noise. Also there was an emergency training exercise (drill) at the park recently which involved running electricity generators all night. The RNO wasn't contacted (Happy clarified that all surrounding neighbors were notified) and Happy stated that DPR will consider moving future drills to a larger park (with adjacent neighbors farther away) – but in the event of a real emergency setup is not so easy to arrange. Marla asked how often these drills are conducted; Happy was not certain but stated they are rare.

#### Executive Directors Report (Happy Haynes, with Fred Weiss, Gordon Robertson, Laura Morales)

Happy reiterated that DPR will re-check park signage (at DeBoer Park) and follow-up. Paco Sanchez phase 1 was celebrated, lots of kids were playing. Update on Fairfax Park: A public notice was sent in June and July to Park Hill residents that the land transaction will be pushed back a couple months due to legal issues. Since this is a land transaction the legal staff is sorting through which council committee will be appropriate to address. Regarding the Johnson Recreation Center, a notice was sent to the community letting the community know that DPR will take over the management and operations rather than having a full partner (via RFP process) with a little programming too. The Head Start program will remain there. Previously a note to the community expressed there would not be any programming gaps during the transition, but there will be a little gap due to facility upgrades; the opening will be early

September. DPR is still interested in lining up community partners for providing additional programming. DPR is hosting the Outdoor Industry Retailers show later this month. This will include a demonstration at Commons Park at which there will be testing outdoor equipment. Jay asked why Commons Park was selected. Happy indicated that activities included water demonstrations but that the entire park will not be affected (trails to remain open). Happy then went on to mention the dedication of art installation at Shoemaker Plaza last week. It's an amazing ceramic art piece. Due to the extraordinary heat and drought conditions, DPR has implemented a fire ban in all parks, mountain parks, and facilities much like other communities throughout the state.

### Alcohol Policy Public Hearing

Since last presentation to PRAB there have been a couple of clarifications (not changes) to some questions. Fred described the addition of Aqua Golf and the Harvard Gulch Clubhouse to the list. Second, language now adds either the possession or consumption of full strength alcohol to the general public consumption portion of the policy; and further includes language requiring compliance with State law, i.e., 21 years of age, not consuming alcohol in a public right of way.

Katie Fischer/INC: One major concern was addressed by no kegs being addressed. Still concerned about how smaller parks will be affected and how compliance will be assured. Jay asked if the community considered the impact of boxed wine (Katie: no).

Kathleen Rust: Pres of Cheesman Park Advocacy Group

She shared concerns of many neighbors to the park regarding this policy. "These are public parks, not bars." With drug and alcohol abuse at all time high, is this needed when we have many successful events throughout the park without alcohol. They are further concerned about additional package liquor trash. What increased liability will the city incur? Ask neighbors what they experience during City Park jazz events. Why not ban all alcohol from the parks, rather than all of the effort needed to monitor people consuming alcohol. Rather than have a sunset of the proposed policy changes, why not implement a one year policy of no alcohol, and study the issue again after that?

Mona Ahmed: citizen

Is consistency across all parks really necessary? Why not reflect the diversity of our neighborhoods with diversity of policy?

Jay asked Fred to re-state changes in state law. Until Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, only 3.2 beer is legal in individual consumption in public places. Thereafter, municipalities will make their own rules; however it will remain illegal to consume alcohol in public right of ways (streets and sidewalks).

Laura expressed support in the past several speakers especially that different parks need different rules.

At this point Marla closed the public comments.

Wende stated that she liked the consistency of the proposed policy and objected to different policy for some neighborhoods. Some parks would see a greater burden and some less opportunity.

Jay asked questions concerning government immunity (or gross negligence liability) due to alcohol policy change and suggested no vote until these questions are answered. Fred replied that city attorneys have been involved with every step and that these changes are to an existing policy. There is no exposure to additional liability; further that permit holders assume liability for their events. The city attorneys office drafted the policy changes. Liquor liability insurance is required for any permitted events.

Marla asked if 3.2 beer is going away. Fred replied that grocery stores will be allowed to sell full strength beverages if licensed.

Jay shared comments from a District 6 Police Dept committee meeting at which the consensus was DPD is stretched too thin to provide the needed responses. They felt that for consistency, no alcohol should be allowed in any park.

Leslie opened the PRAB vote with an opportunity for each board member to express their views.

Shane stated that full strength alcohol is allowed at permitted events; no one drinks 3.2 beer. He felt the changes are mild and will not result in a big effect. He supported the policy update.

Laura stated that if the policy is currently not a problem, leave it alone. She cited NYC does not allow alcohol.

Happy clarified that permitted events (special events) require non-profit status. Such events may hire a licensed business for selling alcohol but they are not considered commercial enterprises in the parks. Fred stated that 90% are non-profit.

Wende stated that special events permits with alcohol require police security presence.

Jack asked if in Section 2 whether beer, malt liquor or hard cider are included. How are they classified? (Note: after the meeting, it was researched and the reply was that hard cider is categorized the same as wine and champagne). Fred and Happy answered DPR would follow EXL. Jack asked in Section 9 how softball and volleyball leagues would be affected. Fred replied the permit holder cannot serve or sell liquor; only as a participant is one allowed to bring own alcohol.

Noel said with the restrictions on kegs... This will have a lesser impact than some of you think. Further that we have a chance to alter policy at sunset in a year. He felt that small venues could have more impact on neighborhoods. Perhaps in the permitting process corrections could be invoked.

Wende supported the policy update and stated she was glad there would be a review at one year.

Shane supported the policy update.

Brande said she supported and was not in favor of different policies in different parks. She did ask what stress it will add to park ranger's work.

Marla supports the policy change; it could have unintended consequences but felt there would still be opportunities to address them.

Leslie supports the policy change and looks forward to re-visiting it in a year.

Laura voted against the policy change.

Jack supports the policy change though he added that without a final policy is it appropriate to vote? Happy commented that only minor revisions are being made at this stage.

Jay did not support the policy change. He felt there aren't enough rangers, or DPD presence off-premise, for enforcement and does not believe a report on the effects of the change will adequately reflect the impact of the policy changes.

Ben did not support the policy change. He stated there is not yet a standard for an alcohol policy in public parks, pointing out that New York public parks don't allow alcohol. He wondered if 50' was enough separation between permitted events and play areas, and wondered if DPR had the necessary resources to enforce the alcohol policy.

The vote was thus recorded as 7 in favor of the policy change with 3 against. PRAB approved DPR's alcohol policy revision. Happy commended the board for its considerations, noted the concerns and opposition to the policy change going forward; the diversity of opinions continues to guide policy. And will affect the way in which DPR monitors the impact to the parks. The policy will take effect in January. She indicated this will give DPR time to evaluate policy going forward.

#### Other Board Announcements

Leslie/39<sup>th</sup> St. Channel Project: Meeting about two weeks ago, they're now getting deep into the design process sidewalks, shade structures, etc. She also noted that there have been reports of Emerald Ash Borer in the city of Superior.

Wende/Cranmer Park: She spoke with the horticulturist during the recent "sprucing up" of the beds and such. She noted the beds were beautiful and was impressed when the horticulturist spent a few minutes discussing the reasoning behind his plants choices and pointing out the plants which do not attract Japanese beetles.

Shane expressed gratitude to Wende and Noel in their work on the PRAB White Paper. He also indicated delight at the new park features at Paco Sanchez Park. Lastly he wanted to note the passing of Reese Grant Cobb recently; Happy added a memorial service is scheduled at City Park Pavilion next Tuesday.

Leslie indicated that Councilman Clark's bill will be open to courtesy public comment before it is voted on next Monday night. She encouraged PRAB to attend and speak.

#### Adjournment

Marla adjourned the meeting at 6:55 pm.