

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

05/10/2023

Meeting Date

09/13/2023

Date Minutes Were Approved



Lilly Lazo (Sep 14, 2023 15:42 PDT)

Chair

CERTIFICATION AND ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the accompanying document is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the aforementioned meeting. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.



Rachelle Nunez (Sep 14, 2023 15:32 PDT)

Staff Liaison





**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 6:00 P.M.**

**Avondale City Hall – Sonoran Conference Room
11465 West Civic Center Drive, Avondale, Arizona 85323**

Physical Access to the meeting space will be available 30 minutes prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. ROLL CALL AND STATEMENT OF PARTICIPATION BY THE STAFF LIAISON

Call to order- 6:03pm

Present Board Members: Chair Lilly Lazo, Vice Chair Stephanie Rodriguez, Board Member Marie Arellano, Board Member Vannesa Cornejo, Board Member Mayra Espino, Board Member Cecilia Lopez, and Board Member Patti Nielson

Present Staff: Bryan Hughes, Corey Larriva, Stacy Swainston, Dominic DeCono, and Rachelle Nunez

Absent: Board Member Janet Beason and Tom Street

2. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES

(Time is limited per person. Please state your name.)

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will consider the approval of the April 12, 2023 meeting minutes. The Board will take appropriate action.

Motion: Board Member Arellano

2nd: Board Member Nielson

Approved 7-0

4. BOARD TEAM BUILDING EXERCISE

“What is your favorite book or author?”

Before beginning the Board Team Building Exercise, Bryan shares that Libraries will be a part of the Parks and Recreation Department, beginning July 1st, 2023.

Board Members:

Lilly Lazo, Chair
Stephanie Rodriguez, Vice Chair

Marie Arellano	Mayra Espino
Janet Beason	Cecilia Lopez
Vannesa Cornejo	Patti Nielson

Staff Liaisons:

Bryan Hughes – Director
Corey Larriva – Assistant Director
Dominic DeCono – Sr. Management Analyst
Stacy Swainston – Recreation Supervisor
Tom Street – Parks Supervisor
Rachelle Nunez – Administrative Assistant



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Vice Chair Rodriguez begins the Team Building Exercise with sharing her favorite book being *The Great Gatsby* and how she enjoyed the symbolism that took place throughout the read.

Board Member Nielson shares that her favorite author is Traci Hunter Abramson. She further explains the stories and genre that Traci Abramson writes.

Board Member Arellano brought in her favorite book that she loves which is "Daughter of Fortune", author Isabel Allende. She further states that she found it through Oprah's Book Club selection. She also shares a quick summary of the story and says that Isabel Allende is her favorite author.

Chair Lazo talks about her primarily using audio books and podcasts. She further shares that her book that is memorable is a poetry book by Morgan Harper Nichols. Her favorite quote from one of the author's poems is "I'm slowly finding peace right where I am."

Board Member Cornejo shares her favorite fiction being "Everything's Eventual" by Stephen King. She stated her favorite short story from that book is "The Man in Black Suit" was the most fun read she has ever had. She further shares that her favorite Non-Fiction book is "Behave" by Robert Sapolsky. Board Member Cornejo states that she enjoys reading on learning about the brain and human behavior.

Board Member Lopez shares her favorite authors being Nicolas Sparks and Stephanie Myers. She mentions that many of Nicolas Sparks novels have made it to motion picture, but she says the books are "So much better."

Corey shares his first time reading a series that he enjoyed in the 5th grade and the series was *The Hobbit*. He further shares that when first meeting his wife, she introduced him to *The Lord of the Ring* movies, but he states that he feels *The Hobbit* book series were much better.

Bryan shares that he enjoys reading biographies and his favorite book being "The Greatest Generation" by Tom Brokaw. He further shares a brief summary of the book.

Board Member Espino says that she does not have a favorite book but shares the two books that stand out to her is "Make Your Bed" by William H. McRaven (Navy Retired). She shared how she finished the book in one day and it being a great read. The other book she mentioned that she enjoyed is "Atomic Habits" by James Clear.

Stacy mentions her favorite book series being a "teenage girl" genre as her favorites are the "Hunger Game" series and the "Twilight" series.

Rachelle shares her favorite childhood book being the poetry book "Where the Sidewalk Ends" and a current poet she enjoys reading is Rudy Francisco.

Dominic mentions his favorite genre is being of a "16yr old boy", in similar with Stacy's previous comment, and he states his favorite book being "Fire and Blood" and his favorite story ever is written by Neil Druckmann, which is the original story behind the creation of "The Last of Us" series.



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5. REVIEW OF PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL OPERATING BUDGET REQUESTS

Bryan discusses the overview of the upcoming projects and budget. He discusses the recommended projects for funding projects; Sand Volley Ball Courts, Donatela Park, Crystal Gardens Trail Improvements, Multi-Modal Trail System, Parks and Rec Master Plan, Sport Field Lighting updates at Friendship Park and Festival Fields, Cashion Community Pocket Passive Park, Friendship Park Improvements which includes design upgrades for the dog park, upgrades to ball field 3 and eventually adding pickleball courts, and Sam Garcia Library and Sernas Plaza Improvements.

Vice Chair Rodriguez asks, "What is CDBG?" to which Bryan answers Community Development Block Grants. He further explains what those specific grant funds are and how the City primarily uses those grant funds.

Vice Chair Rodriguez then asks, "Since Libraries are now a part of Parks and Recreation, does the department receive the Libraries budget?" Bryan answers with that topic not being included in tonight's meeting, but he briefly mentions that the Library budget does move over to the Parks and Recreation department.

Bryan continues with the planned continuation of funding; Community Center Repurposing, Mountain View Park Expansion, Aquatics Center is continuing to make progress, Civic Center Park expected to break ground in July, Fiber Connectivity in Parks to assist with providing Wi-Fi at Community Parks and security cameras. He further discusses the recharge designs at Friendship Park and the nature trails that are in the plans. Bryan talks about the operating funds' graph presented in the PowerPoint to the board. He explains the focus to be on full-time staff as opposed to part-time staff. Bryan continues to mention the supplemental requests and asset replacement.

Dominic talks about the year-to-date budget (as of May 1st) for the Fiscal Year 23 revenue updates and goals. This includes the revenues for Facility Rentals, Sports Programs, Special Interest Classes (SIC), Special Events and the American Sports Center. He mentions that the growth for the department is proving to be a positive impact to the revenue.

6. UPDATE ON PARK DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Bryan talks about the following 6 active projects:

1. Mountain View Community Center- Bryan talks about the map shown on the PowerPoint of the Mountain View Community Center with more than 50% complete and details what the Community Center will look like.
2. Civic Center Park- Bryan talks about the design and plans for the park located next to the Civic Center Library. He mentions that the connectivity will positively impact the Aquatic Center and Library.
3. Sand Volleyball Complex at the BLVD- Bryan discusses the plans for Volleyball courts have been moved off pause and will resume continuing construction. He talks about the five competition-grade courts and the plans for adding restrooms for this facility.
4. Mountain View Park- Bryan talks about the plans for the renovations happening for the park and he talks about adding vandal-resistant restrooms to the park as this park currently does not have restrooms.



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5. Dennis Deconcini- Bryan talks about the upgrades to the turf, ramadas, and playground. He mentions that there is a goal for concrete corn hole and some fitness structures. And he states the importance of being in ADA compliance.
6. Donatella Park- Bryan talks about a newly added park is a neighborhood park located off Palm Lane north of McDowell averaging 5 acres. He mentions the survey feedback from that community wanted shade trees and ramadas. He references the PowerPoint to show the board the concept A and B and explains the differences between the two concepts.

Chair Lazo asks what the plan is for the bathrooms at the Mountain View Community Center. Bryan replies by explaining there will be a family restroom, a staff restroom, and a men's and women's restroom. He states that ideally the restrooms will be used for people using the facility during the facility's operating hours.

Vice Chair Rodriguez asks are the 2 concepts of the Donatella Park final or will there be changes? Bryan replies by taking the current 2 concepts back out to the public for feedback and will be able to tweak the concepts if needed.

Chair Lazo asks about the sidewalks at the Civic Center Park sidewalks in coordination with the trees. Bryan replies that the trees are already present, and the sidewalk is an added addition to the outside of the trees. He further explains the goal of improving the connectivity at the Civic Center Plaza. Corey further explains the connectivity of the sidewalks, surrounding space, and specifically the Aquatic Center.

Vice Chair Rodriguez asks about the availability of bike racks.

Bryan answers that most to all facilities have bike racks which are a necessity when planning. Board Member Nielson asks what kind of trees are at the Civic Center Park. Corey Replies that there is no current detailed landscape yet. He said the trees that will be planned are a variety of mesquites, live oaks, and water-wise trees.

Bryan further shares about adding more trees and the positive impact on the environment. Bryan shares that the hopes to break ground for Civic Center Plaza Park to begin in late July or early August and to have the park open in coordination with the Aquatics Center.

7. DEPARTMENT LEVEL OF SERVICE S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

Corey begins discussing the S.W.O.T. analysis and its purpose of it. He also talks about the survey that was sent out to everyone that will help to construct the FY24 Strategic Plan. Corey further details the focus and intentions of the accessibility of the survey. Corey mentions that the next meeting in June will be able to discuss the S.W.O.T. analysis. He reminds the board that the surveys should be completed within 10-14 days. Corey expresses their appreciation for the Board's feedback.

8. RECREATION AND SPECIAL EVENTS UPDATE

Stacy introduces the Avondale Fiesta event by sharing the Avondale Fiesta Video. Stacy talks about the spacing at the park and felt that it went great for being at Alamar as oppose to the traditional location on Western. She talks about the 75-100 in attendance for the fishing derby. Then she follows up with the Poppin' in the Park will be happening at Alamar that will show the Turning Red movie. She details the following summer event; Blank Canvas and she



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discusses the dates regarding the pickup and drop off for Canvas and shares the marketing strategies for the event. Stacy talks about the showcase event located at the Avondale City Hall on August 3rd, where the Blank Canvas artists are recognized by family and the community at the end of the Summer which usually expects 100-150 participants. Corey talks about the volunteers needed for the Blank Canvas event, especially with hanging all the canvas. He further shares about the children's art being turned into postcards and available for purchase at the Visitor Center. Stacy continues talking about the upcoming events and talks about the Memorial Day Ceremony.

Chair Lazo asks who is the orchestra planned to perform for the ceremony?
Stacy replies, West Side Orchestra.

Stacy talks about the newest celebration event added this Summer, Juneteenth, which will be taking place outdoors at the Resource Center. The date for that event is on Thursday, June 15th, 5-8 pm. Stacy said she will talk about the Light Up the Sky- 4th of July event at the next month's board meeting.

9. BOARD OBSERVATIONS – AVONDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Before receiving the Board's observations of the Avondale Public Libraries, Bryan briefly talks about the new renovations at the Civic Center Library. He then mentions the Sam Garcia Library will be eventually going through renovations.

Vice Chair Rodriguez talks about her friend that attends the Sam Garcia Library and how she loves the story time offered on Wednesdays. She mentions her observation of the Civic Center Library restrooms are very dark. She would like to see visible signage for the genres of books. Board Member Rodriguez further talks about the kids' section was in the back and should have a special fun walkway to lead children to their books section. She talked about the window and views being okay once the Civic Center Park and Aquatics Center. She would like to see more comfy areas for lounging.

Board Member Nielson visited the Civic Center Library. She noticed the reading time with the little ones, and she thought it was nice. And she noticed there was a section for kids to play or build. She liked that there were stem activities for kids to check out. She also observed and liked that there is a sales area in the Library where the funds go back to the library.

Board Member Cornejo visits the Civic Center Library. She shares about the first time going to that library as a 13yr old and how she loved it and the Library in Avondale will always hold that special space for her. She further discusses her observation of an empty space and suggest adding some more furniture to fill up that space.

Board Member Lopez visits the Civic Center Library and shares her suggestion of painting the outdoors and adding signage. Corey further responds to that feedback by mentioning the overall purpose and the plans for the Libraries in the future. Board Member Lopez continues talking about the outdoor displays and signage being covered in bird poop and making it difficult to read. She shares her find of the Sun Dial and her experience with seeing how it worked. Bryan follows with explaining where the Sun Dial is located. Board Member Lopez enjoyed seeing the food resources and the other resources that were shown and available to the public. She liked that there is a variety of items that could be rented through the Library.

Chair Lazo visited the Sam Garcia Library. She talks about renting out various items and loves the concept of providing that service to the community. She discusses the tour given to her by the librarian and the plans for future seating and how she feels there should be more comfortable seating available at the Library. She mentioned that the Library works with a nonprofit group who partners with Estrella Mountain College to offer GED classes. She further mentions the notes stated from the Librarian, that due to a lack of laptops it is challenging to successfully complete that program. Chair Lazo talks about her observation of the playground area and the bare walls, in which she suggests adding a mural.

Board Member Espino visited the Civic Center Library. She talks about her viewpoint as a mother. She says that in the kid's area, there are no seating for adults and only seating for kids and there is needing more improvement. She noticed that a remodel took place, but she feels that the remodel is incomplete. Board Member Espino further explains that as a person who enjoys going to the library as an adult to study, she observed that there is no defined separation between the kids and adults. She further explains her observation of there being a disconnection and does not like the space to study and feels the layout needs more adjustments. She also does not like the study rooms and feels those room are not welcoming. Board Member Espino did visit the Sam Garcia Library and stated she did not feel safe with the busy road and her children. She stated that she does like that Library, but not the parking.

Board Member Arellano visited the Civic Center Library. She said she loves the library and that her family and children utilize the library all summer. Her family enjoys all the programs offered and joining the library club. She further discusses the positive impact the libraries offer. Board Member Arellano suggests more kid friendly views in the library. She further discusses the differences between the Goodyear Library and Civic Center Library. Bryan mentions a suggestion about free passes for the Aquatics Center as an incentive for reading books. Board Member Nielson shares information about the Cloud Library App and the positive resources offered when using that App.

10. PARKS AND PROJECTS UPDATE

Corey begins the discussion mentioning the framing and walls going up at Mountain View Community Center. He talks about the Crystal Gardens trails being completed and the upcoming next phase for Crystal Gardens. Bryan talks about the planting of tree and shrubs at Festival Fields and Mountain View Park. Corey further discusses the tree projects in coordination with Arbor Day and shares the City of Avondale received its 12th annual Tree City recognition. Bryan discusses the Aquatic Center progress in construction. He continues with discussing the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Audit and Transition Plan being currently in process. He states that the reports are showing we are currently in compliance and if there are any changes that need to be made to comply, those projects will take priority and can potentially affect the budget. Corey further discusses the process in depth and what happens with an ADA transition plan.

Board Member Nielson recognizes the positive aspects in Corey going out and seeing that process and how it is constructed.



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Bryan continues the discussion talking about the benefits of being proactive in preparation of ADA planning. Corey further talks about the ADA plan and reviewing all the facilities associated with Parks and Recreation, not just the parks.

Board Member Rodriguez asks if the board will be shown the time tracking and status for upcoming projects in future Board meetings? Bryan replies "yes," that information will be brought back for future Board meetings.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Board Member Nielson

2nd: Board Member Arellano

Approved: 7-0

Meeting adjourned- 7:33pm