

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
April 18, 2019

1 The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting was held on April 18, 2019 at the
2 Parks and Recreation Conference Room, 1501 E. Hadley, Las Cruces, NM.

3
4 **PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

5 Cassie McClure
6 Maryln Zahler
7 Stan Engle
8 Eric Montgomery
9 Megan Schuller
10 Eli Guzman

11
12 **PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

13 Robert Harrison
14

15 **OTHERS PRESENT:**

16 Hazel Nevarez, Senior Office Manager & Recorder
17 Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation
18 Robert Nunez, Recreation Services Administrator
19 Phil Catanach, Recreation Services Administrator
20 Franco Granillo, Park Administrator
21 Cecilia Vasconcellos, Marketing & Event Coordinator
22 Christian Lentz, Half Associations
23 Julie Herlands, TischlerBise
24 Elaine Stachera Simon, Public
25 Greg Shervanick, Public
26

27 The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Vice-Chair McClure and recognized as
28 having a legal quorum.
29

30 **I. Introductions**

31
32 Board members introduced themselves and stated the district they represent. Staff
33 introduced themselves and stated their position. Public members present introduced
34 themselves.
35

36 **II. Conflict of Interest**

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38 There was no conflict of interest.
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40 **III. Approval of Agenda**
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1 Ms. Schuller moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Engle.
2 Motion carried unanimously.

3
4 **IV. Approval of Minutes**

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6 Ms. Zahler moved to approve the minutes of March 21, 2019 as presented, seconded
7 by Mr. Engle. Motion carried unanimously.

8
9 **V. Public Comment**

10
11 **Ms. Elaine Stachera:**

12 Ms. Elaine Stachera Simon, who lives in the College Park neighborhood, District 2,
13 was present to see what steps need to be taken to have a vacant lot in their
14 neighborhood turned into a park. She said Ms. Jamey Rickman suggested the
15 property owners be contacted to see if they would donate the land. Ms. Stachera
16 Simon asked after contacting the property owners about donating the property or other
17 options, trade or purchase possibilities, what would be the next steps and time frame.

18
19 Ms. Delgado said contact with the owner is first, and from there would need to contact
20 Councilor Smith to see if this is something to be pursued and if so, there are several
21 steps that would follow. One step would be to get on the Capital Improvement list to
22 identify funding. Ms. Delgado said there would be a lot of decisions that would need to
23 be made that are out of her realm. Ms. Delgado said there is no time frame.

24
25 Ms. Stachera Simon asked when reaching out to the owners, who would she refer
26 them to regarding donating the land. Ms. Delgado said City Manager.

27
28 Ms. Stachera Simon also asked, since she has spoken to the manager of the Marriott,
29 and will be speaking to IHOP, if sponsorship is an option. Ms. Delgado said it is but is
30 the City Manager's decision.

31
32 Ms. Schuller recommended Ms. Stachera Simon also reach out to NMSU since the
33 property that the Marriott is on is NMSU property.

34
35 Ms. Stachera Simon asked if there are costs involved regarding donation of the land.
36 Ms. Delgado said this would be up to the owner and what is negotiated with City
37 Manager. Ms. Zahler added under the anti-donation act, the city could not give the
38 owners any funds for the land unless the city buys it outright.

39
40 Recommendations were given to Ms. Stachera Simon on how to possibly locate the
41 property owners.

42
43 **Mr. Gregory Shervanick:**

44 Mr. Gregory Shervanick was present to comment on minutes of last month and Ms.
45 Mathews statement concerning the Cool Corridor. Mr. Shervanick said Ms. Mathews
46 did state there had been changes which there have been but she spoke to no one who

1 lives on that street and the Las Cruces Public School system had not been contacted.
2 Mr. Shervanick said he met with their Director of Operations and showed him the
3 blueprints so they would be aware of what's transitioning. He said a meeting was held
4 April 11 concerning pushing the project forward as quickly as possible. Mr. Shervanick
5 said the neighbors still believe it is negligent for the city to put this project in on the city
6 streets; it will endanger the health and possibly the lives of visitors and citizens on
7 Nevada Avenue. He said even though there are changes to Nevada between Walnut
8 and Lees Drive, it still will impact the park on its portion of the street as well as the
9 traffic that is carried between the street and the school.

10
11 Mr. Engle asked Mr. Shervanick if he was able to personally speak to everybody in that
12 corridor that lives on Nevada, is there evidence that Ms. Mathews did not speak to
13 them. Mr. Shervanick said yes, to include the Las Cruces Public School system.

14
15 Mr. Engle asked if the residents would be ready to go on record to say they weren't
16 contacted. Mr. Shervanick said there would be a lot of negativity and no one on that
17 street knows that this is actually happening; they are not informed, at all. He said the
18 city has a mail merge list of 281 names of homes in the area, which they usually send
19 out post cards. When Dona Ana Community United, the proxy organization that spoke
20 for the city - would be contacting individuals, nobody ever showed up to those
21 meetings and when they did, if they did, they weren't informed of the physical major
22 construction changes that were going to happen on Nevada. They were told this
23 organization was thinking about painting on the streets, not putting trees in the street.
24 Mr. Shervanick said he would be able to give the names of people he spoke with.

25
26 Mr. Engle asked Parks and Recreation if public wasn't informed and want to be
27 informed, is there any possibility for that to happen. Ms. Delgado said the April 11
28 meeting was to discuss creating a process that is more seamless when there are
29 multiple departments working on a project, using the Cool Corridor project as an
30 example. The meeting was not to talk on the specifics of the project.

31
32 Mr. Engle said for the record, he is for the project, but he does want the public to know
33 what is happening and have a say in it. Ms. Delgado said she can put this topic on the
34 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting agenda for May 2019 and ask Economic
35 Development to attend and ask Ms. Mathews to give an update, to give a list of dates
36 meetings were held, what was discussed, how this got started.

37
38 Ms. Schuller asked what the generic protocol is for public meetings. Ms. Delgado said
39 she could speak for Parks and Recreation, and said Parks and Recreation sends email
40 blast for the particular neighborhood, postcards, if Councilor for the District has some
41 interest in the project, they get people that have specifically asked for the information
42 or use their data base, post in newspaper, Parks and Recreation website and
43 Facebook page.

44
45 Ms. McClure asked if the Board felt there should be another meeting on this. Ms.
46 Schuller said she felt there have been plenty of opportunities for the neighborhood to
47

1 be involved. Mr. Shervanick said the proxy group, who talks to the neighborhood, did
2 not discuss this project as it is designed, as green infrastructure and putting chicanes
3 in the street. They never discussed the hard construction or cost with the reason being
4 there was a conflict of interest between a non-profit group and city staff. Mr.
5 Shervanick said the non-profit discussed the project without the construction aspects
6 and that the city would discuss the project aspects. The only time construction
7 aspects were discussed was at the meeting held by Parks and Recreation, August 26,
8 2018 which was framed for the Board's purposes and it was decided on what to say,
9 how to say it and how to tell the Board. Prior meetings weren't really public meetings.

10
11 Mr. Montgomery inquired, as point of reference, the meeting of April 11 was designed
12 to set up an interactive policy between departments and best way to go forward on
13 future projects, so as part of that, was there any discussion on public outreach that was
14 outlined as part of this interactive policy or is it still in the works. Ms. Delgado said yes,
15 the meeting was internal, to figure out how departments can work together to move
16 projects forward, using the Nevada project as an example. Mr. Montgomery said a
17 suggestion going forward would be to have more interaction with the public during
18 public meetings.

19
20 Ms. McClure cut discussion to move forward with Board agenda. Mr. Shervanick
21 thanked the Board for their time.

22 **VI. Unfinished Business**

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25 (Note: Item B was discussed first.)

26 **A. Parks & Recreation Master Plan (Update) – Christian Lentz, Halff Associates**

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29
30 Mr. Christian Lentz of Halff Associates presented a PowerPoint to the Board to give
31 them an update of where the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is currently, which was
32 introduced to the Board at their February 2019 meeting. Mr. Lentz said this plan has to
33 be adopted by June and the Board will be getting more information on this plan over
34 the next several weeks. Information shared with the Board was an update of project
35 status, what will be done next with public outreach, the relationship between the Parks
36 and Recreation Master Plan and the Park Impact Fee Study, and preliminary
37 recommendations of the plan. Mr. Lentz reported the key recommendations of the plan
38 will address park land, recreational facilities, programs, operations, and administration.
39 The 2019 recommendations may include some of the 2012 recommendations. A
40 copy of the PowerPoint presentation was provided to the Board.

41
42 Ms. Schuller asked how Ms. Delgado would like feedback on this plan. Ms. Delgado
43 said information can be sent by email or phone call, as long as the information goes
44 through the Chair.

1 Mr. Lentz asked Board's thoughts, concerns on the plan. Ms. McClure asked how
2 many outside entities were involved in the plan, i.e. Friends of Desert Peaks. Mr.
3 Lentz said Friends of Desert Peaks were involved in some of the stakeholder outreach,
4 specifically the Southern New Mexico Trails Alliance, the Bureau of Land Management
5 (BLM) hasn't been spoken to. He said these recommendations were worded in the plan
6 is to work with these partners.

7
8 Ms. Schuller's said her concern as with BLM, citizens have to realize that BLM has the
9 potential to lease land out, and the repercussions of people not taking care of the land
10 have an adverse effect on the people who are leasing the land to run their cattle or
11 something to that effect. Her concern is how does the city do its due diligence as we
12 start to partner with groups to protect the investment of the BLM. Ms. Delgado said the
13 City would only go as far as the city limit. Mr. Lentz added there are plenty of
14 precedence with federal and state lands with having a recreational facility co-located
15 with lands that are otherwise working lands. He said an open lands space program
16 doesn't necessarily end at city limits. That is based on the most valuable land from an
17 environmental and consolidation stand point and will stretch beyond city limits. Ms.
18 Delgado added the state is willing to have an outdoor recreation for the state so they
19 would take care of from the city limit outward.

20
21 Mr. Montgomery said providing a map with amenities would be helpful. Ms. McClure
22 pointed out Parks and Recreation has an app that provides this information.

23
24 Ms. Zahler said on a scale of one to ten, with ten being the highest, Mr. Lentz'
25 presentation is a ten. Her only negative comment was plan specified park instead of
26 parks regarding dog parks. Ms. Zahler suggested having a small dog park limited to
27 hunting dogs at Butterfield Shooting Range where they could be trained. Ms. Delgado
28 said she wouldn't put a dog park at the shooting range for liability reasons.

29
30 Ms. Zahler expressed her thoughts of where dog parks would be located and why they
31 shouldn't be in those locations.

32 33 **B. Park Impact Fees Report (Update/Action) – Julie Herlands, TischlerBise**

34
35 Ms. Julie Herlands, Vice-President of TischlerBise, presented a PowerPoint to the
36 Board to inform them of revisions made to the Parks and Recreation Park Impact Fee
37 Study previously presented in February 2019 and to show where the draft is at
38 currently. Ms. Herlands reviewed land use assumptions, components for the fee,
39 elements that impact the fee, categorization and classification of parks, coordinated
40 and integrated with the master plan to ensure parks are in the proper categories. Ms.
41 Herlands said park impact fees are based on current levels of service, looking at what
42 is being provided to the current population. The PowerPoint showed a summary of the
43 draft fees along with a comparison to 2012 fees. A copy of the PowerPoint
44 presentation was provided to the Board.

1 Ms. Zahler asked what the cost to an individual person is to use a park. Ms. Herlands
2 said the cost to the city at large is \$572 per person. Ms. Zahler asked if the increase in
3 cost of living and taxes has been taken into consideration. Ms. Herlands said this is
4 specifically cost for a new resident to receive the same level of service on a park
5 facility. Ms. Herlands said this is a cost for a home builder or developer to pay as they
6 are building a housing unit to help the city continue to provide the same levels of
7 service. Ms. Zahler asked if the realtor will balk at the increase. Ms. Herlands said the
8 bottom line isn't much of an increase and realtors and developers realize this is a cost
9 of doing business.

10
11 Ms. Schuller asked when the Park Impact Fees go into effect. Ms. Delgado the Park
12 Impact Fees will go before the CIAC in May 2019 for action. The Parks and Recreation
13 Advisory Board can choose to act on this today or wait until next month. From there,
14 the Park Impact Fees will go before Council in June 2019 for final adoption.

15
16 Ms. Zahler asked what would happen if this plan isn't accepted. Ms. Delgado said
17 there have been open meetings attended by home builders, developers and realtors.
18 Their comments were incorporated into the plan and they are aware this is coming.

19
20 Mr. Guzman said he would like to know the home builders, developers and realtors'
21 thoughts are on these proposed fees before acting.

22
23 Ms. Schuller asked what other impact fees are allocated in the city. Ms. Delgado said
24 there are safety, utility, and park impact fees.

25
26 Mr. Montgomery asked with the new proposal, is there a specific mechanism for how to
27 couple an inflation benchmark. Ms. Herlands said construction costs are
28 recommended, market SWIFT standards. Ms. Delgado added currently, building a park
29 is not in the Code. It has been part of a Resolution as an attachment. Ms. Delgado said
30 next step would be to create a Code, once Park Impact Fee and Recreation Master
31 Plan is established.

32
33 Ms. Zahler moved to table action on the Parks and Recreation Impact Fee study until
34 the May 2019 Board meeting, seconded by Mr. Guzman.

35
36 Mr. Montgomery wanted to clarify his understanding of this plan:

- 37 • Recommendation of legal finding that would go forward on the construction cost
38 index component
- 39 • Discounting factor was discussed, and Mr. Montgomery wants to make sure this
40 is also included as part of the policy recommendation to City Council

41 Ms. Delgado said the construction costs could definitely be included. The discounting
42 factor is more related to when the code is done and will need further discussion.

43
44 Motion to table action on the Parks and Recreation Impact Fee study until the May
45 2019 Board meeting carried unanimously.

1 Ms. Zahler moved to request the Parks and Recreation Director invite the Executive
2 Director of the Home Builder's Association or their designee to the May 2019 Board
3 Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

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5 **VII. New Business**

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7 There was no new business.

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9 **VIII. Staff Member Comments**

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11 Ms. Delgado informed the Board of Parks and Recreation's part in assisting with the
12 Asylum seekers and use of Parks and Recreation facilities, and how programming was
13 rescheduled or relocated. Ms. Schuller asked how assisting with the asylum seekers
14 transpired and what is the impact to staffing and facilities, and what needs to be
15 considered getting the facilities back and cleaned. Ms. Delgado said staff utilized were
16 Parks and Recreation staff because they know the facilities, they know emergency
17 procedures, they are trained in CPR, and they know how to open and close the facility.
18 She said Parks and Recreation was contacted to pull Meerscheidt Recreation offline
19 because a facility was needed to house incoming asylum seekers. Basketball games
20 and T-ball registration had to be cancelled due to shortage of staff. Staff was assigned
21 to man Meerscheidt Recreation Center around the clock in three eight-hour shifts.
22 There was custodial assistance that came in throughout the day to assist with cleanup.
23 The last of the asylum seekers was moved out the evening of April 16. Meerscheidt
24 Recreation Center was cleaned on April 17 to be ready for regular programming April
25 18. Frank O'Brien Paper Center will be next facility to be used this coming weekend
26 and Park and Recreation staff is on notice.

27
28 Mr. Montgomery asked what the arrangements are with the Las Cruces Public School
29 system and the budgetary impacts of moving games to Sierra Middle School; was
30 there a contractual arrangement? Ms. Delgado said the school was asked if their gym
31 could be used and they said it was ok. She said some players did cancel.

32
33 Mr. Catanach said staff did their due diligence to get Meerscheidt Recreation Center
34 cleaned, scrubbed the building top to bottom, disinfected and sprayed for insects.

35
36 Ms. Zahler asked if the children of the asylum seekers being immunized. Ms. Delgado
37 said she did not know. Ms. Zahler asked who she should call about this, and someone
38 suggested she call the Department of Health.

39
40 **IX. Board Member Comments**

41
42 Ms. Zahler provided a handout to the Board, Sonya Delgado, Robert Nunez, and Hazel
43 Nevarez with suggestions more toward Recreation and Parks for the Youth Board to
44 consider doing. Ms. Zahler also provided Mr. Nunez a newspaper article from Los
45 Alamos on what a youth group there does.

1 Ms. Zahler also expressed a concern with the one-year term for the Youth Board. Mr.
2 Nunez said he will bringing to the next Board meeting amendments to the by-laws
3 regarding staggering membership years, odd years, so the Youth Board will have
4 members for two years.

5
6 Mr. Engle said he understood, from attending the Youth Board meeting of April 17,
7 topics they have addressed as a Board are things they live with. He said he and Ms.
8 McClure did let the Youth Board know they would help steer them back to Parks and
9 Recreation topics. He said one thing they want to do is take a tour on transit, which is
10 important because most don't have vehicles and could use transit to attend events in a
11 park.

12
13 Mr. Montgomery said he wanted to go on record how happy he was to hear of staff's
14 involvement in assisting with the asylum seekers and is very proud staff was able to
15 deal with such numbers within the resources available. He asked that his family's
16 personal gratitude be extended to staff who assisted with this.

17
18 **X. Adjournment**

19
20 Ms. Zahler moved to adjourn meeting, seconded by Mr. Engle. Motion carried
21 unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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25
26 _____
Hazel Nevarez, Recording Secretary

Robert Harrison, Chair