

**MARICOPA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**
Meeting of July 21, 2015

LOCATION: Flood Control District Operations Building, 2801 W. Durango Street, Phoenix, AZ 85338

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Anne Lynch, Rod Jarvis, Jack Stapley, Dr. Robert Branch, and Devin Del Palacio

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Denise Merdon and Carl Yoshioka

STAFF PRESENT: RJ Cardin, Director; Donna Southard, Recorder; Michele Kogl, Planning and Development Manager; Dawna Taylor, PIO; Aimee Upton, Administrator; and Betsy Pregulman, Deputy Maricopa County Attorney

The official correspondence and staff recommendations contained in this Commission folder are hereby entered as supportive material to the official minutes of the July 21, 2015, Parks and Recreation Commission regular meeting.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

ITEM #1 – CALL TO ORDER – Rod Jarvis, Chair, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission

- The regular meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

ITEM #2 – ROLL CALL – Roll Call taken - a quorum was present.

ITEM #3 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 19, 2015, PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING – Rod Jarvis, Chair, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission – ACTION ITEM

- Commissioner Lynch motioned and Commissioner Stapley seconded to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2015, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting as presented. All in favor, none opposed, and the motion was approved.

ITEM #4 – DIRECTOR’S SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS – RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM

- Director Cardin informed the Commission that the Board of Supervisors would be honoring Commissioner Lynch for her 30 years of service on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission board the following day. He thanked her on behalf of staff and the citizens of Maricopa County for her many years of service to the park system.
- The FY16 Parks budget has been approved by the Board of Supervisors. The initial request included General Fund monies for the operating start-up and Phase 1 development for the Hassayampa River Preserve. Due to several factors limiting the County’s ability to pursue new efforts, this request was not included in the final recommended budget proposal to the Board of Supervisors. Staff will be meeting with the Office of Management and Budget to include additional park enhancements, capital development for the Hassayampa River Preserve and operations of Vulture Mountain in the FY17 budget request.
- FY15 recorded a 14% increase in park visitors which followed a 21% increase the previous year to reach over 1.6 million visitors in FY15. Parks has not reached this milestone since before 2009.
- Other highlights include FY15 first close budget numbers reflecting revenues over budget and expenditures under budget in the Enhancement Fund, the Lake Fund and the Spur Cross Fund; negotiations continue with the Legacy Sports project at Adobe Dam Park for the well water use and management program; nearly 94,000 volunteer hours were logged by Park Hosts and Community

Volunteers during the past fiscal year; a public meeting had been held to solicit input and feedback regarding the Estrella Park Master Plan proposed updates, receiving approximately 60 comments at the meeting and an additional 70 comments online; the Trades Crew has fabricated metal skirts as part of the renovations on several ramadas at McDowell and Cave Creek Parks; The Desert Outdoor Center had a successful summer season with the Boy Scout camps and for the first time, camp sessions were opened to non-scout attendees; Lake Pleasant Park reached nearly 840,000 visitors this year and set an all-time record for visitation numbers; renovations continue on the visitor center at Lake Pleasant; foot and bike night time races have been successful at Estrella and McDowell Parks; an archery league is being held every Thursday night at Userly Park; an Eagle Scout project has installed 17 new interpretive plaques on the Buckhorn Campground Nature Trail; the interpretive ranger has developed a new Summer Sonoran Series program at the White Tank Park in cooperation with the Library; and the environmental assessment at the Vulture Mountain Recreation Area continues.

ITEM #5 – APPROVE THE MARICOPA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT’S RECREATION FEES POLICY – RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – *DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM*

- Director Cardin informed the Commission that the 2009 Strategic System Master Plan recommended a solid philosophy and policy for pricing of recreational fees. He briefly explained the traditional model of park and recreation fee structures used by most agencies. Since 2009, general fund revenues for Parks has significantly decreased and in 2012, central service costs began to be charged to Parks for technology, attorney, and general administrative costs. The new model reflects a net zero in terms of operating dollars. In 2012, the Commission helped to determine which activities would fall into the cost plus section, require some level of recovery, or be placed into the more highly subsidized area. The model, along with benchmarking other similar organizations and agencies, sets the recreation fees. The purpose of the Parks policy is to outline the methodology for development of user fees for park and recreation activities and amenities. The policy guidelines are based on the County’s Budgeting and Accountability Policy (B1011) and the Parks Revenue Philosophy adopted by the Parks Commission in October 2012.
- Commissioner Branch motioned and Commissioner Del Palacio seconded to adopt the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department Recreation Fee Policy as presented for development of user fees for park and recreation activities and amenities. All in favor, none opposed, and the motion was approved.

ITEM #6 – PARKS NEW POS SYSTEM UPDATE – Aimee Upton, Administrator, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – *INFORMATION ITEM*

- Ms. Upton informed the Commission that the first Point of Sale (POS) System was initiated in 2010 and allowed the public to make on-line camping reservations and purchase annual passes. The program also centralized all revenue transactions within the system. The contract was up for renewal in 2015 and Parks went out to bid for a new POS system. Five proposals were received. A contract was signed with Rev’d Up and the new system is in development with a go-live date sometime in August or September. Ms. Upton gave a demonstration of the new system. The new system provides enhanced features such as interactive maps for the public, quick sale features for the most popular items and a more robust souvenir inventory tracking capability for staff.
- Commissioner Branch inquired how customer email addresses are used. Ms. Upton informed the Commission that currently it is only used to email camping or annual pass receipts to the customer. Another feature available for future use includes sending out events and/or programs occurring within the park to the customer about a week prior to their reservation. Director Cardin informed the commission that the intent is to use the email addresses internally and not to sell them.

ITEM #7 – WHITE TANK MOUNTAIN REGIONAL PARK HIGHLIGHTS – Raymond Schell, Parks Supervisor, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Mr. Schell informed the Commission that during fiscal year 2015, nearly 246,000 visitors entered the park.
- A new tortoise enclosure is under construction and will open in October, enhancing the visitor experience and educational programs. In conjunction with the new tortoise enclosure, Central Arizona Conservation Alliance donated plants and organized 50 volunteers to build a butterfly garden which has been registered as a Monarch Waystation. The Friends Group is helping to pay for signage around both projects.
- Other improvements include a one mile connector trail between the competitive track parking lot to the trail system and completion of a new beginner track for bikers.
- The White Tank Mountain Conservancy was formed in October 2014 as a partnership of several west valley organizations to protect the entire mountain range while enhancing economic growth.

ITEM #8 – FY15 CIP PROJECTS RECAP – Brad Reed, Project Manager, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Mr. Reed provided an overview of capital improvement projects completed during the past fiscal year. Projects included updating and placing into operation four chlorination systems at Lake Pleasant Park.
- A 900-foot well was drilled within San Tan Park. Staff is currently waiting on the ADEQ drinking water permit. The well water will replace hauling water into tanks within the park.
- Electrical cabinets were replaced and upgraded at White Tank Park. Parts from the old system were salvaged for use in other cabinets if needed.
- Ramadas at McDowell and Cave Creek Parks were upgraded with metal fascia, new roof coating, electrical outlets, and LED lights.
- Cave Creek Park upgrades included new group campground electrical hookups with water hooks ups scheduled for installation this fall. The electrical system was installed to allow for future expansion without major electrical construction.
- A giant scorpion slide structure was added to the Cave Creek playground and a giant mountain lion play structure was added at Estrella Park. New fitness equipment replaced the old playground equipment at Usery Park.
- Restroom renovations continued at White Tank, McDowell, Lake Pleasant and Estrella Parks. A new septic system was installed at the Estrella restroom. Septic system pumping and upgrades were completed system wide.

ITEM #9 – LAKE PLEASANT VISITOR CENTER RENOVATIONS UPDATE – Brad Reed, Project Manager and David Jordan, Lake Pleasant Park Supervisor, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Mr. Reed provided a brief overview of the renovations and expansion occurring at the Lake Pleasant Visitor Center.
- Mr. Jordan briefed the Commission on the history of the current visitor center. The expanded interpretive area will include exhibits highlighting the park's history, unique features, and artifact, interactive displays, and a new animal display area. David stated that approximately 80,000 people or 10% of park users travel to the visitor center each year.
- Commissioner Del Palacio stated the center's concept drawings look very nice and will offer a wonderful experience for our regular customers and draw new visitors to the building.

ITEM #10 – CALL TO THE COMMISSION

- Commissioner Branch and Chairman Jarvis recognized staff for their work and Director Cardin for his leadership of the County's remarkable park asset.

Item #13 – CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- None.

Item #14 – ADJOURNMENT

- There being no further business, Chairman Jarvis called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Stapley motioned, Commissioner Lynch seconded. With all in favor, none opposed, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.

RJ Cardin, Director

Rod Jarvis, Chair