

**MARICOPA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**
Meeting of April 12, 2011

LOCATION: Maricopa County Parks and Recreation
234 N. Central Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Joseph Marvin, Jack Stapley, Anne Lynch, Carl Yoshioka, Heidi Fischer, Rod Jarvis

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Jimmie Munoz

STAFF PRESENT: R.J. Cardin, Director; Ken Mouw, Chief Engineer; Aimee Upton, Administrator; Dawna Taylor, Public Information Officer; Jennifer Waller, Westside Regional Superintendent; Teresa Retterbush, Eastside Superintendent; Rand Hubble, McDowell Mountain Regional Park Supervisor; Debbie Lemon, IT Administration; Roxana Rojo, Engineering Project Manager; Barbara Lehner, Recorder

The official correspondence and staff recommendations contained in this Commission folder are hereby entered as supportive material to the official minutes of the April 12, 2011 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

ITEM # 1 – CALL TO ORDER – Joseph Marvin, Chair, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission

- The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m.

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

ITEM # 3 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 8, 2011 PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING – Joseph Marvin, Chair, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission - *ACTION ITEM*

- Commissioner Lynch motioned and Commissioner Stapley seconded the motion to approve the March 8, 2011 minutes as presented. All members were in favor and the motion was approved.

ITEM #4 - DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS – R.J. Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – *INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM*

- Director Cardin presented the Director's Summary. In addition to the programs and events highlighted in the summary, other notable items were the Spearhead S Trail dedication, increase of attendance at Estrella Park and the success of the Cave Creek trail rides.

ITEM #5 – UNDERGROUND EASEMENT REQUEST BY APS – Roxana Rojo, Engineering Project Manager - Maricopa County Parks and Recreation – *INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM*

- Ms. Rojo presented the APS easement request for White Tank Mountain Regional Park. The easement would run along the current established roads. The Park would like to add electrical power to 2 host sites and 38 camp sites. This will allow RV campers to use air-conditioners their stay during the warmer months, which will increase park revenues.
- Commissioner Stapley motioned and Commissioner Lynch seconded the motion to hold the first public meeting on June 7th at 9:00 a.m. at the White Tank Nature Center. The 2nd meeting will be held on July 12th at 8:30 at Parks Headquarters.

ITEM #6 – MCDOWELL PARK EQUESTRIAN STAGING AREA – Teresa Retterbush, Eastside Superintendent - Maricopa County Parks and Recreation – INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM

- Ms. Retterbush and Mr. Hubble provided a PowerPoint presentation on McDowell Mountain Regional Park's relocation of the equestrian staging area.
- Mr. Hubble relocated the equestrian staging area on Saturdays and Sundays during January 1st-March 30th. He stated over half of park visitors come between January 1st and March 30th. And moving the equestrian staging area avoids expanding the parking lot areas, which would have an impact on the desert ecosystem. The Park usage break down is as follows: 61% mountain bikes, 28% hiking, 4% equestrian.
- The trail head parking area has been congested on weekends because of the amount of space needed for both horse trailer parking and removal of horses from trailers. Because of safety reasons, equestrians were asked to stage at the four peaks area, travel the Shallmo Wash and connect with the park trails. The four peaks staging area is 6.4 acres, expansive enough to accommodate all equestrians without having a negative impact on other visitors. Recently, an Eagle Scout installed hitching posts and campfire rings at the Four Peaks Staging Area.
- Tracy House and equestrian addressed the commission with her opposition to this change. She feels Shallmo Wash is difficult for horses to travel through; there is lack of access to facilities; and there are no ramadas. She referred to the Parks master plan and stated the main trail head was designated for all access. It's inconvenient for equestrians who come out for a 2-3 hour ride to start at four peaks because of the travel time to the connecting park trails.
- Ms. House pointed out the Estrella equestrian facility is being built and questioned why the Parks Department didn't spend that money at McDowell. Contract Administrator Tom Timmons corrected Ms. House and informed her that a private concessionaire was funding the work at Estrella.
- Director Cardin stated the current master plan has no designated horse trail staging area. Currently, the Parks trail plan is being revised to provide trail connectivity to the main trail system.
- Commissioner Jarvis stated he was against making a horse staging area rule for all Parks because this has never been an issue at other Parks. Commissioner Jarvis stated park staff must be empowered to have the responsibility of making decisions on day-to-day parking.
- Kevin Costello offered one option being a more general rule to allow staff to enforce where people can park.
- Ms. Retterbush said the first public meeting at McDowell will be held in May. Ms. Retterbush added at San Tan equestrians staging in one section of the parking lot was tried, but it didn't work.
- Commissioner Stapley suggested that all parties should meet to discuss alternatives.

ITEM #7 – NORTH LAKE PLEASANT PLANNING UPDATE – Jenn Waller, Westside Superintendent Maricopa County Parks and Recreation – INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM

- Jenn Waller provided an update on the North Lake Pleasant Planning. The planning committee includes representatives from Parks, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Sheriff's Department and the City of Peoria.
- BLM has requested we continue the quadrant development north of Lake Pleasant. The upper quadrant was designated to be a conservation area and the area north of Humbug Bay was designated by BLM for a historic district. Lake Pleasant currently has both recreation and conservation areas. Aerial photos over 15 years show the trails, both motorized and non-motorized have kept growing and many of these roads were never planned.
- The BLM routes are motorized, however the 1995 Parks Master Plan restricts OHV use in any Park. North Lake Pleasant is a limited use area which new non-motorized areas could be added.

- One challenge for Parks is that BLM is a free access facility, while Parks is fee based. Installation of iron rangers at entrances of BLM land will be necessary. The ultimate goal is safe recreation development while preserving land. By organizing trails and activities, the negative impact will be lessened on the desert ecosystem.
- On May 4, 2011 there will be a public meeting to obtain feedback on what the public would like to see at Lake Pleasant. This will help us identify the balance of what the public wants and what we can offer.

ITEM #8 – OHV ROUTES VS. MCDOT PRIMITIVE ROADS – Jenn Waller, Westside Superintendent - Maricopa County Parks and Recreation – *INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM*

- Ms. Waller presented information on the OHV vs. MCDOT primitive roads at Lake Pleasant. The OHV areas at the Lake include Humbug and Aqua Fria. Current park rules do not allow any motorized vehicles on roads unless the road is paved, but BLM allows unlicensed OHV on their lands. There are grants for park systems who allow OHV use.
- Commissioner Jarvis approves OHV routes and would like the topic brought back to the May meeting with alternatives and ideas for OHV.

ITEM #9 – PARKS POLICY UPDATES – Aimee Upton, Administrator - Maricopa County Parks and Recreation – *INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM*

- Ms. Upton reviewed the policies that have been added, changed or updated.

ITEM # 10 - CALL TO THE COMMISSION – Joseph Marvin, Chair, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission – *INFORMATION ITEM*

- None

ITEM # 11 – CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- None

ITEM # 12 – ADJOURNMENT

- Commissioner Stapley motioned and Commissioner Yoshioka seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 a.m. All members were in favor and the motion was approved.

R.J. Cardin, Director/Secretary

Joseph Marvin, Chair