

**MARICOPA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**
Meeting of September 18, 2018

LOCATION: Maricopa County Forensic Science Center, Large Conference Training Room, 701 W. Jefferson Street, Phoenix AZ 85007

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Megha Budruk, Robert Branch, Eric Mears, Thomas Rhoades, Denise Merdon (via phone)

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Isabel Chavez, Rod Jarvis

STAFF PRESENT: RJ Cardin, Director; Donna Southard, Recorder; Dawna Taylor, PIO; Ken Vonderscher, Planning and Development Manager; 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 September 18, 2018, Parks and Recreation Commission regular meeting.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

ITEM #1 – CALL TO ORDER – Megha Budruk, Chair, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission

- The regular meeting was called to order at 9:11 a.m.

ITEM #2 – INVOCATION - None

ITEM #3 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Chair Budruk

ITEM #4 – ROLL CALL – Roll Call taken - a quorum was present.

ITEM #5 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 14, 2017, MAY 15, 2018 and AUGUST 21, 2018 REGULAR MEETINGS AND THE NOVEMBER 14, 2017 PUBLIC HEARING MEETING – Megha Budruk, Chair, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission – ACTION ITEM

- Director Cardin recommended a minor change on the August 21, 2018, regular meeting minutes to clarify the old easement “may” be extinguished but is not necessarily required to be extinguished.
- Chair Budruk motioned and Commissioner Rhoades seconded to approve the amended August 21, 2018, minutes and the November 14, 2017 and May 15, 2018 regular meeting minutes and the November 14, 2017 public hearing minutes as presented. With all in favor, none opposed, the motion was approved.

ITEM #6 – DIRECTOR’S SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS – RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM

- Director Cardin reported that staff continues to work with Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center on the rehabilitation center at McDowell Mountain Regional Park. These discussions are in conjunction with the master plan update with a commitment occurring only after the Board of Supervisors has approved the final master plan update. Director Cardin informed the Commission that on November 17, 2018, Parks will celebrate the dedication of the Maricopa Trail. The Park Supervisors, Trails Supervisor and Trades Supervisor each provided brief highlights of activities occurring within their park/division.

ITEM #7 – EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS – RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – PRESENTATION ITEM

- Director Cardin recognized the following employees for their years of service with Maricopa County: Brad Reed, Sharon Richard, and Brian Clancy (5), and Stephen Turton (15).

ITEM #8 – FY2017-2018 COMPLETED PARKS CIP PROJECTS – Brad Reed, Project Manager, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Mr. Reed provided a brief overview of the completed projects within the park system.
- Commissioner Mears inquired how the projects are budgeted, designed and procured/delivered. Mr. Reed explained that the larger projects are bid out and the smaller projects are completed by approved JOC (Job Order Contractors). Many of the designs are preapproved plans. Mr. Vonderscher explained the Parks Department has a 10-year CIP plan using previous bid costs, new bid estimates, or pricing estimates provided by the JOCs to determine the budget for years one and two.

ITEM #9 – FY2018-2019 CIP TIMELINE – Ken Vonderscher, Planning and Development Manager, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Mr. Vonderscher explained that the design, engineering and permitting process will have many projects overlapping fiscal years. Staff is discovering that with the improved economy, many of the construction companies are scheduled out for six to eight months. Staff reviews infrastructure and facilities for life expectancy, safety issues, and resource protection scheduling the highest priorities into years one, two and three using available funding. Collaboration continues with Maricopa County Facilities Department and Department of Transportation with nearly \$5M of leveraged resources and expertise on several projects.
- Commissioner Mears inquired about the availability of contractors. Mr. Vonderscher explained that due to the distance of some of the parks and the large number of jobs available to contractors, staff is seeing no-bid submittals on some projects and in general, lower numbers of submitted bids.

ITEM #10 – PARKS FINANCIAL BUDGET UPDATES – Aimee Upton, Administrator, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Ms. Upton provided an overview of the budget cycle process, funding sources and a FY2017-18 financial recap. Parks has four main operating funding sources; General Fund (less than 10% from tax-based revenues), Enhancement Fund (mountain parks), Lake Fund (Lake Pleasant and Desert Outdoor Center), and the Spur Cross Fund. Additional smaller funding sources include Parks Grants, Souvenir and Donations funds. Ms. Upton explained that Central Service Costs are county-wide services (Clerk of the Board, Office of Enterprise Technology, Procurement, etc.) that are needed by each department. In April 2018, the increased entrance fees went into effect; there was no impact in visitor attendance as numbers continue to increase over 2017.
- Commissioner Branch inquired if visitor attendance numbers will continue to be monitored in comparison to the County's population growth and the impact of the fee increase. Ms. Upton explained that attendance is regularly monitored to determine park staffing levels and future projects. Director Cardin informed the Commission that the department reports on four main performance measures each quarter to the County which includes attendance.

ITEM #11 – AZ STATE HIGHWAY 74 LETTER OF INTEREST – Emily Miller, Contract Administrator, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Ms. Miller informed the Commission that the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) owns the land around Lake Pleasant and that around 2002-2003, initial discussions were held to explore the possibility of putting a commercial concession along Highway 74. In 2017, the City of Peoria finalized a study to determine the feasibility to bring infrastructure to Lake Pleasant. The report included a traffic study which estimates 8,400 vehicles travel this stretch of the highway per day. This area of land is not currently within the parks' master plan area. Suggested concessions include gas station/convenience store, hotel, RV park, equestrian rental area, water craft sales, or any other concession that would increase/support park visitors. If the Letter of Interest (LOI) generates sufficient responses, Maricopa County Parks will submit a request to BOR to manage the land for a commercial concession area which will also require BOR approval of any development and amenities. Developer responsibilities include environmental and cultural studies, all of the infrastructure, operations, maintenance and capital improvement costs. Staff intends to publish the LOI in January 2019 with proposals due in May 2019.
- Commissioner Mears asked for clarification on the approval process from BOR to help avoid delays or possible rejection of a concession. Director Cardin explained that before the LOI is issued, Parks should have a list of approved commercial activities from BOR. If a quality commercial concession can be selected, they will be able to assist in the master plan update. The advantages of a concession in this area would be the provision of additional services to our park visitor and additional revenue to Parks.

ITEM #12 – MCDOWELL REGIONAL PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE – Lauren Bromley, Planner, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Ms. Bromley informed the Commission that meetings have been held with stakeholders, partners, and staff along with public open houses to solicit comments, ideas, requests and/or complaints. Submitted feedback includes additional camping, competitive track extensions, expansion of event staging areas, addition of a nature playground, conservation center partnership, a new nature center, new primitive camping sites, cabins, ADA barrier free trails, etc. The final public meeting is scheduled in October to provide the public with the list and draft plan elements. Dependent on the results of the final meetings and reports, a draft plan may be available to the Commission for review/approval in January 2019.

ITEM #13 – BUCKEYE HILLS REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN MINOR AMENDMENT APPROVAL – Lauren Bromley, Planner, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – ACTION ITEM

- Ms. Bromley updated the Commission that there is no electricity provided to either of the shooting ranges located within Buckeye Hills Park. The original park master plan states that the park should be provided with underground electricity. Due to feasibility studies and costs, a minor amendment is being proposed for approval to initially allow power to be installed above ground. The shooting ranges are currently being supplied power through generators.
- Director Cardin stated that this amendment had been posted on the Parks' website for public input for 30 days, receiving only positive comments. The environmental and cultural studies are running concurrently and are in the final stages of writing. A full master plan update which will include this amendment along with other major changes/additions will be scheduled in the next couple of years.
- Chair Budruk motioned to approve the Buckeye Hills Regional Park Master Plan Minor Amendment, seconded by Commissioner Mears. With all in favor, none opposed, the motion was approved.

Item #14 – CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- Mr. Jay Cook, Regional Supervisor for the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), thanked the Commission for their support of staff to collaborate with AGFD on numerous mutually beneficial projects and programs within the parks' system. He stated Game and Fish was very excited about developing a robust partnership with the County Parks.

ITEM #15 – CALL TO THE COMMISSION

- Commissioner Branch complimented the Parks on another award and asked staff to further explain the award. Director Cardin informed the Commission that Dawna Taylor wrote the submission for the NACo award. There were two components to the award; the partnership with The Nature Conservancy and the improvements to the Hassayampa Preserve to enhance visitor experience. The recognition was under the Growth and Economic Development category which is a result of the economic impact that parks create within the surrounding communities.

Item #16 – ADJOURNMENT

- There being no further business, Chair Budruk motioned, seconded by Commissioner Rhoades, to adjourn the meeting. With all in favor, none opposed, the meeting was adjourned at 11:08 am.

RJ Cardin, Director

Megha Budruk, Chair