

**MARICOPA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**
Meeting of March 21, 2017

LOCATION: Usery Mountain Regional Park, Nature Center, 3939 N. Usery Pass Road, Mesa, AZ 85207

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Rod Jarvis, Megha Budruk, Thomas Rhoades, Denise Merdon and Isabel Chavez

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Anne Lynch and Robert Branch

STAFF PRESENT: RJ Cardin, Director; Donna Southard, Recorder; Jennifer Waller, Operations Manager; Ken Vonderscher, 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 March 21, 2017, Parks and Recreation Commission regular meeting.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

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

- The regular meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

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

ITEM #3 – PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION APPOINTMENT – RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – *INFORMATION ITEM*

- Director Cardin welcomed Isabel Chavez to the Commission. Commissioner Chavez was approved by the Board of Supervisors at their February 1st meeting and represents District 5.

ITEM #4 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 17, 2017, REGULAR PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING – Megha Budruk, Vice-Chair, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Commission – *ACTION ITEM*

- Commissioner Rhoades motioned and Commissioner Merdon seconded to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2017, meeting. With all in favor, none opposed, the motion was approved.

ITEM #5 – DIRECTOR’S SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS – RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – *INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEM*

- Director Cardin thanked all the volunteers that have worked over the past year helping to keep our parks clean and providing excellent customer service to our visitors. The Hassayampa River Preserve agreements are scheduled to be approved by the Board of Supervisors on March 22. If these agreements are approved, this will be the first additional park land added to the Maricopa County park system in nearly 20 years. Other Board of Supervisor items include the termination of the agreement with Central Arizona Water Conservation District for delivery of excess CAP water; CAP is requiring the termination of the agreement, however, the golf course has done a great job to reduce water usage and excess water has not been used for the past five years. Other highlights include the year-to-date budget status; the promotion of a longtime Trades Crew employee, Jeff Gruver, to the supervisor position and the retirement of the Desert Outdoor Center Supervisor, Rich Glinski; staff continues to work with the Bureau of Land Management on the Vulture Mountain Recreation Area; all the parks have been very busy over the spring break and wild flower season with visitors and special events; there is one active bald eagle nesting site this year at Lake Pleasant; the H₂OMG event scheduled in February had been cancelled at the last moment; the promoters would like to reschedule to next year; staff will evaluate if it is feasible.

ITEM #6 – EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS – RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – PRESENTATION ITEM

- Director Cardin recognized David Jordan for his 10 years of service with Maricopa County.

ITEM #7 – 100 MILES IN 100 DAYS CHALLENGE RESULTS – Dawna Taylor, PIO, and Jennifer Johnston, Park Superintendent, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION

- Ms. Taylor and Ms. Johnston provided a brief recap of the program including the introduction of a new electronic log for completed miles by the participants. Facebook drew 800 followers with many active exchanges among the participants. Total participation numbers were slightly lower than the previous year; staff attributes the reduction in the wet winter weather. However, the category of couples/families saw an all-time high with many youth joining their parents on the challenge along with a high number of mountain bikers. Celebrations were held in each of the parks with participants completing the challenge receiving their shirts and sharing their adventures.

ITEM #8 – SCORPION BAY UPDATE – Emily Miller, Parks Contract Administrator, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department and Dan Smith, President, and Gary Elbogen, Executive Vice President, Desert Troon Companies – INFORMATION ITEM

- Ms. Miller introduced Mr. Smith, Mr. Elbogen and Mr. Coulter, from Desert Troon Companies. Mr. Elbogen provided an overview of the upgrades completed at Scorpion Bay along with proposed changes within the next six to 24 months. The new branding campaign hinges around Scorpion Bay as a destination with many different opportunities. Completed improvements include initial remodel/refresh of the restaurant and store, additional paved parking, increased rental boats and covered slips. In process improvements include expanding the restaurant kitchen and dining areas, construction of a new dock and additional restrooms, construction of additional and relocation of existing wave attenuations, and the design and construction of a prototype off-shore lodging facility. Proposed improvements include construction of a boardwalk, relocation of the dry storage area, purchase of a tour/cruise boat, and a new boat house/slip for MCSO (Maricopa County Sheriff Office), AZGFD (AZ Game and Fish Department), and the Parks Department.
- Mr. Smith informed the Commission that Desert Troon Companies have been in Arizona for 35 years. Scorpion Bay offers Park visitors the opportunity to stay longer during their visit which relates to more revenues for Desert Troon and Parks.
- Commissioner Jarvis inquired about the expansion onto the land area and how the process is going with the City of Peoria for planning and permits. Mr. Smith stated that they would like to expand to the land area and that their company had already been working with the City for many years on housing projects. Mr. Coulter informed the Commission that they work with multiple agencies. Floating projects are new to most agencies which has slowed down some of the approval processes. Both Parks staff and Troon staff continue to work through issues as they occur.
- Director Cardin stated it has been refreshing to work with a company that looks at Scorpion Bay as a master plan development and that staff has been very comfortable working with Desert Troon Companies.

ITEM #9 – PARKS FY18 BUDGET REQUEST – Aimee Upton, Administrator, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Ms. Upton provided a brief overview of Parks funding sources and the FY18 budget timelines. Final adoption by the Board of Supervisors is expected on June 19, 2017. Ms. Upton briefly reviewed the submitted proposed budget request.

ITEM #10 – VULTURE MOUNTAIN ROADS UPDATE - Ken Vonderscher, Planning and Development Manager, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Mr. Vonderscher provided a brief status update on the Vulture Mine Road. Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) provides design, construction and maintenance of county park roads. The \$12M project will include straightening out the 'S' curve which aligns with the park entrance, construction of new roads to the day use area including, the east trailhead, the campgrounds and the OHV day use areas.
- Director Cardin explained that the R&PP lands are leased property and allows Parks to collect fees for park amenities in that area. MCDOT has completed the 30% design and is now working towards the 60% design completion. Parks has hired a consultant which will work with MCDOT in conjunction with the road design to develop the 60% recreation facilities design.

ITEM #11 – BUCKEYE HILLS SHOOTING RANGE UPDATE – RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department – INFORMATION ITEM

- Director Cardin informed the Commission that the non-profit group, Buckeye Hills Sportsman Club, has been managing the public side of the facility. Their Use Management Agreement ended December 2016 and had notified Parks they would not be renewing the agreement. A Request for Proposal was released, but no interest was received. Buckeye Hills Sportsman Club agreed to continue to manage the area on a month to month basis through the end of June 2017. The facility is on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, therefore, only a non-profit can operate it. Additionally, there is no electrical power supplied to the facility; it had been constructed with 100% solar capability, but generators are being used since the solar system failed. The Air Quality Department has expressed concern over the emissions from the generators. The cost to bring electricity to the facility is approximately \$1.6M. Interest to operate the facility has since come from the City of Buckeye Police Department, Luke Air Force Base and the Arizona Department of Public Safety. Staff will meet with each agency to explore options and commitment level with a goal to keep the facility open to the public for some use. If no agreement can be reached, the facility may operate only as a short-term government shooting facility until it is known if electricity can be brought to the facility. If this occurs, discussions with BLM may be broached to see if this can become a public commercial shooting range.

ITEM #12 – CALL TO THE COMMISSION

- None

Item #13 – CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- None

Item #14 – ADJOURNMENT

- There being no further business, Commissioner Rhoades motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Merdon. With all in favor, none opposed, the meeting was adjourned at 11:52 am.

RJ Cardin, Director

Anne Lynch, Chair