

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

02/18/2021

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board held a meeting on February 18, 2021 at 6:01 p.m. via zoom webinar.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Present:

Cassie McClure – District 1
Stan Engle – District 4
Eric Montgomery – District 5
Megan Schuller – District 6
Jeff Thompson – District 2

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Absent:

Eli Guzman n- At Large
Maryln Zahler – District 3

Others Present:

Phil Catanach, Recreation Administrator, Parks & Recreation
Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation
Franco Granillo, Parks Administrator, Parks & Recreation
Catherine Mathews, Landscape Architect, Parks & Recreation
Hazel Nevarez, Senior Office Manager, Parks & Recreation
Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator, Parks & Recreation
James Woods, Keep Las Cruces Beautiful Coordinator
Sreedevi Bhathala Mohanraj, Architect, Public Works
Jennifer Morrow, Interim Engineering Administrator, Public Works
Jimmy Moreno, Construction Management Administrator, Public Works
David Villarreal, Project Manager, Construction Management, Public Works
Alex Flores, Property Project Manager, Construction Management, Public Works
Arturo Gonzalez, Program Manager, ECM International
Ikani Taumoepeau, Assistant City Manager
Tony Trevino, Interim Deputy Director, Public Works
Gregory Shervanick, Public

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting of February 18, 2021 via Zoom webinar and was brought to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair McClure and recognized as having a legal quorum.

1. Introductions

1.1 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members

Board members introduced themselves and stated the district they represent. Ms. McClure welcomed Mr. Jeff Thompson as the newest Board Member and said introductions would be done at the regular Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting on January 21, 2021.

1.2 Parks and Recreation Staff

Staff introduced themselves and stated their position.

2. Conflict of Interest

No Conflict of Interest.

3. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Schuller moved to accept agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Engle. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Schuller moved to approve minutes of January 14, 2021, seconded by Mr. Engle.

Jeff Thompson, District 2 - Aye
Stan Engle, District 4 - Aye
Megan Schuller, District 6 - Aye
Cassie McClure, District 1 - Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Thompson moved to approve the minutes of November 19, 2020 as amended, seconded by Ms. Schuller. Motion carried unanimously.

Jeff Thompson, District 2 - Aye
Stan Engle, District 4 - Aye
Megan Schuller, District 6 - Aye
Cassie McClure, District 1 - Aye

5. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

6. Action Items

There were no action items.

7. Discussion Items

7.1 Parks & Recreation Go Bond Projects Update – Public Works

Ms. Jennifer Morrow provided a Power Point presentation to the Board on Go Bond Program Update.

Ms. Morrow reported the Hadley Recreation Complex is 52% complete with estimated completion date of February 23, 2021. She reviewed status on items pending completion and items completed at Maag Ball Field and Harty Ball Field. Ms. Morrow reported Maag is ahead of schedule, Hardy is on schedule, Paz and Ron Galla lighting is planned for later, and irrigation is on schedule. Ms. Morrow reported actual expenses are above planned expenses which is partly towards the lighting.

Ms. Morrow reported on Parks & Sports Courts status. She reported Lion's Park tennis courts are complete and said the pickle ball community is using two of the courts while the courts at Apodaca are being worked on. The fencing, trees, light pole installations and removals at Apodaca has started. Estimated completion for Apodaca is May 2021. Ms. Morrow reported Desert Trails has been completed pending final punch list and the park is open to the public. Ms. Morrow reported demolition at Young Park has started. Ms. Morrow said Desert Trails walking trail is ahead of schedule and Klein Park, Hillrise Park, Fourhills Park, Papen Community Center, and Benavidez Community Center are scheduled for later this year. She reported status is at 26% on time and 32% on cash.

Ms. Morrow reported Unidad Park is scheduled to deliver 90% in a week. She said plan went from a splash pad without circulation to one with a recirculation system in it which will require additional design, and additional time from NMED for review, so the schedule has been updated accordingly. Ms. Morrow said they are hoping to advertise the RFP the middle of June 2021.

Ms. Morrow reported the East Mesa Public Rec Complex is at 95% design. She said they are looking to get this out to bid in a week.

Ms. Morrow reported the RFP's for the two Dog Parks, one located at Rinconada & Bataan Memorial and the other at Burn Lake, were opened and the SAC committee selected the highest scored contractor. She said Public Works is currently in negotiations with the contractor. If negotiations are successful, next step is to seek Council approval.

Ms. Morrow reported having 95% construction documents under review on the Walking, Jogging, Biking Trails. She said they have most of the EBID permits and are working with EBID to review the trails and give their input.

Ms. Morrow reported they are in good shape with the overall schedule. They are still in design of East Mesa Complex, Unidad Playground, into construction 1/3 of the way on E. Hadley, Parks and Sports Courts, starting construction on the Recreation Trails, and in negotiations from the bidding on Dog Parks. Ms. Morrow displayed program budget and noted the amounts shown for East Hadley Recreation Center, Park and Sports Courts, and Walking, Jogging, Biking are actual numbers from a contractor, and the East Mesa Public Recreation Center, Unidad Playground, and the Dog Park are the engineer's estimate.

7.2 Keep Las Cruces Beautiful (KLCB) Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) – Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator

Mr. Robert Nunez presented a Power Point presentation on the Youth Conservation Corp Mural Project, with a summation of the process from receiving the grant, to hiring of crew members and facilitator, of trainings covered, identifying, and choosing location, creating design concept, presenting to the Las Cruces Art Board and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for review and approval, and finally starting and finishing mural. Mr. Nunez reported it was a six-week project with crew salaries totaling \$27,648, supplies, \$2,788 and City Match of \$12,193.

Mr. James Woods acknowledged his staff, Francisco Ontiveros and Luis Vasquez, for their help in preparing the tunnel for paint. He said he also hired a NMSU work-study, Breanna Yazzie, who also assisted the Youth crew members. Mr. Woods informed the Board the Youth Conservation Corps crew members consisted of Stephanie Villegas, Remy McDowell, Christian Cruz, Josef Buckingham, Kimberly Esparza, Kimberly Riley, Marina Vasconcellos, and Facilitator leading the project, Laramie Medina. Before, during, and after pictures of Triviz Multi-Use Path Access Tunnel to show progress and final view of mural were provided in the Power Point presentation. Mr. Woods noted there was one frame of the mural, a mantel with sports equipment on it and jerseys hanging, which the YCC Corps head office wants to use on their website as it symbolizes what the youth went through this past year not being able to play sports during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Thompson said he had a chance to see the finished project and it is spectacular and should be proud of the crew – it was well done.

Mr. Engle said the mural looks great and thanks to Mr. Woods and the students who did the hard work.

Chair McClure said the mural looks great and use of the picture on the website is awesome. She hopes more projects like this can be done, especially now because youth need more social interaction and this project was done in a very responsible way and it is a benefit for the community. She thanked Mr. Woods for guiding this project along.

7.3 Keep Las Cruces Beautiful (KLCB) Update – James Woods, KLCB Program Coordinator

Mr. Woods informed the Board a lot of Keep Las Cruces Beautiful (KLCB) programming has been at a standstill. Supplies were offered to the community to be able to do clean ups on their own – some groups cleaned the river and the desert area in the Dona Ana. He said in going to yellow, they should be able to get some small groups to do some cleanups, try to get back to rescheduling some district cleans ups - Team Up to Clean Up. Mr. Woods said staff has been able to continue to take care of graffiti abatements. Mr. Woods said as Dona Ana moves into yellow status, staff should be able to do some more organized type of clean ups and offer more resources for the community to get more involved.

Ms. McClure asked if KLCB is working with the Picacho Arts District as she saw a graffiti sign saying Keep Las Cruces Beautiful. Mr. Woods said he hasn't but will reach out to them to see what they are all about.

7.4 New Park Resolution – Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation

Ms. Delgado updated the Board on the new park for District 5. Parks and Recreation has a funding source to purchase land and equip for the new park, approximately \$675,000.00. A few parcels have been found and staff is working with Land Management to reach out to owners to see if they are interested in selling. Staff is working with Community Engagement to put together a plan to make outreach to neighbors where park will be located to get feedback on amenities and things community is looking for in the park. Ms. Delgado said items that need to be considered to make sure property is going to fit our needs is access to park, lighting, security, if there is on street parking and if not, could a parking lot be added, and making sure park isn't on a major road or one that is going to be expanded. Ms. Delgado said they also work closely with Public Works. Park is due to be in its completion by January 2021.

Ms. Schuller asked what the average acreage is for the park. Ms. Delgado said two acres.

Mr. Engle asked if funding source is from the Phillipou lawsuit. Ms. Delgado said yes.

7.5 FY22 Budget Requests – Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation

Ms. Delgado informed the Board on Parks and Recreation Fiscal Year 22 proposed budget requests. Budget is under \$2 million and are tied to PEAK goals:

Personnel	\$9.6M
Operating	\$4.7M
Capital	\$444,000
Total	14.7M

Ms. Delgado informed the Board personnel dollars requested is for a Parks District Manager, Project Manager, personnel for the new 50 Meter Pool, Youth Program Monitors, Youth Program Specialists (increased hours), Park Maintenance workers for a Trail Crew and for South District, and a Deputy Director.

Ms. Delgado informed the Board operating dollars requested is for special projects, increase in utilities, KLCB-graffiti abatement, park amenities replacement, 50 Meter Pool (Operations) and park supplies.

Ms. Delgado informed the Board capital dollars requested is for shade structure, Water Smart Grant match, Regional Aquatic Center dehumidifier, Juvenile Citation Program (JCP) exterior repair/replacement, Meerscheidt Recreation Center bathroom/locker room floor replacement and Safe Haven exterior/renovation. Ms. Delgado noted these are General Fund requests only.

Mr. Thompson, District 2, asked what the projected offset revenue would be for the 50-meter pool. Ms. Delgado said at this point no, but per the Fees and Charges policy, aim is to reach 33% recovery. Ms. Delgado said this isn't hit with the current aquatic center and outdoor facilities with the reason being the fees are very low.

Ms. Schuller asked if cost for new projects and need for additional park maintenance staff was captured in this budget. Ms. Delgado said yes.

Ms. McClure asked for information on Youth Monitors. Ms. Delgado said they are part-time, currently at 20 hours per person, and need to be moved up to 30 hours (benefits kick in at 30 hours). Ms. Delgado said this will help because many of these Youth Monitors start as students and Parks and Recreation would like to give them a place where they can start thinking about benefits and choosing Parks and Recreation as a career. Ms. Delgado added the increase in hours will also give Youth Monitors an opportunity to earn some annual leave.

8. Staff Member Comments

Ms. Delgado informed the Board staff is working on the budget and once final budget is approved, it will be brought back to the Board. Staff is also looking for land for the new park.

Mr. Granillo informed the Board he will be reporting to the Board at the next meeting the maintenance impact to the department when a new facility is received, to staff and budget. He gave a quick rundown of facilities that are already maintained:

- Over 300 miles of medians and right of ways
- 299 alleys and all the highway interchanges
- 100 parks
- 37 city building landscapes (which staff manages contract), three directly for Parks and Recreation which are Frank O'Brien Papen Community Center, Regional Aquatic Center, and Meerscheidt Recreation Center, and zone management for downtown – Plaza de Las Cruces, City Hall, and Young Park.
- Athletic fields section – take care of 45 to 50 miles of trails once Go Bond is implemented, currently under 40, five baseball and softball complexes, two multiuse complexes – Soldados and Provencio Van Dame, two soccer complexes – Burn, and High Noon Soccer which is not ours yet, but we maintain, five specialty ranges.
- Community Forestry Program which is responsible for planting 300 trees annually and responsible for removing hazardous trees and giving advice to community giving advise regarding planting of trees and shrubbery.
- Construction crew which supports the special projects team, athletics, parks, community forestry, medians and right of ways, and maintains sports courts.
- Staff also assists with events in different departments of the city, Keep Las Cruces Beautiful cleanups, recreation movies and music.

Ms. Mathews informed the Board her section continues to work on their projects, and reviewed the top ten:

- Skatepark renovation project – request for proposals for design build has been advertised and anticipate having under contract in the next two months.
- In process of receiving grant for the Apodaca Park Splash Pad Aquatic playground and multiuse trail. The cultural resources study has been completed.
- Parks security and lighting project at Veterans Memorial Park. The electrical upgrades to ensure the project is successful has been completed. Light fixtures have been selected.
- In negotiations with the consultant to do design portion for the Recreation Trails Program (RTP) grant for the Las Cruces Lateral Trail project. Should be under contract soon.
- Smart Controllers project with the Water Smart Project – have quote for getting booster pumps for the irrigation systems at Apodaca Park and Soldados multiuse fields and confirming scope of work.
- Lighting upgrades for Women’s Veteran Monument. Contractor discovered an out of code condition with grounding wires so working on a change order.
- City Bond median landscapes are continuing – Phase 1 portion, near completion as far as construction goes, still quite a bit of work to be done on a few of the medians and a punch list items to be addressed on a number of the medians.
- Highland Park is getting ready to move into construction.
- Lohman Avenue and Roadrunner medians – have funding for the design and are writing the request for proposal.
- AARP Fitlot project – have met with the supplier of the equipment, reviewed site conditions, and went over installation requirements. Supplier is providing quote to AARP. Installation should start in March and completed before August.

Mr. Nunez informed the Board the Out of School Program is offering tutoring sessions for Kindergarten thru 5th grade, and 6th thru 12th grade. He said the teen tutoring sessions are about 90% full. He said the Las Cruces Public Schools will be going to a hybrid offering beginning with high school so staff will be collecting data to see if there will be any vacancies. He said the K-5 has seen some increases. Mr. Nunez said staff is looking at offering a fun filled traditional spring break recreational program – communicating with Department of Health and City Management. Staff is also preparing for summer programs, coordinating activities and outings with various non-profits, preparing to set up some agreements with those organizations.

Mr. Nunez informed the Board the Juvenile Citation Program is still virtual. Staff are offering classes and working with subcontractor to identify alternative programming to expend grant funds.

Mr. Nunez informed the Board Keep Las Cruces Beautiful program has received the green light to offer some additional programming so over the next four months will be getting out to various districts and offering some opportunities for the community to assist in beautifying the community.

Mr. Catanach informed the Board the league gym wooden floor is being replaced at Meerscheidt Recreation Center. He said the athletic staff is looking at how they can move forward with sports in the near future and are currently working on active movement and sport skills activities that can be offered outdoors – schedule should be out by mid-March.

Mr. Catanach informed the Board recreation staff has been working on ideas for activities as Dona Ana moves into the yellow status under Covid-19. He said videos are posted on Facebook of sports skills, crocheting, arts and crafts skills, nutrition, and the Parks and Recreation two step video from last summer.

Mr. Catanach informed the Board Aquatic staff was able to fix the broken filtration system and were able to open the Regional Aquatic Center for lap swim and channel walk (by appointment). He said Frenger pool has been open for lap swim with temperature of pool maintained between 78 and 80 degrees. Mr. Catanach said the fitness area at the Regional Aquatic Center is open for ten or less (people) a session by appointment. Mr. Catanach added safety protocols are followed and said by the end of this month, will have reached 10,000 patrons attending Frenger Pool and Regional Aquatic Center during the Covid-19 period.

Mr. Catanach informed the Board the City Employee Wellness Program offers Stick to It Challenges where one walks a certain number of minutes or set daily fitness goals, which has over 30 participants. He said they also have 150 participants in the Ziggy Challenge -employees walking, exercising to earn points for incentives.

Mr. Catanach said staff is also looking to see what they can do to continue virtual music in the park and to see what the 4th of July will look like.

Ms. Delgado informed the Board she did send an email to the State of New Mexico to ask what kinds of programming and activities can be done in yellow status, to make sure staff understands how certain spaces are defined.

Ms. Delgado informed the Board a presentation on how the splash pad water is filtered and cleaned at the next Board meeting per Mr. Montgomery's inquiry.

9. Board Member Comments

Chair McClure acknowledged she has seen the Parks and Recreation videos on Facebook.

Mr. Engle reported he reached out to his Councilor regarding the District 5 new park, letting her know the Board's concern that the Resolution would set a precedent and other Councilors would want Parks and Recreation to add more parks than they can sustain. He said Councilor Bencomo's response was she recognized the urgency of the park in District 5 which is why the rest of the Council went along with it, and she would consider any future resolutions of that kind within the context of Parks and Recreation being able to sustain the development and maintenance.

Mr. Engle said for everyone to stay healthy and get vaccine as soon as possible.

Mr. Thompson said he also reached out to his Councilor and Councilor Abeyta-Stuve thought it was a one-off situation and would be more cognizant as move forward with other requests.

Mr. Montgomery apologized for arriving a little bit late to this meeting. He said he appreciates Ms. Nevarez and Ms. Delgado's comments on the splashpad water and looks forward to hearing more on this at the next meeting. Mr. Montgomery wished everyone a wonderful February.

Ms. Schuller thanked Board and staff for everything.

Chair McClure said she also reached out to Councilor Gandara and like the other Councilors, and received similar response – a one-off, recognize issue. Ms. McClure got a sense it was prerogative of City Councilors to do due diligence. Chair McClure said for next meeting, will hear from Mr. Granillo what a new park adds to workload. She said there was discussion with Councilor Gandara that they aren't quite aware of affects of new park, or median and would like thru the Board see more detail. Ms. McClure said Councilor Gandara would also like to know how other programs, i.e., Mano y Mano, could aid Parks and Recreation.

Chair McClure thanked Board and staff for all they do.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Montgomery moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Engle.

Eric Montgomery - Aye
Stan Engle - Aye
Jeff Thompson - Aye
Megan Schuller - Aye

Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Hazel Nevarez, Recording Secretary

Cassie McClure, Chair