The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board held a meeting on January 20, 2022, at 6:03 p.m. at City Hall Council Chambers, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Present:

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

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Absent:

Jeff Thompson – District 2
Vacant – District 3
Vacant – At Large

Others Present:

Phil Catanach, Recreation Services Administrator
Franco Granillo, Parks Administrator
Cathy Mathews, Landscape Architect
Hazel Nevarez, Recording Secretary
Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator,
Tony Trevino, Deputy Director/Public Works
James Woods, Keep Las Cruces Beautiful (KLCB) Program Coordinator
Gregory Shervanick, Public

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting of January 20, 2022, at City Hall Council Chambers, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM and was brought to order at 6:03 p.m. by Chair McClure and recognized the meeting 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.

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

Board Member Schuller moved to move item 6.2, Board Member Telephonic Attendance, to Discussion Items, seconded by Board Member Montgomery.

Roll Call Vote:
- Board Member Schuller - Aye
- Board Member Engle – Aye
- Board Member Montgomery – Aye
- Chair McClure - Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

Board Member Montgomery moved to approve minutes of July 15, 2021, seconded by Board Member Schuller.

Roll Call Vote:
- Board Member Schuller - Aye
- Board Member Engle – Aye
- Board Member Montgomery – Aye
- Chair McClure - Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Participation

No public participation.

6. Action Items

6.1 Direct Email for Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Members – Chair McClure, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Chair McClure said that in discussion with Board Member Engle, they would like to institute an email address for the Parks & Recreation Board and publicize it to the public to hear any requests they have.

There was discussion among the Board with input from Ms. Delgado about whether it would be one Email for the whole Board, or separate emails for each District, what platform would be used to manage the email, whether there would be any management problems and if this has been discussed with I.T., proposed use of a business card with the email address for Board Members to provide constituents, how would this email address be advertised, and whether both this email and Board Members individual email be posted on the City website.
Board Member Engle moved to direct Parks and Recreation staff to begin the process of determining if it’s feasible for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to have separate emails for each District or if there should be only one email for the entire Board, seconded by Board Member Montgomery.

There was no further discussion.

Roll Call Vote:
Board Member Schuller - Aye
Board Member Engle – Aye
Board Member Montgomery – Aye
Chair McClure - Aye
Motion carried unanimously.

6.2 Board Member Telephonic Attendance – Chair McClure, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

This item was motioned and approved (under Agenda approval) to be under discussion items.

7. Discussion Items

6.2 Board Member Telephone Attendance (moved item) – Chair McClure, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Chair McClure explained that pre-approval to allow a Board Member to attend a future meeting by telephone cannot be done because the Board Member needs to be voted in by a quorum at the current meeting and the Board Member being voted in cannot be counted as part of the quorum.

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

Mr. Woods provided the Board with an update on numbers and events that have taken place over the last few months:
• Great American Clean Up that was held in April 2021 was scaled back with about 200 volunteers and collected three tons of trash along with the roll offs that were stationed there.
• Toss No Mas event held in October had about 425 volunteers and collected over five tons of trash along with the roll offs that were stationed there.
• Great American Clean Up is coming up in April 2022.
• The graffiti team has abated 1,070 locations, averaging 90 to 100 per month. A lot of the graffiti is being seen on the electric boxes, mailboxes, poles, culverts, and ditches.
• Team Ups to Clean Ups continue. Some districts have a big turnout and some districts not so big.
• Bataan Memorial East and West has been on focus. AARP, one of the Adopt a Spot groups, did a cleanup on the frontage road between Rinconada and Sonoma Ranch collecting over 25 bags of trash this month. Americas High School has been doing a Martin Luther King Day community Service over the last four or five years, and this year 30 students collected over 40 bags of trash in this area, East and West.

Mr. Woods reported he attended the Keep America Beautiful Conference in November 2021, doing a lot of networking with other communities. He said litter studies show cigarette butts are the number one item of litter, with face masks being the second.

In closing, Mr. Woods said the KLCB program is running smooth, navigating through the Covid pandemic.

Chair McClure asked if there is anything from the conference that Mr. Woods would like to implement locally. Mr. Woods said the Great American Clean Up, held by Keep America Beautiful, was discussed and the questions brought forward was who you use as a messenger to get volunteers on board, how do you determine which areas of town or City to focus on, with different ideas shared. He said you take different parts of what participants said about their communities and see what works in our community. He added his main take away was who is that messenger, who is going to help him and help the city get everybody on board for these cleanups. Chair McClure suggested utilizing the Youth Advisory Board to help spread the message.

7.2 Go Bond Update – Tony Trevino, Deputy Director/Public Works

Mr. Tony Trevino, Deputy Director of Public Works, provided a PowerPoint presentation on Parks and Recreation’s Go Bond projects. He reviewed with the Board on the following projects reporting on start date to current status, completion or estimated completion, and overall program schedule:

Question 1 (Q1) – Hadley Recreation Complex, Parks & Sports Courts, Unidad Park, East Mesa Public Rec Complex, Dog Parks.

Question 4 (Q4) – Walking, Jogging, Biking Trails

Board Member Montgomery said he recalled on the Hadley Complex work being done, there was discussion on one of the restrooms being rehabbed and specifically the ADA access to it would be lost because of how it was getting redesigned, it wasn’t going to be quite as wide. Board Member Montgomery asked if this was still targeted for addressing for a future time or on a future Go Bond component. Mr. Trevino reported those items were taken care of and all restrooms have ADA accessibility for their stalls.

7.3 50 Meter Competition Pool Update – Tony Trevino, Deputy Director/Public Works

Mr. Tony Trevino, Deputy Director of Public Works, provided a PowerPoint presentation providing a project update on the Community Competition Pool reporting from start of contract award to
current status, floor plan, and project photos as project progresses, and reported project as being 15%.

Board Member Schuller asked since construction has started, is there a built-in cost of inflation for price of materials that is going on currently or how is it anticipated going forward for completion of the project. Mr. Trevino said the route taken for this project was a CMAR, Construction Manager at Risk, which gives a guaranteed maximum price, and so price is set there.

7.4 Parks & Recreation Special Projects Update – Catherine Mathews, Landscape Architect

Ms. Catherine Mathews, Landscape Architect with Parks and Recreation, informed the Board she will be presenting on Capital projects being worked on. She provided the Board with a Special Project Priorities and Status Spreadsheet dated 01-18-2022, which she explained is a tool used on a weekly basis to allow team to keep track of projects, to know where they are going, and to allow team to communicate with each about where each project stands. She informed the Board the projects team consists of herself, Franco Granillo, Parks Administrator, and two Project Specialists, Wilfred Martinez, and Sergio Esparza. Ms. Mathews explained projects are prioritized, the team has a matrix to objectively evaluate projects as they come for the big Capital Improvement Plan that goes into the budget, and the same evaluation tool is used to go through the projects on an individual basis as they are assigned. Ms. Mathews explained the first page of the Special Project Priorities Matrix are the top ten projects being worked on, the second page are the next ten, the third page are On Deck, projects that are coming that have funding identified but aren’t being worked on yet. The next page are Supported, where Parks & Recreation serves as the client (the user Department) and the Special Projects team supports those projects. The next page are Parking Lot Items, projects that are coming up that will need small amounts of attention but haven’t moved up to the level of being an active on-going project. The next page are Completed Special Projects. The next page are Internal Projects, projects that the Parks Department work on with support from the Special Projects team. The next page are Internal Completed Projects, and finally Idle Projects, projects that are moving nowhere but want to be kept in mind for possibly coming up in the future. Ms. Mathews explained this report shows the name of the project in number order, initials of the Lead person working on the project, phase status (planning, design, construction, close out), color codes phase status (green for things going good, orange for projects where things are a little bit stuck, red for effort needed on the project), Consultant/Contractor/Vendor, Contract Status, Budget Amount, Budget Source, PO Number, and notes about the project.

Chair McClure asked what some of the problems are for projects coded red. Ms. Mathews responded sometimes it is problems getting requests for Proposal (RFP) out since sometimes don’t get assistance in a timely manner, or quotes received are out of budget and need to fix scope, or budget is too high.

Ms. Mathews also did a PowerPoint presentation for Board Members to show locations of some of the top ten projects and report on their status.
Board Member Schuller asked what has gone on with the dying trees at Pioneer Woman’s Park. Mr. Franco Granillo, Parks Administrator, reported studies were done and a Certified Tree Arborist was hired to go through trees in District One, and were given funding by Council to assess these trees further. He said the hazardous trees are set for removal this coming fiscal year, and it’s a three-year tiered out plan, which discuss the current tree situation if we have another storm like the one this past summer, things that can be done to increase tree canopy, and removal of dangerous trees.

Chair McClure asked if there is going to be any community input in terms of wayfinding. Ms. Mathews reported absolutely and will also be showcasing the work to the public.

Board Member Engle asked if the design of the Woman’s Park Gazebo fitting in with the master plan that was presented to the Board in the past. Ms. Mathews responded yes.

Chair McClure asked who owns the park on Hayner. Ms. Mathews responded this is Branigan Park and a master plan is being done on it. She said there has been a suggestion that the city purchase the area around Branigan Park, and it coincides with the Amador proximo plan which is a guiding document for creating the master plan. Ms. Mathews said that if the city was to purchase the additional land, staff if working with the consultant to come up with ideas on how this would lay out in the master plan. Chair McClure asked how purchase of the land would be initiated? Ms. Mathews said initiating purchase is out of her hands, but staff is taking the idea as expressed in Amador proximo and planning from there to get an idea of a solid layout. Chair McClure asked how this is put into fruition. Ms. Mathews said the master plan would be presented to Council as a Parks and Recreation recommendation about what should be done and representing all public input received, and staff’s ideas and their knowledge of what community needs are. Ms. Mathews says the process is to go to the public first, then consultant comes up with a master plan consulting with public several times, then the plan comes before the Board for recommendation to Council, and then goes to Council for approval. Chair McClure asked when this plan will go to Council. Ms. Mathews said it is anticipated to go to Council by June 2022.

Board Member Schuller asked what else is on the legislative docket for Parks and Recreation. Ms. Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation, reported funding for another skate park, more funding for Woman’s Pioneer Park, and Veteran’s Memorial Park parking lot.

Board Member Engle asked Ms. Mathews if she could give a quick summary of what Downtown Pavers and Trees is under Internal Projects On-Deck is. Ms. Mathews said there is some lifting of the pavers and will have to find a solution. Board Member Engle said across the street on Main Street from Ikard’s, there looks to be a tree that once existed that is no longer there and could be a trip hazard and a liability issue for the City and asked if this could be expedited before someone trips on the hole that is there. Ms. Mathews said will make note of this to address as soon as possible.

7.5 City of Las Cruces Parks & Recreation Department 2021-2022 Fees & Charges/Facility Use Policy/Red Line – Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation
Ms. Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks and Recreation, informed the Board that before the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Fees and Charges had been reviewed with the Board and since then some additional changes have been made. A copy of the City of the Las Cruces Parks & Recreation Department 2021-2022 Fees & Charges/Facility Use Policy/Red Line had been emailed to the Board to review prior to this meeting. Ms. Delgado went over the additional changes with the Board and let them know action is needed at this time and next month’s Board meeting will be used for public input and any questions the Board may have. Ms. Delgado mentioned, while explaining the removal of Fields 11 and 12 from High Noon Soccer Fields, that Parks and Recreation is still actively seeking the lease, and legal is still working on this.

Chair McClure asked what it means to rent a trail. Ms. Delgado said Las Cruces has running groups that like to have runs on a trail, so trail will have to closed off, so Parks & Recreation rents the trail.

Chair McClure asked regarding field lease at High Noon Soccer, if Legal could come to explain their process, as this lease issue has been going on forever.

Board Member Engle asked regarding trail rentals, if there is a minimum number of people needed to rent. Mr. Granillo when a large group comes for use of trails, staff works with Public Works and the Police Department, to come up with a traffic control plan, and they help in determining the minimum and maximums. and from there can determine what portions of trail is required for the event. He added as for the $2 fee per person, it is easier to place a fee per participant number than put a price per mile.

Chair McClure asked if there is consideration to permit trails during heavy use time. Mr. Granillo said the groups that have come in are not too big. They put an event together based on the size of the trail they want to use and are very well gauged. Mr. Granillo says he has never come across an issue with times or space for an event.

Chair McClure asked if there is publication of trail being used for an event. Mr. Granillo says the biggest advertisements he has seen for these events are on social media. He added he can work with running groups on this.

Board Member Engle said it would be beneficial to let the group wanting to use a trail to be tolerant of other users, if this is something that can be written into the rules. Ms. Delgado said this can be done.

8. Staff Member Comments

Mr. Phil Catanach, Recreation Services Administrator, informed the Board all the Recreation facilities are open, swimming pools and recreation centers are fully serviced, and programs are running. With Governor allowing opening in July of 2021, staff moved forward with community events – 4th of July, Movies and Music in the Park. He added currently, Adult Indoor Volleyball is
going on with 48 teams, over 500 players, playing over 200 matches in the season, and Youth Indoor Soccer with 16 teams, over 160 youth. Mr. Catanach said on Youth Indoor Soccer, staff is teaming up with McArthur Elementary Community School to help them organize teams to participate in our leagues. He said there are three teams at McArthur and out of the thirty-three (33) youth that are playing, thirty (30) of them had never participated in organized sports—a grant was received to pay the league fees. Mr. Catanach said staff will be doing the same with Youth Basketball. Mr. Catanach added staff is getting ready for the summer, with 4th of July, Music in the Park, Movies in the Park. He said he is very proud of staff keeping things going through this Covid-19 pandemic.

Chair McClure asked if transportation is provided for the youth in the Community school. Mr. Catanach responded yes, they are driven to the games through their school bus, and practices are done at McArthur Elementary.

Mr. Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator, informed the Board the After School Program is currently running, along with the Teen Program, and the Weed & Seed Program. He said there has been fluctuation in numbers within the school sites as School Administration has limited the numbers allowed to attend. He added there have been staffing challenges but have utilized staff from other sections of Parks and Recreation to continue to provide services. Mr. Nunez said over winter break, staff partnered with non-profit groups such as Friends of the Organ Mountains and Cruces Creatives, to provide activities. He said the Weed & Seed Program recently worked with the National Guard from Fort Bragg, who will be going to Africa, and they wanted to see how our programs run so they can try to do something similar in Africa. Mr. Nunez reported the Youth Development Diversion Program is about 10% behind budgetarily with the grant as there has been a reduction in referrals from the Juvenile Probation Office (JPO), who are working remotely for the state. He said staff is trying to come up with some outside the box ideas to get youth into the program. He added there have been challenges in the South – Anthony, Dona Ana, Santa Teresa. Mr. Nunez reported personnel wise, with loss of some staff to other positions, hiring continues. Mr. Nunez said the application for the Youth Board has recently been revised and will be moving forward with this Board once the new Teen Connection Recreation Services Supervisor is hired. Mr. Nunez reported additional funds have been applied through the Keep Las Cruces Program to pursue the Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) grant to rehabilitate murals through out the City.

Chair McClure asked if Parks & Recreation is experiencing delays in hiring in terms of how long it takes to get somebody on board once someone has been selected for a position. Mr. Nunez said it is at a minimum four weeks, but realistically six to eight weeks. Board Member Schuller informed Mr. Nunez New Mexico State University has an upcoming Career Fair in February.

Mr. Franco Granillo reported when things shut down in March of 2020, his staff was back within a week because of cleanliness issues at parks and safety issues that came up. He said during the Covid-19 pandemic, things have been normal for the parks section. He said staff is keeping up with maintenance and keeping up with new properties. He said the challenge has been getting leagues back open. He added the leagues did well on following the direction and guidelines
provided at the league meeting that was held. Mr. Granillo said hopefully things don’t turn back and things can move forward to have a successful park season.

Ms. Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks and Recreation informed the Board the Department’s Peak Business Plan is being updated and incorporating the items from the City’s Strategic Plan and Elevate Las Cruces. She also said the Department is in the middle of the budget process and once it is complete, she will bring the budget forward to the Board. Ms. Delgado said staff is looking for a facility for Frisbee Golf and will come before the Board once some places have been identified, and then to Council for a final decision and funding. This was from a request that came from the community through a Councilor. Ms. Delgado said the Department has started the National Recreation and Park Association accreditation process.

Chair McClure asked if the location for Frisbee Golf, if this is going to look like a golf course. Ms. Delgado said it will function like a golf course but won’t look like a golf course. She said natural terrain will be used and could be an existing facility.

9. Board Member Comments

Board Member Montgomery said it’s great to be back.

Board Member Engle said its good to see everybody again and urges everyone to get their shots.

Board Member Schuller said she wanted to commend Parks and Recreation during this time. She said it’s great to be back in person and it’s rewarding to see that Parks and Recreation has not stopped progressing and feels staff doesn’t get enough kudos for this. Ms. Schuller said her term ends in March 2022 and if anyone knows of anybody that could replace her, she could relay the information. Ms. Delgado said City Clerk is aware and will notify Councilor Flores.

Chair McClure said Parks and Recreation deserves credit because recreation helps mental health and staff has helped people get through on a day-to-day basis. She said the city would not be the same without the staff of Parks and Recreation and to make sure to let staff know this.

10. Adjournment

Board Member Schuller moved to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting, seconded by Board Member Montgomery.

Roll Call:

   Board Member Schuller - Aye
   Board Member Engle – Aye
   Board Member Montgomery – Aye
   Chair McClure - Aye

Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.