

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2017

**SUMMARIZED MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Tim Behrens  
Brian Bloom  
Charles Hammersley  
Adam Kaupisch  
Jim Stratton

**STAFF PRESENT**

Andy Bertelsen  
Sara Dechter  
Kathy Drummond  
Shawn Mullaney  
Rebecca Sayers  
Steve Zimmerman

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Chair Jennifer Grogan  
Thomas Ziegler

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Co-Chair Bloom called the meeting of September 20, 2017 to order at 4:05 p.m. Co-Chair Bloom was in attendance via teleconference so he asked if one of the other Commissioners would be willing to chair the meeting. Commissioner Hammersley volunteered to do so and ran the meeting from there.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Co-Chair Bloom (via teleconference), Commissioners Behrens, Bloom, Hammersley, Kaupisch, and Stratton were present for roll call. Chair Grogan and Commissioner Ziegler were absent.

3. **INTRODUCTIONS**

All of the Commissioners welcomed Commissioner Behrens who stated that he was excited to serve on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

4. **APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 21, 2017 MINUTES**

Motion made by Commissioner Stratton to approve the August 16, 2017 minutes as written. Motion seconded by Commissioner Kaupisch. Motion passed unanimously with 5 yeas votes.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No public participation.

6. **PRESENTATION ITEMS**

The Commission agreed to reorder the agenda so the Friends of Thorpe Park presentation occurred first.

- A. **Friends of Thorpe Park presentation.** Rose Houk, representing the Friends of Thorpe Park, presented a draft design of eight acres of park property which is currently being utilized as the Public Works Yard. Public Works will be vacating the property within the next 18 months to two years after the new Public Works facility is completed. The community group has held public meetings and developed a pro forma budget and a list of amenities they would like to see on the site, which they are referring to as the Thorpe Park Annex.

## PRESENTATION ITEMS (Cont'd)

The estimated budget costs are approximately \$1,328,390 including renovating the existing building and site remediation. Amenities could include:

- Wildlife viewing area with a ramada
- Community garden with a ramada
- Deciduous trees (135 trees 3" diameter)
- Fruit trees (38 trees 3" diameter)
- Irrigation for trees
- Plaza (5,625 sq. ft.)
- Benches (12 6 ft. benches made with recycled plastic)
- Walkways (8" wide concrete or stabilized granite)
- Playground

- B. United States Tennis Association (USTA) presentation. Eric Mitchell, Executive Director for the United States Tennis Association (USTA) Southwest Region gave a power point presentation noting the USTA's role in promoting and developing the sport of tennis. Nationally, since 2000, tennis programs have grown by as much as 11%, but have decreased or are flat in Northern Arizona because the Flagstaff community lacks a large municipal facility where tournaments could be held. An estimated 1,650 students are served each year through the local Flagstaff Tennis Association (FTA) in cooperation with the Flagstaff Unified School District after school programs, middle schools, and high schools. Lessons are currently being taught with pop-up nets in school gyms and in parking lots using foam balls. The high school's tennis program has difficulty scheduling matches because Flagstaff only has two four court locations and matches need to be staggered to run a successful tournament.

Mr. Mitchell's presentation included:

- An inventory of Flagstaff tennis courts including private, semi-private, and public
- Current programming for youth and adults
- Missed opportunities for programming due to lack of infrastructure
- National trends in providing a safe, supervised experience for youth and adults in a centralized location
- Differences in pocket courts versus larger facilities
- Youth and adult programming that could be offered:
  - Junior team tennis (ages 10-18)
  - Proper high school matches (6 courts required)
  - City run programming (contracted instructor)
  - Youth summer camps (i.e. Nike camps)
  - Better adult league programming (longer, overlapping seasons)
  - 18+, 40+, 55+, 65+, men's, women's, mixed, tri-level
  - League sectional championships
- Economic impact (FTA could bid on revenue generating tournaments, offer clinics, classes league play, and travel teams)
- USTA's wish list for Flagstaff includes:
  - 18 outdoor adult courts, 4 outdoor youth courts, 6 indoor courts with lights
  - Full-time, staffed facility (like Hal Jensen, Jay Lively, Aquaplex)
  - Monitored facility, to handle scheduling courts, rental equipment (ball machine, etc.)
  - Locker rooms with showers, and other amenities (like Aquaplex)
  - Pro Shop (can be outsourced and source of revenue)
  - Snack Bar
  - Viewing areas, including shading
  - Conference room for community events/meetings
- USTA Resources:
  - On-staff engineers to help with design and oversight of facility build
  - USTA National and sectional assistance with creating programming
  - Opportunities to apply for grants

## PRESENTATION ITEMS (Cont'd)

- C. High Occupancy Housing Plan presentation. Sara Dechter, Comprehensive Planning Manager for the City of Flagstaff, presented this item. The City's Comprehensive Planning Program has been working with members of the public, other City departments, and Northern Arizona University during the last year to develop a High Occupancy Housing Plan. The draft of this document was released in July and the community has had several chances to weigh in on the proposal during Commission meetings, office hours, one-on-one meetings, online, and at workshops. The High Occupancy Housing Plan has identified opportunities and impediments to achieving the goals of the Regional Plan concerning this type of development.

Staff asked Commissioners to review the excerpts from the plan that pertain to Parks and Recreation issues and consider the following recommendations and questions.

- As the analysis has shown a great need for small public parks, what criteria should staff use to decide what is an acceptable smaller park and what is not?
- What should staff and the Commission's role be in reviewing these smaller park spaces?
- Are there ideas on ways to fund and support smaller parks centrally located to dense neighborhoods and activity centers?

Further discussion and policy questions will be reviewed during the October meeting and until then Commissioners can send their comments directly to Sara via e-mail at [sdechter@flagstaffaz.gov](mailto:sdechter@flagstaffaz.gov). The draft plan will be presented to City Council on September 26, which is another opportunity for the public to share their comments. The final plan will be presented to City Council at a joint City Council / Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on November 8.

- D. Flagstaff Open Space, Parks and Recreation Program (FOSPR) presentation. Chuck Hammersley, community citizen of the FOSPR Steering Committee, gave a brief history of the model used by Coconino County for a tax increase that went to Coconino County voters in 2002 and expired in 2014. The Committee is proposing the City of Flagstaff charge a one-eighth-cent sales tax to pay for capital projects to acquire and protect open space, acquire, develop, and maintain parks, recreation facilities, sports facilities, and trail systems. The FOSPR committee is a political action committee which is driven by community members. The group is trying to identify projects and cost estimates to present to City Council on February 6 when they will ask the Council to consider putting the initiative on the November 2018 ballot. The committee will hold two more public meetings in October and November and they have asked the community to submit their project before November 17.

## 7. DISCUSSION/STANDING ITEMS

- A. Parks and Recreation unfunded capital list and priorities. Commissioners and staff reviewed the list that was completed at July's meeting. Adam Kaupisch, a citizen representing the USTA Association Northern Arizona, and the pickleball group asked the Commission to consider amending the unfunded capital priorities list to include a racquet facility which would include 18 outdoor adult courts, 4 outdoor youth courts, 6 indoor courts with lights, 16 outdoor and 6 indoor pickleball courts, location to be determined.. Commissioners agreed that maintenance, operations, and programming costs need to be considered before making that change. Commissioners were in agreement to update the list as follows:

### First priorities - in priority order

1. West Side Neighborhood Park land acquisition and development (private land acquisition)
2. Lake Mary Park - land acquisition and development;
3. Christensen Park - land acquisition and development;
4. Continental Regional Park Improvements - developing land owned by the City;
5. Thorpe Park Annex (Public Works Yard Repurpose)
6. Cheshire Park development;

## DISCUSSION/STANDING ITEMS (Cont'd.)

### Examples of facilities to the above developments include:

- Racquet facility including outdoor and indoor courts sized for the community (tennis and pickleball in a single facility)
- Splash pad (incorporate into a new park development)
- Snow play (active and passive)
- Girls softball
- Adult softball
- Fields (soccer, multipurpose)
- Special event venue

### Secondary Priorities

- Buffalo Park improvements (develop the parking lot)
- Competitive Lap Pool (is this still needed?)
- Second Sheet of Ice (NAU building rink and NAU Hockey potentially moving there)
- Wheeler Park Redevelopment

B. Lake Mary and Christensen Parks land acquisition update. Staff continues to explore opportunities in the Lake Mary area and the airport regulations regarding development around the airport. The City's Real Estate Manager is exploring opportunities for the Christensen park property.

## 8. REPORTS

- A. Monthly highlights of Parks. A monthly report was included in the agenda packet and stands as presented. The Hal Jensen Recreation Center tennis courts project was completed on September 20 and the facility has been re-opened to the public.
- B. Monthly highlights of Recreation. A monthly report was included in the agenda packet and stands as presented. Other items staff is currently working on include budget priorities, the Halloween Harvest event, partnerships with the Downtown Business Alliance (DBA), and the Winter Wonderland event.
- C. Monthly highlights of Open Space. A monthly report was included in the agenda packet and stands as presented.

## 9. INFORMATION ITEMS TO AND FROM COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

It was noted that Commissioner Stratton will be absent for the October 18 meeting.

## 10. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE OCTOBER 18, 2017 MEETING

- High occupancy housing discussion and direction to staff
- Thorpe Park Annex concept discussion
- West side park discussion
- Parks and Recreation unfunded capital list and priorities
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## 11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.