



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
Virtual Meeting – Teams Meeting  
8/17/2020 4:00 p.m.



**SUMMARIZED MINUTES**

**Members Present**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Brian Bloom (Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Mark Cox |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Ryan Martin         | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Stephen Parsons     | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Aurelia Yazzie                 |   |

**Councilmember / Liaison to the City Council**

- Councilmember Regina Salas

**Staff Present**

- Rick Barrett – City Engineer
- Cathy Guetschow - Admin Specialist
- Lalena Guider – Admin Specialist
- Amy Hagin - Parks Manager
- Trevor Henry - Capital Improvements Project Manager
- Martin Ince – Multi-Model Planner
- Gino Leoni - Parks Supervisor
- Rebecca Sayers - Parks and Recreation Director
- Robert Wallace - Open Space Specialist
- Jon Wilson - Recreation Manager

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Chairperson Bloom.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Bloom, Commissioners Cox, Martin, and Parsons were present for roll call.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 15, 2020 MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Parsons to approve the June 15, 2020 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Martin. Motion passed unanimously with four (4) yea votes.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Public Comment: A Letter was submitted for Item 5B and is attached to these minutes for the record.

5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- A. Switzer Canyon water transmission line project – Trevor Henry, Capital Improvements Project Manager, and Turner Engineering  
Trevor Henry updated the Parks and Recreation Commission regarding phase four of the Switzer Canyon project as it relates to Open Space, and McPherson and Buffalo parks. The city is programming and planning transition mains from Route 66 to the city reservoirs near Shultz Pass. Two options are possible for Phase 4. The first option includes building into the Open Space parcel. The second option would consider work in the privately-owned San Francisco Street. Mr. Henry summarized the pros, cons, and

costs of each option. Open Space has approved of working within the Open Space section, which is the more cost-effective option, providing that additional measures are in place for seeding and water to revegetate the area to previous conditions. Robert Wallace, liaison for the Open Spaces Commission, relayed that Commission's concerns about the impact to open space and for long-term maintenance costs and re-vegetation. The project team is working to provide long term and restoration efforts in response to those concerns. A possible FUTS trail addition would be maintained by Parks staff, however a FUTS trail is not in the plans at this time. Martin Ince, Multi Model Planner informed the commission that funds are not available for a FUTS trail addition. The Parks and Recreation Commission voiced general consensus with the proposed alignment as long as the Open Space Commissions concerns are taken care of with appropriate seed mixes and extended watering schedules depending on weather when the project is constructed.

- B. Pocket park opportunities along the Rio de Flag – Trevor Henry, Capital Improvements Project Manager Trevor Henry with the team of project managers, Christine Cameron, and Rick Barrett, provided information to the commission regarding opportunities for pocket parks in the upper reach around the Rio de Flag project. The Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the city, oversees advertising, awards, and construction. The city is a nonfederal sponsor in charge of utilities relocation and property acquisition. The team proposed possibilities for pocket parks in the upper reach to be considered after the project is completed.

A letter was submitted to the commission from Joan Jamieson with a request to rebuild the footbridge over the Rio de Flag between Wheeler park and the library. The commission discussed the footbridge noting that capital dollars are not available, and that the elevation of the new Rio channel will change enough that a bridge is no longer necessary. The Commission also discussed that among other capital improvement priorities, such as constructing pocket parks along the alignment, the footbridge would not be among them. The Commission will continue to follow the project and return to address betterments after the project is completed.

- C. Flagstaff Trails Initiative (FTI) information. Martin Ince, Multi-Model Planner and Robert Wallace, Open Space Specialist, provided the Flagstaff Trails Initiative (FTI) history and current projects for FTI including the creation of an advisory board to create a 501(C)3 which will allow them to apply for grants. FTI are looking at additional partnerships for funding trail development. There were questions about the planning of a trail system at Observatory Mesa, a City protected open space area. FTI is not directly involved with that project which will be managed by City Open Space program staff. The City Open Space program is also working on an application to rezone McMillian Mesa from Public Facilities to Open Space, including a neighborhood participation plan and cultural survey of the property.

- D. Graffiti in Parks – Amy Hagin, Parks Manager.  
Amy Hagin reported on graffiti in parks, primarily the skate parks. The areas of graffiti occur in locked areas after hours and Parks staff notify authorities when repeated graffiti occurs. Parks staff will continue to explore security cameras as a possible option to deter vandalism and assist police with investigations. Previous research into cameras has shown them to be cost prohibitive. Other solutions might be to commission artists to paint murals, which have shown positive results at Bushmaster Park. Councilmember Salas reported that she has discussed this problem with Council and encouraged a collaborate partnership with the Beautification and Public Arts program. Councilmember Salas also recommended a Park Watch program in neighborhoods in partnership with the police department.

- E. Commission vacancy appointments, Rebecca Sayers, Parks and Recreation Director.

Sayers informed the commission that there are currently three vacancies. One of these is Commissioner Martin's seat and he has applied for reappointment. Four applications have been received and will be going to council.

F. COVID-19 update, Rebecca Sayers

City council will reconvene August 18, 2020 and will review the city's reentry plan. The City is in Phase II currently and recreation centers are closed. Parks remain open to the public. The Flagstaff areas has met the Council-established criteria for reopening. Staff and the Council have received many requests to permit field use from user groups like soccer and flag football, as well as indoor sport organizations using the Jay Lively Activity Center.

G. City budget update, Rebecca Sayers

The City remains in the Significant Stage of the Recession Plan. Recreation Manager, Jon Wilson informed the Commission that refunds for Aquaplex memberships are being provided to the public. Sayers reported the shutdown created a total revenue loss for Parks and Recreation totaling nearly \$1 million over the months of the closure. Revenue projections, assuming there is a fall opening of recreation centers, predict a possible 60% to 80% in additional revenue loss. The current closure and a slow opening will continue to offer savings on expenses for operations and maintenance.

H. Thorpe park annex update, Rebecca Sayers

City Staff working to organize a chartering meeting in September of internal staff to start the planning process for the public participation process and outreach about the future of the site. Stakeholder interviews are planned to begin occurring this fall. Parks and Recreation staff have partnered with City planners as well as the City's Indigenous Coordinator on the project.

6. COUNCIL LIASON REPORT

Councilmember Salas spoke on the Significant stage of the recession plan. The city is seeing a 5.5 to 5.9 percent reduction in revenue which equates to a \$2.4 to \$6.7 million loss in revenue. She also updated the Commission on upcoming council meeting discussions.

7. REPORTS

A. Monthly Highlights of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space – No questions or discussion

8. INFORMATION ITEMS TO AND FROM COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

None

9. AGENDA ITEMS FOR OCTOBER 2020 MEETING

- Current and future work program for the Parks and Recreation Commission
- City updates – COVID-19 and city budget/recession plan
- Joel Montalvo Park – Change in building purpose
- December meeting date

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.

4668 Windsong  
Flagstaff, AZ 86004  
August 14, 2020

### Let's Build a New Footbridge

Dear Ms. Sayers, Chairman Bloom, Mr. Martin, Mr. Parsons, Ms. Yazzie, and Mr. Cox:

I am interested in the construction of a new pedestrian footbridge between Wheeler Park and the main branch of the Flagstaff Coconino County Public Library. The footbridge over the Rio between Wheeler Park and the Library was one of the civic features that marked Flagstaff a friendly and connected community. It served as a visible link between our loves of recreation and learning. The Daily Sun included our remembrances of the old footbridge in December (2018) and January (2019). Now, let's look to the future: Let's build a new footbridge!

As reported in the Daily Sun, the footbridge was dismantled primarily due to unsafe conditions. However, that decision was also informed by the Rio's future alignment due to the Rio de Flag flood control project (RDF) and by its cost to repair. The Daily Sun reported very different estimates at different times (ranging from \$70,000 to \$1,000,000).

In the past, I contacted Rick Barrett, the city engineer, because I thought that this could be part of the Rio de Flag Floodwater Project, but he told me I was wrong. He suggested that I contact another commission. However, I did not know which one, and so I contacted both the Beautification and Public Arts Commission and the Parks and Recreation Commission. Eliza Kretzmann and Rebecca Sayers wrote that I should begin with Parks and Recreation. Mr. Barret told me that if a new footbridge were to be built, money would have to be allocated, and plans drawn up before any work could proceed. This seems to me like a several year project, and I know this is a tough time, but I hope that you think a new footbridge is worth considering.

Thanks,

Joan Jamieson