

**CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD (MPRAB)**

Minutes

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Location: In person at the Parks and Recreation Dept office, 1801 N 4th St NW, and Zoom

Members Present: *At-Large Members* - Valerie Martinez (chair), and Tony Johnson; *District 2*- Julie Radoslovich (vice chair); *District 3* - Anna Nelson, PhD; *District 5* - John Ajie; *District 7* - Cynthia Serna; *District 9* - Fredrica “Rickie” Bergquist

Members Absent: *District 1*- Vacant; *District 4*- Vacant; *District 6* - Vacant; *District 8* – Vacant

Guests Present: Ralph Arellanes

City Staff Present: Director David Simon, Deputy Director David Flores, CIP Program Manager Cheryl Somerfeldt

1. Call to Order:

- a) Chair Valerie Martinez called the meeting to order at 12:31 pm.
- b) Introduction of board members.
- c) Introduction of guests.

2. Business Meeting:

- a) Agenda for August 6 2024 approved unanimously.
- b) Approval of previous August 6, 2024 meeting minutes approved unanimously.

3. Old Business:

- a) Presentation of MPRAB 2024 report to City Council now scheduled for the November 18 City Council meeting.
Councilor Champine is assisting with scheduling, and Chair Martinez will make a presentation. The report requests include:
 - i. \$80,000 of additional funds for park activation
 - ii. Faster nomination and approval of board members (it has taken 2 years in the past and full membership / representation is important.
- b) Open Space Alliance revised MOU - update/status
Chair Martinez: The Open Space Alliance, a 501c3, is in the process of reviewing their MOU with the City, and believe it could be expanded to include MPRAB or “OSA friends” to apply for grant money for park activation. The Open Space Alliance has also been invited to present to MPRAB.
- c) Snow Park renaming request withdrawn by Arellanes family
Mr. Arellanes withdrew the request to rename Snow Park out of respect for Mr. Snow’s family and to pursue the renaming of Stardust Skies Park. Mr. Arellanes submitted a notification email to the Stardust Skies Neighborhood Association. Therefore, the remaining

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MPRAB Park Naming Policy action items such as signs in the park will be completed by the Parks Department. At the public meeting, each guest will have a chance to speak for 2 minutes in the same way as the Snow Park re-name request.

Julie Radoslovich asked when all options to memorialize Andres Arellanes will be discussed. *Director Simon* will present Parks Department options to honor Andres Arellanes when the board requests.

- d. Draft letter requesting opioid settlement money for parks programs

Julie Radoslovich read the draft letter to the local government coordinating commission, the group that meets with City Council, the County Commission, and APS. She will attend the October 24, 2024 meeting on behalf of MPRAB and will report back.

The board members are in support of the letter as written, which emphasizes that the board encourages funds be used to increase park activity.

Dr. Ana Nelson moved to adopt or support the opioid settlement letter, Fredrica “Rickie” Bergquist second. The board voted unanimously to support the letter.

Chair Martinez mentioned that the board is currently pursuing funding for park activation in the following three ways:

- i. The MPRAB report requests funds from the mayor and council.
- ii. The Open Space Alliance collaboration for public fund raising.
- iii. The Opioid Settlement Letter request for funds.

4. Reports:

- a) Parks and Recreation Department, Directors

Deputy Director Flores:

- *Staff Changes:* Shay Armijo, previous Associate Director is now the Deputy Director of Senior Affairs and is no longer with the Parks Department. Susan Rice is the new Recreation Division Manager, and manages the Balloon Fiesta, racket sports, the climbing wall, and bicycles. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of the Golf Division retired.
- *Events:* The 10-mile foothills run will be on November 10th, 2024. The new McKinley Esperanza opens on November 20th, 2024.

Director Simon:

- *Projects:* The New Mexico Finance Authority Water Trust Board Grant State Agency funds water resource projects, and the Parks Department is pursuing a grant to renovate Puerto del Sol golf course for water savings. The Parks Department is also pursuing a grant from this agency to renovate Bennie Hargrove Park. In September, Parks was awarded a federal grant for the renovation of Mesa Verde Park from the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Program (ORLP) under the National Parks Service. The ORLP has also granted funds for the Officer Danial Webster Children’s Park project.

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The Parks Department repaired the “open slide” at Juan Tabo Hills Park and opened it to the public. Vandalism and slides being used at night required extra security, which is very expensive and illustrative. Parks is trying to open the “closed slide” but awaits replacement parts. A new cantina has opened at the Ladera Golf Course, and the EPC recently unanimously approved to install lighting at the Ladera Golf Course driving range to provide a more robust offering to the public.

- *Policy:* The e-bike ordinance was formally adopted by City Council to allow e-bikes on all City managed paved trails. This ordinance opens all unpaved trails to e-bikes unless the Parks Department chooses to close the trail or unless an underlying land owner does not allow e-bikes.

The City’s foothill trails are open to e-bikes. All east mountain trails are closed to e-bikes.

At a meeting last Monday night, the MRGCD gave permission for e-bikes to use all paved trails that cross their lands now and in the future.

The e-bike ordinance applied a 20mph speed limit to all trail users unless the Parks Department applies a lower speed limit, which will occur where appropriate. Currently, signage is being developed and ordered.

Electric micro-mobility devices are allowed on paved trails, and were already permitted due to ADA regulations. Vehicles over 100lbs are not permitted.

Additional costs such as signage and speed limit monitoring will be paid by trails funds. Operating funding is not covered and will be a challenge. Education of user etiquette is the most important piece.

Studies show that the impacts of e-bikes are the same as the impacts of other bicycles since they do not make a sound, and therefore the impact on wildlife is similar, although there may be more people on the trail total.

b) Parks and Recreation Department, Staff

- The Parks Department received an ORLP grant to expand disc golf in the City. We are looking to spend the funds at 3 sites: Brent Baca at Montessa, Ladera Dam, and Piedras Marcadas. Disc golf activates a park, but it is difficult to find good sites.

5. Public Comment:

Mr. Arellanes requested 2 board members and 2 staff members to work on the name change request for Stardust Skies Park.

Response: Once all steps in the MPRAB Park Naming policy are complete, the public meeting date can be scheduled.

Karen Cathey: Happy to see Phil Chacon is coming along as she is very hopeful for this park, but wants to make sure to deter vandalism. Happy about Jack and Jill Park, and hoping it will open again soon.

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Karen is personally invited to the upcoming International District Library Park meeting.

6. Review Action Items

- a) The vice-chair will submit the opioid settlement letter and attend the meeting.
- b) Staff will contact the Open Space Division regarding an update on their MOU review.
- c) Staff will send the board the e-bike ordinance.
- d) Staff will send the board a map of each Council district with parks listed.

7. Next Meeting, December 3rd, 2025

- a) Adjourned at 2:17pm