

METROPOLITAN PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of May 2, 2024 Meeting

Location: Parks and Recreation Department Office and Zoom

Members Present: Valerie Martinez, Julie Radoslovich, Cynthia Serna, Tony Johnson

Members Absent: Anna Walker, David Duhigg

City Staff Present: Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez, CIP Program Manager Cheryl Somerfeldt

Call to Order

- Introduction of Guests

Business Meeting

Public Comment

Old Business

New Business

- Student interns for public health and public safety.
- Valerie will work on a report to the Mayor this year.

Reports

- Deputy Director Vasquez reported:
 - Last weekend, the USA Cycling National Collegiate Championships occurred in Albuquerque. It was a three day event; first day included time trials on Atrisco Vista west of the Volcanoes. The second day included a road race up and down in the hills of the east mountains with over 150 riders. The third day included laps around Balloon Fiesta Park which coincidentally held the Celtic Festival the same day.
 - Last weekend, a Disc Golf Tournament with almost 150 participants from the West, ages 8-72, occurred at Ladera Golf Course.
 - Park activation events throughout the City are moving forward. Park updates include:
 - Manzano Mesa Pickleball Courts (including 33 courts including a championship court) will be finished soon and there will be a large tournament on Memorial Day weekend.
 - Work continues at Wells Park and Phil Chacon Park major renovation projects, and MPRAB could possibly visit these on the field trip.
 - Food trucks in parks will expanded from 3 parks to at least 6 parks.
 - PRD applied for an ORLP grant for a major renovation of Mesa Verde Park, and we are waiting for a decision.

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- Questions:
 - Julie Radoslovich asked if the City can subsidize or target vendors that are more affordable?
 - Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez answered that the City does not subsidize. There are currently 20 food trucks that rotate throughout the three parks, and this will be expanded with the new program to include six parks. PRD will be cognizant of pricing when looking for additional vendors.
 - Julie Radoslovich asked why the Federal Government is interested in Mesa Verde Park?
 - Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez answered that the ORLP grant is targeted for urban disadvantaged communities to expand outdoor recreation with an emphasis on natural elements. The application included adding trees, expanding pollinator garden, reducing turf/water consumption, nature play, etc.
 - Valerie Martinez asked about the grant match.
 - Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez answered that the 2025 GO Bond would cover the required matching funds.
 - Tony Johnson mentioned that during the International District Festival, he saw issues with Wilson Park - weeds, dumpster full, and fence.
 - Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez answered that he will check with Parks Maintenance regarding Wilson Park.
 - Tony Johnson mentioned that during the block party at Wilson Park last year OEI funded popsicles and the community funded hamburgers and hotdogs. For the International District Festival, people were able to sign up for a free food ticket.
 - Julie Radoslovich mentioned that organizations could partner.
 - Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez mentioned that park pop-up funding can be used for this purpose by organizers; and there is a calendar for all these events for maintenance purposes.
 - Valerie Martinez stated that they appreciate the big events but want to balance activation of underutilized parks and keep all parks maintained.

Sub-Committee Reports

- Board members will be visiting Lavaland Park.

Board Members Round Table

- Julie Radoslovich reported on the enormous amount of coordination involved with the Mandala event. She found it easy to work with and organize funding with the Parks & Rec Dept. Approximately 85 people total participated in the mandala building especially including the targeted 1st and 2nd graders. The Chicano studies program was a partner and provided music. The Rio Grande Food Project provided composting. The church provided flowers. Paletas were provided. The larger mandala was taken down smaller versions built. It was an excellent community project. Julie will work on written report.

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- Cynthia Serna reported that the Workers Memorial Park final concept is almost done. Is there a way to infuse job search opportunities into park activation? Marion Fox Park has a new NA president (Nick Hammell) focuses on park activation and using parks as the base for community activities such as scheduled coffee with a cop, harm reduction training, bicycle repair and chat event, and a meetup spot in general. BernCo provided a grant to clean up the alleyway in her neighborhood (Mile High) for recreation purposes. The alley is used as a walking space, recreation space, murals, and little library. Bernco asked them to talk to other NA's about it, and the idea is spreading. City alley-ways can be used for recreation, which helps the community and deters crime in the alley.
- Valerie Martinez reported that it would help NAs to learn from each other and share information.
- Cynthia Serna stated that Owen Sena has been doing monthly neighborhood walks with different neighborhood associations and they have been including parks in those walks. It would be good to reach out to Vanessa Baca of ONC.
- Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez mentioned that ONC was doing lunch and learn webinars and he will try to get 2-3 case studies.
- Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez stated that Rocky Mountain Youth Corps and Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps are employed often on Parks and Open Space projects.

Optional Public Comment

- Ramona Teo commented that she was involved with the nature mandala at Pat Hurly and it was a beautiful event and she would be happy to do it again.
- Wes Duplantier appreciated hearing about the mandala event. He talked to Dan Champagne, City Councilor for District 8 where he lives, about being nominated to the MPRAB. It is important for all positions and all committees for all people to be able to get in and get involved if desired.

Review Action items

- Group will Plan Lavaland field trip as a group. Julie Radoslovich will call to see if NA president is available for Lavaland June 21st.
- Valerie Martinez will contact Dan Champagne in District 8.
- Valerie Martinez will start drafting annual report.
- Valerie Martinez will follow up on other potential board member (Frederica, District 5).
- Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez will follow up on Council action send email in minute. Will get together with Ramona. And send letter.

Vote is to have next meeting June 4th meeting and no meeting in July.

Adjourned