Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

May 20, 2021

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board held a meeting on May 20, 2021 at 6:01 p.m. via zoom webinar.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Present:

Cassie McClure – District 1
Jeff Thompson – District 2
Stan Engle – District 4
Eric Montgomery – District 5
Megan Schuller – District 6

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Absent:

Eli Guzman - At Large
Maryln Zahler – District 3

Others Present:

Phil Catanach, Recreation Administrator, Parks & Recreation
Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation
Franco Granillo, Parks Administrator, Parks & Recreation
Catherine Mathews, Landscape Architect, Parks & Recreation
Hazel Nevarez, Senior Office Manager, Parks & Recreation
Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator
Sreedevi Bhathala Mohanraj, Architect, Public Works
Jennifer Morrow, Interim Engineering Administrator, Public Works
David Viarreal, Project Manager, Public Works
Tony Trevino, Public Works
Arturo Gonzalez, Architect/Project Manager, ECM International/El Paso, TX
David Shields, Dekker/Perich/Sabatini
Carrie Denton, Dekker/Perich/Sabatini
Kurtis Morton, Dekker/Perich/Sabatini
Ken Romig, Dekker/Perich/Sabatini
Gregory Shervanick, Public
Thomas Winter, Public
Joseph Sandoval, Public

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting of May 20, 2021 via Zoom webinar and was brought to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair McClure and recognized 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 Montgomery moved to accept agenda as presented, seconded by Board Member Engle. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

Board Member Montgomery moved to approve minutes of April 15, 2021, seconded by Board Member Engle. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Participation

Ms. Hazel Nevarez read email received from Tom and Maggie Winter:

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Good evening,

The city asked for public input on two GO Bond projects: designing the rehab of the Apodaca pickleball courts and designing the East Mesa Rec Area. According to the GO Bond website, the design for Apodaca is 100% complete and construction is 45% complete. The design for East Mesa is 98% complete.

How can the public see the final design and specifications for each of these projects?

Whom would we contact if we had questions?

Thank you!

Tom & Maggie Winter
magswheel@aol.com

Ms. Sonya Delgado reported she did report the email inquiry from Tom and Maggie Winter to Jennifer Morrow, Public Works. Ms. Delgado said Ms. Morrow is going to get the information and send to Tom and Maggie Winter. Ms. Delgado added staff is looking to see if this information can be posted on the web but will need to coordinate this with a different organization that is not with the City at the moment. Ms. Morrow said she will follow-up on the email and make sure the concerns are addressed.
Mr. Gregory Shervandinck reported he was at the Capital Improvements meeting this afternoon and heard some very disheartening figures concerning the Nevada Cool Corridor. He said Ms. Delgado also came on the line and made a defense and David Sedillo spoke to the last time. Mr. Shervandinck said David Sedillo told the Board he would come back to give the actual figures for the Nevada Cool Corridor since he (Mr. Shervandinck) prefaced the Board as there were $2.2 million as total cost, which is incorrect now because those costs have grown. He said 60% of the plant life of the Nevada Cool Corridor has been replaced and the contract for watering them for the six months after they were put in became 12 months. Mr. Shervandinck said this flood control demonstration project is not what was told originally in 2018 when this committee listened to ten people who heard what the project was going to be. He said it will never fulfill what the Board was told it was. Mr. Shervandinck said the City of Las Cruces basically has blatantly lied to everyone concerning what the cost of this project was. He said it shifted from Sustainability in the beginning to Parks and Recreation because they were going to handle the green space, taking care of the green products in the chicanes which included trees, which there are no trees, and then essentially it now is in the Public Works section of the City of Las Cruces.

Mr. Shervandinck said he also, after hearing the draft report for the conservation of water for the City of Las Cruces from Rhonda Diaz at the Utilities work session last week on Thursday, he is going to specify that Parks and Recreation gets a motorized valve for the control water that fills Young Park pond for the simple fact that that line is the Utility of Las Cruces line which services water to the pond. He said it is unacceptable that that pond is filled in the manner that it has been filled for the last ten months. Mr. Shervandinck said if there is a problem with conserving water in Las Cruces and if the citizens are going to be penalized, then we also need to be aware of the use of water for filling that pond. He said as he has expressed before in these public input meetings, there is a problem with the pond and if the City doesn’t realize that, they should hire somebody that can validate his observation that after a certain point when the pond is filled above the concrete layers, that the physics of water and the pressure of gravity forces the water into the ground and out of the pond.

Mr. Shervandinck said these are items that he is going to pursue because if the Amazing Race is going to start at Young Park, and it should be a nice place to be, there are a number of people that go there every evening, there are fisherman, and since the maintenance, you don’t have enough people, but 15 parks are going to be built in the next 24 months, then need to think about how to handle hiring more staff to take care of parks for the citizens of Las Cruces. To Ms. Delgado, Mr. Shervandinck said he would defend her to the hilt because she is an employee of the City of Las Cruces and when the Administration above her, including Councilor Vasquez for District 3, does not understand that Ms. Delgado does not have the staff, nor does Councilor Sorg in District 5 understand that he cannot have five brand new park in District 5 over the next 24 months without the ability to maintain or take care of them. Mr. Shervandinck said it is a ridiculous situation that unfortunately Parks and Recreation is caught in because of the GO Bond as well. He said since the Go Bond staff has met in the last week and has decided that within five weeks they will begin to put out information concerning whether or not there should be another GO Bond round, he will be an opponent and will speak very loudly that the City of Las Cruces should not ask its citizens
to pay for more funding for GO Bond projects that cannot be completed since the projects
couldn’t be completed from the first round. Mr. Shervanick thanked the Board for their time and
for listening to him. He said he believes it’s important that transparency is coming to play, and he
hopes the other respondents during public participation will also tell the truth about what their
needs are as citizens. Mr. Shervanick again thanked the Board, Ms. Delgado, and Ms. Morrow.

Ms. Delgado said she will bring back a presentation that talks about the Cool Corridor in its
entirety and will also ask Public Works and any other department that was involved to give a full
report on the entire project.

Regarding the motorized valve at Young Park Pond, Ms. Delgado said staff is already looking into
this. She said staff did appreciate Mr. Shervanick bringing this forward and when he did, staff did
some research and have started to have discussions to see what can be done. She said staff does
understand there are issues with this pond and will address them as quickly as possible.

6. Action Items

There were no action items.

7. Discussion Items

7.1 Veteran’s Park Parking Lot – Cathy Mathews, Landscape Architect/Parks & Recreation and
David Viarreal, Project Manager/Public Works

Ms. Catherine Mathews informed the Board staff an update regarding the Veteran’s Memorial
Park parking lot project follows. She said the design process is nearing completion and David
Viarreal with Public Works is managing the project and he has invited the consultant to give a
brief presentation to see where the project stands and to give the Board an opportunity to ask
questions.

Mr. David Viarreal informed the Board design for the Veteran’s Memorial Park parking lot is 95%
complete and informed the Board Dr. David Shields of Bohannon Huston will provide a
presentation with some plans and mentioned Bohannan Houston’s architectural consultants are
also present.

Mr. David Shields of Bohannon Huston informed the Board they are doing the civil side
improvements and are teamed with Dekker/Perich/Sabatini on the pavilion and new restrooms
proposed for Veteran’s Memorial Park. Mr. Shields provided an overhead presentation and
noted they are basing the design on the original masterplan that was initiated by Parks and
Recreation of the City of Las Cruces. The presentation covered the demolition plan, overall
parking lot layout, utility plan, off site drainage plan, parking lot lighting. Mr. David Shields turned
over the rest of the presentation to Ms. Carrie Denton from Dekker/Perich/Sabatini who then
covered the architectural layout and landscape plan for Veteran’s Memorial Park. The
presentation was turned over to Mr. Ken Romig of Dekker/Perich/Sabatini who covered the
irrigation plan. Mr. Romig turned over the presentation to Mr. Kurtis Morton of
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini who then covered the architectural floor and ceiling plans for the pavilion and restrooms, the architectural building elevations and finishes and the architectural building sections. Mr. Shields finished the presentation reviewing cost estimates - pavilion and parking lot $1,562,973 and offsite drainage $864,000.

Mr. Shields ended thanking those who have served our great country and thanked the City of Las Cruces for their continued support in honoring the Veterans of our community and expressed it is an honor and privilege to be a small part of this.

Chair McClure said it was a great presentation. There were no questions from the Board.

7.2 Go Bond Projects Update – Jennifer Morrow, Senior Engineer/Public Works

Ms. Jennifer Morrow, Interim Engineering Administrator for the City of Las Cruces, provided an overhead presentation on GO Bond Program Update. The update covered Question 1- Hadley Recreation Complex, Question 1 – Parks & Sports Courts, Question 1 – Unidad Park, Question 1 – E Mesa Public Rec Complex, Question 1 – Dog Parks, Question 4 – Walking, Jogging, Biking Trails, as well as overall program budget.

There were no questions from the Board.

7.3 Parks & Recreation Programming Update

7.3.1 Phil, Catanach, Recreation Services Administrator/Parks & Recreation

Mr. Phil Catanach gave the Board an update on how the Recreation Section is moving forward with programming, letting them know what current programs are running and what is coming up.

In reference to Movies in the Park, Mr. Shervanick provided the following information as an FYI: it is now illegal to park on the south side of Nevada from Walnut to Lees Drive. There are signs that are posted so you can no longer park on half of the street and if you follow the whole street of Nevada to Solano, there are 12 more no parking signs, so for the length of .95 miles is no parking on Nevada. If you go to Movies in the Park, they will ticket you for parking on the south side of Nevada between the park and the school.

Chair McClure asked if there is a way to get a reprieve for that day. Mr. Catanach said he will look into this.

7.3.2 Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator/Parks & Recreation

Mr. Robert Nunez gave the Board an update on what is happening in his Youth Services Section - Juvenile Citation Program, Keep Las Cruces Beautiful, Out of School Time, Teen Connection, and upcoming Summer Recreation.

7.3.3 Franco Granillo, Parks Administrator
Mr. Granillo gave the Board an update on the re-opening program for the ball fields and the athletic fields, saying it is going well.

Mr. Granillo expressed thanks to Public Works Staff and Arturo’s staff for getting GO Bond done smoothly and seamlessly on Hadley.

Board Member Thompson asked over the course of opening so far and the way the leagues are going, what has the biggest challenge been from both a participant and spectator point of view. Mr. Granillo said the biggest challenge was the amount of people that showed up and some not wanting to wear masks.

Board Member Engle said he was contacted by Councilor Bencomo, who was contacted by Las Cruces Youth Soccer and they had concerns about renting facilities and the over policing of the leagues regarding COVID-19 restrictions, specifically one warning rule before the entire league is reprimanded. Mr. Granillo responded that this was discussed in every meeting with the leagues, letting them know there was a one warning set up but that was for clear disregard of the rules that were put in place and they agreed to. He said at the time, masks were strictly in use and rule was geared toward clear disregard of the rules. Also discussed though were if could see the leagues trying to comply, help and communicate, discussions would be held to follow up, debrief, see what went wrong and what could be improved. Regarding permits, Mr. Granillo said permits aren’t being taken for any open space and leagues are aware their email with their schedules acts as their permit and there were no issues with them getting on the field.

Board Member Engle clarified no outside facility rentals are being done yet. Mr. Granillo concurred. Board Member Engle clarified it wasn’t just youth soccer, but all leagues were treated equally. Mr. Granillo concurred saying there were twelve meetings, documented, recorded and all leagues were given the same guidelines to follow and they all agreed.

Board Member Thompson understood from Ron Nestle, Las Cruces Youth Soccer, that all scheduling of fields is run through Las Cruces Youth Soccer and asked if this was correct. Mr. Granillo said when it comes to Las Cruces Youth Soccer, fields are shared with Adult, Youth, and FC Grande (Alexis Ruiz). Mr. Granillo said the permit process doesn’t allow double booking, so what happens is Adult will put in a permit and will coordinate with Youth to coordinate the fields, or vice versa. Board Member Thompson understood from Mr. Nestle that Las Cruces Youth Soccer holds the permit for all the fields. Mr. Granillo responded Las Cruces Youth Soccer does not hold the permit for all the fields, they work with the Mesilla Valley Soccer Association, with Dominic’s group, with FC Grande, and themselves. It depends on who submits the permit at the time. Board Member Thompson asked if the permit process goes thru Parks and Recreation and Mr. Granillo concurred.

7.4 4th of July Update – Phil Catanach, Recreation Services Administrator/Parks and Recreation

Mr. Catanach informed the Board from what he understands the Governor has said, that July 2nd looks like a date that could open up the community. He said staff has been meeting with NMSU on a plan for a 4th of July Celebration, July 3rd Electric Light Parade. Announcement was sent out
for the parade with a theme, Stars and Stripes Forever. Plan is for a concert and fireworks display on July 4. Governor’s orders will be followed. More announcements will go out as things move forward.

7.5 Board Duties & Responsibilities/Elections – Sonya Delgado, Director/Parks & Recreation

Ms. Delgado informed the Board it is time for Chair and Vice Chair elections. The Board was previously sent Board Duties and Responsibilities to review prior to next meeting.

Board Member Schuller said this would be a good time to inquire what Board Member Guzman’s position is for the foreseeable future on the Board, since he has been absent in meetings and Mayor at Large is a voting position. Ms. Delgado said she will reach out to Board Member Guzman to see if he is still interested and provide an update at the next meeting.

Ms. Nevarez added also sent to the Board for review prior to this meeting were City Ordinance Board member rules which also addresses attendance of meetings.

8. Staff Member Comments

Mr. Granillo said he will bring forward to next meeting Dog Park Rules but isn’t sure yet if will be informational or action.

Ms. Mathews informed the Board the AARP Fitlot at Benavidez Community Center is completed. She said the punch list is being addressed by the contract in the next week or two.

Ms. Mathews said at Metro Verde, the Ninja Park, which has American Ninja style pieces of equipment along a trail, has a punch list that needs to be addressed.

Ms. Mathews said the Red Hawk Villas Park, a passive recreation space, is coming along. She said the contractor is having difficulty finding plant material.

Ms. Mathews said City Bond Medians Phase 1 is being managed by Public Works and anticipated completion and close out is this summer.

Ms. Nevarez informed the Board she will be sending forward to the Board the red line Fees and Charges to review before the next Board meeting. Ms. Delgado added the red line Fees and Charges will be up for discussion at the June meeting and for action in July.

Ms. Delgado informed that Board she has not had an opportunity to look into Parolees and their dogs but will look into it and hopefully has some information for the next meeting.

Ms. Delgado expressed thanks to the entire Parks and Recreation team who has done an outstanding job pulling together programming to get the youth and adults out playing while still maintaining COVID-19 safe practices.
9. Board Member Comments

There were no Board Member comments.

10. Adjournment

Board Member Montgomery moved to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting, seconded by Board Member Engle. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Hazel Nevarez, Recording Secretary

Cassie McClure, Chair