

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

June 18, 2020

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board held a meeting on June 18, 2020 at 6:01 p.m. via Zoom.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Members Present:

Robert Harrison
Cassie McClure
Stan Engle
Eric Montgomery
Megan Schuller

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Members Absent:

Eli Guzman
Marilyn Zahler

Others Present

Hazel Nevarez, Office Manager, Parks and Recreation
Phil Catanach, Recreation Administrator, Parks and Recreation
Franco Granillo, Parks Administrator, Parks and Recreation
Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator, Parks and Recreation
Cathy Mathews, Land Scape Architect, Parks and Recreation
Ceci Vasconcellos, Community Engagement Coordinator, CLC
Sonya Delgado, Parks and Recreation Director
Tony Trevino, Interim Deputy Director, Public Works
David Sedillos, Interim Public Works Director
Ed Carnathan, Visit Las Cruces Sports Manager
Sreedevi Bhathala Mohanraj, Architect, CLC
Mark Hettinga
Dominic Aragon, Meeting Host, CLC
George Radnovich, Sites Southwest
Arturo Gonzalez
Brigitte Fuller, Wilson and Company

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting of June 18, 2020 via Zoom was brought to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Harrison 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

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve agenda as presented, seconded by Ms. Schuller. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve minutes of February 20, 2020 as presented, seconded by Ms. McClure. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Participation

Chair Harrison read verbatim three emails received for public input. Two emails were from Thomas Winter – one pertaining to East Mesa Parking and the second pertaining to East Mesa Entry Road Funding —~~emails attached~~. The third email was from Frank Carril on his interest in Pickleball, ~~email attached~~. Below are the emails:

First Email:

In conjunction with the provision for Public Participation and Input to the above meeting, please present the following question to whoever can best address **East Mesa Entry Road Funding**:

With reference to item 6.1. East Mesa Recreation Complex and page 3 of the presentation document, [EMRC PRAB MTG - 6-12-20.PDF](#) -----

During the public review of the original online PowerPoint presentation of the three options, funding for the access roads was verbally discussed. At that time, it was revealed that the expected State funding had been denied and that other sources would have to be researched over the two years remaining for project completion. My comments submitted at that time were “Road construction funding needs to be addressed, immediately, so that it will not delay the project further. Money to build the entrance road must not come from GO Bond funds.”

The latest document shows that funding for the roadways was amazingly found by sucking the money directly from the Go Bond funding as feared.

• Budget from GO Bonds: • \$6.5 million for the complex • \$2 million for the entry road.

This means that any short fall will result in the elimination of something promised in the park projects. There has been no detailed accountability for costs of the individual elements of these projects from the beginning. This continues to allow for a budget shell game to shift monies at will. The

public needs to know the breakdown of all the elements of these projects and that reallocated roadway funds will come from other City resources, not the park Go-bonds themselves.

Sincerely,

Thomas Winter

Second Email:

In conjunction with the provision for Public Participation and Input to the above meeting, please present the following question to whoever can best address **East Mesa Parking**:

With reference to item 6.1. East Mesa Recreation Complex and the presentation document, [EMRC PRAB MTG - 6-12-20.PDF](#) and the previous public PowerPoint presentation of design options:

The drawings show parking, without the actual lot capacities indicated. While the sizes may be adequate during normal activity, participation in tournaments and special events can increase the parking requirement many times over. Parking overflow areas should be provided for each of the venues. This need only be areas cleared of brush and topped with crushed stone. I do not believe the design of the roadways or normal safety restrictions would allow for parking along the shoulders. This should be addressed in the initial construction.

Sincerely,

Thomas Winter

Third Email:

My input for Parks & Rec. Meeting 18 June 2020

Target Input: Apadoca Rehab. Go Bond Budget \$300.K

My Name is Frank Carril, with Pickleball interest. I attended the Public "Last Open Public Working Meeting on Site at Apodaca Park", afterwards, we were invited to submit idea's through Parks to the Wilson company for suggested ideas and reviews. I have submitted my complete Package, which included: Drawing for 8 Pickleball Courts (First Pickleball Courts in Las Cruces), Pad restoration, 21 century Outdoor Flooring as used in Espanola, NM High School, New Lighting LED Heads, Safety Fencing (10') w/multiple Gating max width for ADA, Wind Screen Entire Parameter, Allowance for new Sidewalks around the existing Pad. All components bid Osha standards, w/labor, figuring State Standards and Davis Bacon Act. I have competitively bid out project, resulting at \$250K, with a possible +\$30K Save margin, meaning, project could range from \$220K to \$250K dollars, meaning CDS, (cost dollar savings), much as 25% of \$300K Budgeted for this improvement. I also submitted a Build plan for 8 to 12 weeks depending on labor availability and virus considerations, included in cost estimate.

Thank you,

Frank Carril

(Former Parks & Rec. Board Member District 4)

6. Action Items

- 6.1. East Mesa Recreation Complex – Tony Trevino, Interim Deputy Director of Public Works/Wilson and Company/Sites Southwest (George Radnovich)

Mr. Tony Trevino introduced Mr. George Radnovich of Sites Southwest. Mr. Radnovich informed the Board his company is doing the East Mesa Recreation Complex project for the City of Las Cruces with Wilson and Company being the lead consultant on the project. Mr. Radnovich introduced Ms. Brigitte Fuller who is representing Wilson and Company.

Mr. Radnovich presented a PDF presentation to the Board on the East Mesa Recreation Complex introducing the project, a summary of the public meetings for the project, a draft presentation of the preferred master plan option, and next steps. Mr. Radnovich informed the Board planned improvements from the G.O. Bond were that the project would include field sports: soccer/football fields, baseball fields, court sports: eight pickleball courts, amenities and infrastructure: concession areas, restrooms, food prep court, plaza, traditional park, entry roads, trails around the park, parking, pedestrian circulation. He said the G.O. Bond was \$6.5 million for the complex and \$2 million for the entryway.

Regarding public comment, Mr. Radnovich said the number of parking wasn't included in the master plan yet, but they are all scaled and do have adequate parking for the first phase. He added this information could be provided after the meeting.

Mr. Radnovich said Wilson and Company is doing a study to determine where the roads into the project location might be - one would go to Sonoma Springs Avenue, one would go off to Sonoma Ranch Road at Camino Coyote, and the third would go off to Sonoma Springs Blvd. Ms. Fuller added they are working on this road study, to include a traffic study, with the City's Public Works Department to determine what might be the most effective way for public entry into the site.

Mr. Radnovich continued with the presentation covering public meetings held, the three Master Plan options and preferred plan.

Mr. Trevino added that Camino Coyote as a main entrance is not set in stone as will still look at Sonoma Springs and will be determined after the feasibility study. Mr. Radnovich asked if there is enough money, if the road in could be a three-lane road because when tournament occurs, there is a lot of traffic in and out. Mr. Trevino said this is something to be discussed further in the design phase.

Mr. Radnovich said they are still working on what phase one would be but will definitely have two soccer fields, two baseball diamonds, the traditional park, and eight pickleball courts. Deliberations on the infrastructure hasn't been finished yet. Next steps are to get Board comments and will hold a fourth public meeting with City Council and the Mayor, shooting for July 6, 2020 City Council meeting. Phase one will be much more complete by then and Master Plan layout complete based

on Board comments along with Public Works and Parks and Recreation's comments. Schematic design will begin the end of June, completing the plans and bidding the project in the winter of 2021, and construction would occur in 2021.

Ms. Schuller asked what the total acreage of the complex is planned out to be. Mr. Radnovich said he believes it to be about 60 acres. Ms. Fuller said it is closer to 75 acres.

Ms. Schuller asked, with that amount of acreage to cover, where will concessions and restrooms be. Mr. Radnovich said concessions would be at each end of the termini for the greenway.

Ms. McClure asked how long phase two would take so the complex is fully operable. Mr. Trevino said hopefully in 2022, with another bond sale, can begin the second phase.

Mr. Montgomery asked, in relation to food truck area, is there specialized infrastructure going into that concept, like power stations and special parking stalls. Mr. Radnovich said since at a Master Plan phase, they aren't at a level of detail to be able to answer this question totally. He added they have done food truck courts for other New Mexico cities and towns and power and special place for parking for the trucks was provided during events along with plazas in front of the trucks.

Mr. Engle expressed concern on, from public meeting comments, the possibility of edible landscape. He asked how this would be mitigated. Mr. Radnovich said they don't typically put edible landscaping in park projects or sports complexes unless there is a real buy in from the Parks and Recreation Department. Ms. Mathews added that fruit trees in public landscapes could be problematic and her opinion of including fruit trees in this type of landscape would not be the best idea.

Mr. Sedillo said he wanted to address the public comment about using G.O. Bond funding for the roadways. He said the G.O. Bond funding would not be used for the roadways as the City has acquired municipal gross receipts tax bonds to cover the roadway and drainage construction of the project.

Chair Harrison asked how many acres is just phase one. Mr. Radnovich said probably around 30 acres but haven't determined what the interstitial space would be and how big it would be. Once figures out, and the parking, he could be a lot more precise. Chair Harrison asked on the phase one, with the G.O. Bond amount of \$6.5 million, what aspect does Sites Southwest think can be completed with this dollar amount. Mr. Radnovich said he believes will be able to build Paseo Road, but not the special pavement. Should also be able to do the food truck, streetscape, greenway, some parking and will build the road that goes up to the parking. Mr. Radnovich outlined with his presentation what would be able to be covered. Chair Harrison added it would be nice if the parking would be addressed. Mr. Radnovich pointed out in his presentation what area parking would include. Mr. Radnovich

said this is all still in the master plan stage and they would be happy to come back to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board when at the schematic design phase. Mr. Radnovich said they would like to include in the traditional park in phase one is the volleyball courts, some skate park type improvements, playgrounds, basketball courts, and an amphitheater type structure.

Ms. McClure said she received a question from Mr. Gregory Shervanick who is viewing the meeting, on how much water use will occur. Mr. Radnovich said there will be utilities going to the site and water will be one of them. A water budget hasn't been done yet. A water budget will be done for the entire complex once phase one is determined and what future phases water needs are, Mr. Radnovich said the complex will have a low water xeriscape and environmentally appropriate part of the park and the areas in between being xeriscape. He added we have to respect water use in the desert.

Mr. Trevino added at the end of Sonoma Springs, there is already water, gas and sewer mains that can be tied in to and will be the closest way to tie into utilities. He said this will be discussed further on in design with Utility staff and will also discuss reclaimed water, if feasible or not.

Chair Harrison said he anticipates the fields could be multi use and asked if will be looking into artificial turf. Mr. Radnovich said the fields will be multiple sizes so multiple events can be staged at the complex. Mr. Radnovich said there was consensus on green grass as synthetic turf is very expensive. Ms. Mathews said she agrees to go with Bermuda grass as it is cost effective to maintain and it is Parks and Receptions recommendation to go with natural turf.

Ms. Schuller moved to accept presentation as presented to move forward to City Council, seconded by Ms. McClure. (Due to power outage, Mr. Engle is not present.) There was no further discussion following the motion. Vote called:

Mr. Montgomery – I
Ms. McClure – I
Ms. Schuller – I
Chair Harrison – For

(Note: there was a power outage – Mr. Engle was unable to log back in and so was unable to vote.)

Motion passed.

6.2. Parks & Sports Courts Improvements – Tony Trevino, Interim Deputy Director/Public Works / Highland Enterprises/SMA (Paul Dugle)

Mr. Trevino presented to the Board for a second time Parks & Sports Courts Improvements and Additions for the 2018 G.O. Bond. He reviewed background, project information with questions at the end. He said the improvements were approved August 21, 2018. The approved project, for \$16.9 million, included Desert Trails Park, Young Park, Apodaca, Metro Verde, Four Hills, Hillrise, Cardon Park, Frank O'Brien, Klein Park, Benavidez, Lions, Hadley, Unidad Park, some

dog parks, and the East Mesa Recreation Complex. All these parks were included in the question for \$16.9 million. He said today the Board will be hearing about Desert Trails, Young, Apodaca, basketball, tennis, and pickleball. Public meetings were held at the Dona Ana Branch Community College on the East Mesa January 23, 2020, with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board on February 20, 2020. Following this meeting there were some concerns regarding pickleball/Apodaca and tennis/Lions so additional meetings were held with the tennis group on March 4, 2020 and with the Apodaca pickleball group on March 5, 2020 on site. Prior scope of work for these courts was discussed and these groups addressed their concerns and gave their ideas which have been incorporated into the scope of work to move forward.

Mr. Trevino addressed the resurfacing of the pickleball court brought up by Mr. Carril's email for public comment regarding the 21 century Outdoor Flooring, Mr. Trevino said they are still working with Parks and Recreation to determine what flooring will be appropriate for this area. Mr. Trevino said there isn't much difference in budget if go with the requested surfacing or the three layers acrylic colored surfacing. Being reviewed with Parks and Recreation is the maintenance, upkeep, durability of this material in our environment.

Chair Harrison asked in the aspect with Mr. Carril and his presentation and working up from surface to budget, how far is he with working into the City and being able to do what they would like to do and at a cheaper rate. Mr. Trevino said Mr. Carril did provide his cost estimate and he was informed that procuring work at the City is a little bit different because we have to pay State wage rates. Mr. Trevino said Mr. Carril's cost estimate was close to us, however, we also will address concerns by the rest of the pickleball committee group who wanted the expansion of the courts and there were other concerns by players who wanted some of these improvements done. Mr. Trevino said we are accommodating a little bit more than Mr. Carril had asked for and trying to address what some of the pickleball members wanted.

Ms. McClure moved to approve the Parks & Sports Courts Improvements, seconded by Mr. Montgomery. There was no further discussion. Vote Called:

Mr. Engle – Yes

Ms. Schuller – Yes

Mr. Montgomery – Yes

Ms. McClure - Yes

Motion passed.

6.3. Board Elections

Chair Harrison opened nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Ms. Schuller nominated Chair Harrison as Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, seconded by Mr. Engle.

Mr. Montgomery said he was going to nominate Ms. McClure but she isn't present to accept.

Mr. Montgomery moved to table nominations to the July 15, 2020 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting, seconded by Ms. Schuller. There was no further discussion. Vote called:

Mr. Engle – I
Ms. Schuller – I
Mr. Montgomery – I
Chair Harrison – I

Motion passed.

Ms. Schuller moved to rescind her nomination of Chair Harrison as Board Chair, seconded by Mr. Montgomery. Vote called:

Mr. Montgomery – I
Mr. Engle – I
Ms. Schuller – I
Chair Harrison – I

Motion passed.

7. Discussion Items

7.1. Parks and Recreation Re-opening Phase Update – Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation.

Ms. Delgado informed the Board on the re-opening plan, a plan was presented a plan to City Council that laid out Phase 1 Green (ready to go right now with those facilities), Phase 2 Yellow (could be coming down the way, Phase 3 and beyond Red (nowhere near opening). The plan was based alongside the Governor's orders. She said staff had the State Epidemiologist also looked at the plan to see if Parks and Recreation was moving in the right direction, if things made sense. They did like the plan. Ms. Delgado said that as of right now, the Governor is saying we can't have groups larger than five and to keep facilities, activities, and programs that promote gathering of groups and mixing of families. This is why parks were closed at the very beginning of COVID. The Mayor began this on Easter weekend. On the first phase, specialty parks (shooting range, RC Airport, Remote Control Track, Pickleball courts, Lion's Tennis Courts) were chosen to open, with limited times of use and were geared toward the adult population because the adults seem to understand and get that they need to social distance. Trails were also opened. Signage was placed in these facilities. Staff would open and close the gates at Lion's Tennis Courts which were opened for approximately two weeks, 3 days during the week. After two weeks, an additional day was added to tennis and some of the special facility areas went back to their regular hours because COVID numbers were steadily going down through the state. Ms. Delgado says Parks and Recreation staff listen to the Governor's press conference every two weeks to see whether she is encouraging gathering yet or keeping numbers down and staff plans accordingly. Ms. Delgado said in Phase 2, a park opened in each district which started June 15, 2020. She said the Governor should be speaking again

next week and staff will be listening in to see what is going on. In the meantime, staff will be monitoring parks, taking head counts, seeing if people are wearing their masks, and keeping social distancing. She added if notice COVID numbers to go down, then could possibly start opening other things.

Ms. Delgado added that during this entire time, staff has also been assisting with the food boxes with Senior Programs. Staff is also giving out meals at the Safe Haven and Frank O'Brien facility for our youth. Staff has also put out some recreational virtual programs and activities. Staff is also looking at possibly opening the Summer Recreation Program but will be very limited. Currently the ratio is 1 to 5 and there is a lot of issues/regulations that need to be addressed.

7.2. 4th of July Update – Phil Catanach, Recreation Services Administrator

Mr. Catanach informed the Board with the inability to gather in large crowds due to COVID, the 4th of July Electric Light Parade had to be cancelled as well as the community concert (partnered with NMSU). He said there will be a virtual electric photo parade and are asking people to submit photos of their heroes (4th of July themed). He added that staff would like for the Board to be Judges as prizes will be given. He said staff is looking to have a spectator free 4th of July display in an area that is visible to as many areas of our community. Mass gathering is being discouraged. Final details for this are still being worked out and when everything is for sure, a news release will go out letting the community what area of the sky to look at. Mr. Catanach added the Electric 5K run will be cancelled this year.

Chair Harrison asked if staff was looking at different opportunities for virtual Music in the Park. Mr. Catanach said yes,

7.3. Projects Update – Cathy Mathews, Landscape Architect/Parks & Recreation

Ms. Mathews briefed the Board on a few projects:

- Have been working on the Councilor Pedroza Memorial at Lions Park near the tennis courts. The area is landscaped, including irrigation. Have installed sleeves that are ready for the installation of the plaque on its frame. Have not installed the frame yet because are waiting until can have an unveiling of the memorial when Councilor Pedroza's family can be present.
- Provencio Van Dam lighting is complete.
- Benavidez Community Center Park playground is complete with new playground equipment, new engineered wood fiber safety surfacing, and rubberized safety surfacing. There is a little more work to be accomplished in the vicinity. Next steps will be to replace some of the benches, some of the picnic tables, and to install more trees with irrigation.

Ms. Mathews added that the Special Projects team is working very hard with park colleagues to get projects done.

8. Staff Member Comments

Mr. Nunez informed the Board the Juvenile Citation Program is currently going on with virtual classes with all participants since beginning of May. Have been doing assessments and follow-ups with all participants. The youth participants have adapted with this.

Mr. Nunez informed the Board the Keep Las Cruces Beautiful team have been busy working five days a week on negative graffiti. Bags, equipment, gloves are also being provided to residents for litter gathering.

Mr. Nunez informed the Board staff is working on a plan to offer some type of programming this summer to youth in a safe and healthy manner, and are also looking at recreation outside the box, different things that can be done in the very near future and as progress into the Fall. He added educational packets along with popcorn and other items are given out every Friday at the Safe Haven and Frank O'Brien Papen facilities. In partnership with FYI, dinners are being given out – over a three-week period, staff has given out close to 3,000 dinners at Safe Haven and Frank O'Brien.

Mr. Granillo commented that at the beginning of COVID, park staff got sent home towards the end of March and so over the last three months, schedules were derailed. He said he would like to give Kudos to his staff because after accessing everything on a limited work schedule, staff is only a week behind. Mr. Granillo said he would also like to thank Mr. Nunez and Mr. Catanach, whose staff were handing out meals, and they also helped in monitoring the parks that were opened. It's been a good collective team effort.

Mr. Granillo added Ms. Mathews projects continue to get done with assistance from his staff and her staff, working hard together.

Mr. Granillo thanked Ms. Delgado for relaying a lot of issues faced to upper management, and for her help during this time of adjustment.

Mr. Catanach informed the Board the Regional Aquatic Center pool is open for lap swim, as well as the walking channel and the fitness center. He said the outdoor pools are getting ready for inspection so can open to the public for lap swim.

Mr. Catanach informed the Board his staff is assisting monitoring/checking numbers/social distancing at the opened facilities. He added they are also working on some virtual programming.

Mr. Catanach informed the Board staff is also working on virtual Music in the Park, with plans to video tape 34 bands to be shown on U-tube as well as the City Facebook pages.

Mr. Catanach said he is very proud of his staff who have stepped up to do the work in this time of uncertainty.

Chair Harrison asked is the public is supposed to call to schedule reservations for any use at the Regional Aquatic Center. Mr. Catanach said yes, the public needs to call the day before for use of lap swim and the upstairs fitness area.

Ms. Vasconcellos informed the Board she is working alongside Parks and Recreation to distribute information which is extremely important during this time and addressing issues as they come up. She said she is helping them to make their events and activities a success. She added going virtual is not easy and she commends Parks and Recreation staff for doing a great job. She said she and staff are here to make sure the public knows what is going on.

9. Board Member Comments

Mr. Montgomery gave a compliment to staff on the re-opening phase and protocol, as his wife and daughter were able to go to the Regional Aquatic Center. They really enjoyed their time and felt safe.

Ms. Schuller said to continue to be safe and Parks and Recreation are doing an excellent job, hopefully we will get back to a normal sooner than later.

Mr. Engle thanked staff for doing a good job and getting us through these unprecedented times.

Chair Harrison thanked all the staff for everything they do. Opening recreation gives us a little outlet much needed during this time.

Ms. Delgado added that the Parks and Recreation team is operating at 40% currently, will be at 60% the first week of July, and depending on how things go, should be at 75% in August. The team is doing an exceptional job – being at only 40% and only a week behind after being closed in March – Administrators and Ms. Mathews, with all her projects, have done an amazing job. Ms. Delgado said she appreciates each one of our staff and does appreciate the Board with sticking with us and trying these new Zoom meetings. She said if some of the members have challenges with Zoom or the internet, we have space at the Castaneda office where members can be put in different areas, socially distant, to use the computers.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Montgomery moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Schuller.

Mr. Montgomery – I

Mr. Engle - I

Ms. Schuller – I

Chair Harrison – I

Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Hazel Nevarez, Recording Secretary

Dr. Robert Harrison, Chair

DRAFT