

**City of Glendale  
Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Retreat  
Sahuaro Ranch Fruit Packing Shed  
9802 North 59th Avenue**

**Saturday, August 13, 2011  
8:30am-11:45am**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan Liebman, Chair  
Donna Williams, Vice Chair  
Allison Tedford  
Samantha Cooke  
Jamie Aldama  
Gary Parr

MEMBERS ABSENT: Patrick Church

OTHERS PRESENT: Erik Strunk, Exec. Director, Parks, Recreation & Library  
Bill Schwind, Deputy Director  
Karen Hesser, Deputy Director  
John Akers, Sr. Recreation Coordinator  
Christine Frederickson, Management Assistant

CITIZENS PRESENT: Danielle Silvas

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Liebman called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Mr. Strunk advised the Commission that Commissioner Church previously indicated he would be unable to attend the retreat.

Chair Liebman presented past Commissioner Silvas with a plaque in appreciation and recognition of her contribution and service to the Parks and Recreation Commission for the past two years.

Chair Liebman expressed appreciation to staff for setting up the retreat and thanked the Commissioners for attending on a Saturday morning.

**III. Business from the Floor**

None

**IV. Presentation on History of Sahuaro Ranch**

Mr. Akers presented a brief presentation of the Sahuaro Ranch Park Historical Area (SRPHA):

- SRPHA is a 17-acre historical site, with 13 structures and historic landscape.

- The ranch started in 1886 made possible by W.J. Murphy, builder of the Arizona canal – the source of water.
- Attracted William Bartlett from Illinois to invest in property and established Sahuaro Ranch as a fruit ranch.
- The Adobe House was the first structure built in 1887.
- The Fruit Packing Shed, built in 1891, was important for drying/shipping fruit.
- Sahuaro Ranch has a historic barnyard, part of the property's distinctive identity.
- The Main House, 1891-1898, was the home of a ranch manager and last owners.
- Water problems forced Mr. Bartlett to give up on the ranch and sell to Charlotte & Richard W. Smith in 1927; Charlotte was related to the Sands family at Manistee Ranch.
- Their son, Richard, took over the ranch and established a dairy. He eventually sold the property to the City in 1977.
- The City restored buildings at Sahuaro Ranch including the Foreman's and Main houses.
- Many historic trees remain, such as dates and pecans.
- SRPHA offers Main House tours, ranch tours, and school tours.
- SRPHA works with partners and hosts events: Tractor Show, Glendale Folk & Heritage Festival, Rose Show, Wild Western Festival, etc.

Vice Chair Williams asked how we get information out about the facility. Mr. Akers responded that there is information on the City's website and signs throughout the park. Mr. Akers also commented that the City was recently awarded a grant which will allow visitors to tour the ranch using a smartphone application.

Chair Liebman commended Mr. Akers for his presentation and commented that the presentation should be put on the City's website.

#### **V. Role and Mission of the Commission**

Mr. Strunk provided a presentation on the mission, roles, and responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission. His presentation reviewed the basics of the Commission including structure, terms, and the primary powers and duties of the Commission.

Chair Liebman asked if we needed to have a discussion on the formulation of by-laws. Mr. Strunk responded we have not had to create by-laws as the Code of Conduct has been followed in the past meetings.

Vice Chair Williams asked if we were going to review the Open Meeting Law. Mr Strunk responded that his presentation would not cover the Open Meeting Law as it is reviewed during Commission training.

Mr. Strunk continued his presentation on the roles and responsibilities of the Commission including researching issues and recommending decisions and policies that are in the best interest of the community. He then listed several practical responsibilities for the Commission as well as staff responsibilities. Mr. Strunk also included information on the Parks and Recreation Commission Enabling Ordinance in the packet he provided to the Commission members.

Chair Liebman responded that since capital improvements will be limited over the next five years, there will be more responsibility for maintenance of existing facilities and the Commission should focus on that.

Commissioner Aldama expressed thanks for the thorough presentation by Mr. Strunk and the reminder of the public perception of Commissioners.

Vice Chair Williams asked how many of the Commissioners had attended the City's Boards and Commissions training. All responded in the positive, except Commissioner Aldama who is planning on attending in the future.

Chair Liebman also thanked Mr. Strunk for the thorough content of the presentation.

## **VI. Parks and Recreation Overview: Core Services**

Ms. Hesser and Mr. Schwind provided a brief overview of the four key areas of focus for the Parks and Recreation Department:

- Care of Infrastructure (parks, facilities, pools and trails)
  - Ms. Hesser provided a spreadsheet of all parks, retention areas, and facilities showing a grand total of 2,188.5 acres that the department is responsible for maintaining, along with 13,129 trees. Ms. Hesser discussed the three areas of focus for maintenance including maintaining and inventorying what we have and planning for what we need.
  - Ms. Hesser discussed the levels of service for the parks and how the different types of parks (Regional, Community & Neighborhood) have different maintenance frequencies.
  - Ms. Hesser reviewed the partnership and volunteer programs that assist with maintenance such as Adopt-A-Park, Community Service workers, and other City of Glendale departments.
  - Ms. Hesser identified technological efficiencies that have been implemented to assist in the maintenance division.
- Health & Prevention (after-school programs; senior, adult, teen, youth and family wellness)
  - Mr. Schwind handed out a copy of the My Community magazine to show all the different health and prevention programs for all ages in the community.
- Safety (parks & facility supervision, maintenance and water safety)
  - Ms. Hesser discussed the Department's Risk Management Plan, along with personal and certified training for staff. She also discussed programs the City offers for staffs health and well-being.
- Community Heritage & Preservation (conservation and historic preservation)
  - Mr. Akers previously included this key area in a meeting presentation.
  - Vice Chair Williams asked if there was a better alternative to the cost of maintaining shade trees. Ms. Hesser responded that there are other alternatives for shade in the parks such as ramadas and shade structures, but those are costly to maintain as well. Ms. Hesser also referenced the City of Phoenix' Shade Plan which is a Master Plan for creating 25% canopy cover in Phoenix Parks.

Vice Chair Williams asked if the Redistricting Plan will impact park site visits with the different districts. Mr. Strunk commented that the City Council is currently reviewing different redistricting maps based on the outcome of the census, however, at this time, it will not impact park site visit districts.

Vice Chair Williams expressed concern about inspecting playground equipment during park site visits and if there was specific items the Commissioners should be focusing on.

Ms. Hesser responded that the Department has certified staff that inspects the playground equipment. The park site visit reports should be an overview of the park and should give staff a perspective on what a visitor would see.

Commissioner Parr asked about the new lighting that was installed at the Sahuaro Ranch Sports Complex and has the department realized any savings based on the more efficient lighting that was installed. Ms. Hesser stated that she would need to check with the Facilities Department.

Chair Liebman thanked Ms. Hesser for sharing the challenges of the maintenance division and commented that the levels of maintenance at Thunderbird Conservation Park still remain at a high level.

Commissioner Aldama commented that the City has a great parks' system. He also commented that he wasn't aware of the park site visit requirements. Ms. Hesser replied that the park site visit reports will be distributed later in the fall and a detailed checklist will be provided to the Commissioners on what they should be looking for in the parks.

Commissioner Aldama also requested further information on a previous comment Ms. Hesser had made about a customer's request to install restrooms at Sierra Verde Park. Commissioner Aldama asked how the citizen was informed that the City would not build restrooms at that specific park. Ms. Hesser responded that they shared the department's philosophy on why restrooms are not built in Neighborhood Parks which is: Neighborhood Parks are generally located within walking distance of the citizen's home therefore, a restroom facility would not be needed.

Commissioner Aldama commented on the importance of staff receiving training.

Commissioner Aldama asked if there are minimum maintenance standards for all parks, specifically for Sonorita Park. Ms. Hesser responded that all parks have a level of service based on what type of park it is. Sonorita is considered a Neighborhood Park, therefore it receives trash service two times a week, a playground inspection once every ten days and a daily visit by a Park Ranger. Commissioner Aldama asked if there was any future plans for Sonorita Park because there is potential for injury with the landscaping. Ms. Hesser responded that she would have the park evaluated for any safety risks.

## **VII. Partnership Overview**

Mr. Schwind presented an overview of the partnership opportunities within the Parks and Recreation Department including City/Public Partnerships, City/Not-for-Profit Partnerships and City/Private Partnerships. Within those partnership opportunities, there are Operational Partners, Vendor Partners, Service Partners, Co-Branding Partners, and Resource Development Partners. Examples of potential partners within the different categories were provided. Mr. Schwind's presentation also included a current list of partners and the value associated with those partnerships.

Mr. Strunk commented that the department is in the process of creating a 501c3 so that the department can start accepting grants, donations, and estate plans. The Discount Coupon Sales listed as a current partner was a mechanism to raise funds for the creation of the 501c3.

Vice Chair Williams asked how partnerships are formed and asked about groups like the Phoenix Mercury that are very active in the community. Mr. Schwind responded that we do have a good partnership with the Arizona Cardinals because they are located in

Glendale. He said that generally partnerships are created through networking and that some partnerships are created because groups have approached us such as United Healthcare recently did at the Glendale Adult Center.

Chair Liebman commented that creating the 501c3 will open opportunities for donations.

Commissioner Aldama commented that the value for the Heart for the City partnership was blank and asked how that value is quantified. Mr. Schwind commented that the partnership with the Heart for the City was a new partnership that had just completed an eight-week experimental program for the City.

### **VIII. Discussion and Creation of FY2011-12 Commission Work Plan**

Chair Liebman facilitated a discussion with the Commission about its direction, goals, and role in working within the parks' system for the upcoming fiscal year. The FY 2010-11 goals were used as a guideline to set the next year's goals. The following six goals were discussed and will be voted on at the September Commission meeting:

1. As a Commission, conduct meetings at least four times at various parks system facilities.
2. Each Park and Recreation Commissioner will conduct park site visits at each of his/her district sites between November through April and August through October. Each Commissioner will complete the "park visit forms" and return them within one week of the visit. In addition, one to two random park site visits will be conducted at the "busy parks" between May through July.
3. Each Park and Recreation Commissioner will volunteer, participate or observe in at least one annual Parks and Recreation event or activity.
4. As a Commission, participate in at least one community outreach event to promote the Commission's purpose and activities and the Parks, Recreation and Library Services Department.
5. Each Park and Recreation Commissioner will visit and observe at least one other city Commission meeting.
6. Each Park and Recreation Commissioner will "job shadow" a Parks and Recreation employee.

In addition, the Commission agreed that the following items should be included on future meeting agendas:

1. Commission meeting times
2. Quarterly updates of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
3. APRA conference schedule
4. Thunderbird Park Master Plan update
5. Updates on the Master Plans: Trails, Sahuaro Ranch Park, and Thunderbird Conservation Park
6. A standing update on upcoming department and city events
7. A standing update on the status of this work plan
8. An overview of the department's marketing efforts

### **IX. Commission Comments & Suggestions**

Chair Liebman again commented how beneficial it was having a Commission retreat and thanked the Commissioners and staff for their participation and time.

**X. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm by consensus.

The next regular meeting will be Monday, **September 12, 2011**, at 7 p.m. at the O'Neil Recreation Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Frederickson