



PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

April 9, 2012

5:30 p.m., 10th Floor Conference Room
2 Civic Center Plaza, El Paso, Texas

MINUTES

Members Present: 6

David Turner, Jennifer Barr-Ardovino, Janet Selzer, Frederick Caldwell, Ralph Cloud, Theresa Welch Fordham

Members Absent: 2

James Tolbert, Melissa Ann Luna

Member Vacancies: 1

Staff Present:

Nanette Smejkal, Parks & Recreation Director, Marci Tuck, Open Space, Trails and Parks Coordinator, Richard Garcia, Park Planning and Development Manager, Lucy Calderon, Recording Secretary

1. Agenda Item #1. Meeting Called to Order
David Turner, Chair, called meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. Agenda Item #2. Approval of Minutes: February 13, 2012
Motion by Jennifer Barr-Ardovino to approve the February 13, 2012 minutes as written with corrections. Second by Frederick Caldwell. Motion carried (unanimous).
3. Agenda Item #3. Call to the Public (for items not on the agenda)
None
4. Agenda Item #4. Parks and Recreation Calendar and Newsletter
Nanette Smejkal, Parks and Recreation Director, highlighted the calendar and newsletter included in the agenda packet. Ms. Smejkal reminded members Arbor Day Celebration will be Friday, April 27, 2012, 10:00 a.m. at Nations Tobin. Invitations will be mailed.
5. Agenda Item #5. Discussion: Parks and Recreation Master Plan – Halff Associates
Ms. Smejkal introduced Jim Carrillo, Director of Planning for Halff Associates who developed the Master Plan in 2006 for Parks and Recreation Department. Halff Associates is contracted to update the Master Plan. Mr. Carrillo introduced Kimberly Annis, Park Planner for Halff Associates. Mr. Carrillo handed out questions for board members feedback.

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Mr. Carrillo reviewed the Stakeholder Interview Questionnaire and requested feedback on the Board's prospective on specific areas, concerns and insights. Board members commented on the following:

Future park plans

- Implementation of walking paths in parks
- Improvement to park proximities
- Land acquisition or donation for park land

Park ideas/improvements

- More linear parks
- Public restroom facilities availability
- Define Open Space
- Lack of park land
- Funding

Discussion ensued about things most needed or wanted for El Paso parks and recreation in comparison to other cities. Frederick Caldwell stated that Veterans Park would be a model park with diamonds, flat fields, skate park, swimming pool, recreation center, playground area, and walking paths. (*handout*)

6. Agenda Item #6. Discussion and Action: Projects Recommended by the Board for the 2012 Quality of Life Bond
Jennifer Barr-Ardovino stated that each City Representative gets information from their constituents as to what is needed and wanted in their respective area and how many requests they get for each project, and went on to state that she didn't know enough about the various projects to feel comfortable in listing particular ones for funding.

Motion by Jennifer Barr-Ardovino not to provide a recommendation for projects for the 2012 Quality of Life Bond. Second by Frederick Caldwell. Motion carried (unanimous).
7. Agenda Item #7. Presentation and Discussion: Dark Sky Ordinance Presentation (John Peterson) and status of Recommended Code Changes (Richard Garcia)
Mr. Peterson presented a PowerPoint "Saving the Night" explaining the savings, safety and aesthetics of dark skies. Using shielded lights at ball parks, fields are lit better, keep glare out and has a saving of 40% less wattage and can be used on walking trails as well as open parks.
8. Agenda Item #8. Presentation and Discussion: Passive Rainwater Harvesting (Dr. John Walton)
Dr. Walton presented a PowerPoint explaining the advantages of passive rainwater harvesting. By distributing water in shallow depressions which will soak up storm water into ground, storing it and watering plants, saves water usage, is cost efficient and helps keep plants green.
9. Agenda Item #9. Discussion: Status of Recommended Changes to Restroom Policy
Marci Tuck, Open Space, Trails and Parks Coordinator stated that Council was presented with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommendations, however Council tabled the item until budget reviews.
10. Agenda Item #10. Discussion: Park Land Excesses and/or Shortages
Theresa Welch Fordham asked if Asarco site could be used as parkland or if Chelsea site could be sold. Nanette Smejkal, Director of Parks and Recreation explained that State Law require voter

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approval for sale of parkland. Transfers and leases can be done with EPWU or School Districts. Policy decision is by Council to determine if land proceeds would go to parks or to general fund. The Asarco site conceptual plan envisions some park lands, though not for entire site. Ms. Fordham asked for future discussions on ways to raise money for parks without raising taxes.

11. Agenda Item #11. Subcommittee Reports:

- a. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Representative Meeting Report-City Plan Commission Subcommittee for Comprehensive Plan Rewrite (Jennifer Barr-Ardovino)

Jennifer Barr-Ardovino stated this was her last report as the Comprehensive Plan has been approved by Council.

Plan available at www.planelpaso.org

12. Agenda Item #12: Discussion and Action: Subcommittee Assignments (as needed)

Motion by Jennifer Barr-Ardovino to approve Theresa Welch Fordham as replacement to Janet Selzer in Park Naming Subcommittee. Second by Fred Caldwell. Motion carried (unanimous).

13. Discussion: Identify Items for Future Agendas

14. Adjournment – 7:50 p.m.