



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
Virtual Meeting – Join Teams Meeting

12/20/2021 4:00 p.m.



**Draft Minutes**

**Members Present**

Commissioner Richard Conway  
 Commissioner Brenda Linskey  
 Commissioner Stephen Parsons  
 Commissioner Josh Stackhouse

Commissioner Austin Kerr  
 Commissioner Ryan Martin (Chair)  
 Commissioner Dana Rowden

**Councilmember / Liaison to the City Council**

Councilmember Regina Salas

**Staff and Others Present**

Carrie Eberly, Southwest Decision Resources  
Cathy Guetschow – Administrative Specialist  
Amy Hagin – Parks Manager  
Andi Rogers – Southwest Decision Resources  
Rebecca Sayers – Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Events Director

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Linskey, Parsons, Stackhouse, Martin, and Rowden were present for roll call. Commissioner Kerr was not present (excused), and Commissioner Conway joined at 4:06 p.m.

2. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS FOR NEW COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioners and staff welcomed and introduced themselves to the new Commissioners.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 18, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Parsons to approve the October 18, 2021 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Conway. Motion passed unanimously with five (5) yeas votes. Commissioner Martin was unable to respond due to computer difficulties.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No public participation.

5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

A. **Thorpe Park Annex Public Engagement Process Update and Interview with Southwest Decision Resources**

Andi Rogers and Carrie Eberly of Southwest Decision Resources (SDR) introduced themselves and explained their role in facilitating a broad community engagement to design a robust concept plan for the Thorpe Park Annex parcel. They have collaborated with sub-contractor Wheat Design Group of Tucson, who will work on the visual architecture and landscape illustrations regarding the community's interest.

Ms. Rogers explained the process will be divided into three phases: listen, create, and enjoy. They are currently in phase one of the process and hope to have a design concept submitted to City Council by next year. They are also working on a community survey that will be launched soon.

The assessment interview for the Commissioners included:

- Getting to Know You/Your Organization  
Commissioner Martin introduced himself as the Chair for the Parks and Recreation Commission stating that the role of the Commission is to help guide with policy decisions and to help guide city staff. It is a place where the public can speak and bring forward ideas. Commissioner Parson explained that the Commission's role is to anticipate and look at what is presented, making recommendations to City Council if it warrants. Councilmember Salas explained that the Commission also recommends budget since they are funded by the BBB. Would like SDR to include the local business sector, event producers, and arts and science nonprofits.
- Understanding the Values and Vision for the Area  
Commissioner Martin reported that Thorpe Park has always hosted festivals and the parking lot near Aztec that is close to the Annex has been used by Pride in the Pines. He would like it to be easier for other events to be able to use the space. Commissioner Linskey commented that she brought her children to Thorpe Park and throughout the years her family has spent time there. She explained the Annex does not hold any emotion for her, not knowing that it even existed, but anything that would be done there would add to the experience and appreciation of the park. Commissioner Stackhouse reported that he and his wife use Thorpe Park and acknowledges the importance of the Annex. Commissioner Conway would like to see the Annex used for events and the growing needs of the softball community. Commissioner Rowden commented that Thorpe Park is a big part of the community, and that she utilizes the dog park. The parcel holds many options and is excited for the outcome. Commissioner Martin commented on the dog park stating that it was informally placed. During winter it is hard for Parks to manage and would like to see it moved. He would also like to see the parcel used for multiple users instead of just one. Commissioner Linskey reported that the pickleball community acquired six pickleball courts at the Sports Stop at Flagstaff Athletic Club – east stating that the pickleball community now has more courts than there are tennis courts. Would like to see the parcel used as a multi space for a community garden, Willow Bend, museum, an indigenous cultural center, and more. Commissioner Martin asked if the old building is still being used by Parks and if there would be a need of future use by Parks. Parks Manager Amy Hagin currently has one crew out of four that uses the site. Currently tractors and snow equipment are stored there for snow operations. Commissioner Stackhouse would like to see more events and parking. Commissioner Parsons thinks that the parcel could be a better location for the dog park.

Ms. Rogers reported on the information that has been compiled from assessment interviews with other groups, stating that there is more to come. Commissioner Linskey was pleased to hear about the request for an amphitheater and performing arts but questioned the noise level and how it would affect the surrounding houses. Councilmember Salas reported that the previous Council held two meetings regarding the visioning of the parcel and were approached by the indigenous community with their visions of the parcel, noting that the parcel was deeded to the city for parks and recreation.

- Anticipated Challenges

Ms. Rogers reported that the implementation of the future Annex is uncertain with funding and how they can approach it with partnerships and grants. Commissioner Martin stated if housing is placed there then there is an issue with sound and parking. Another challenge would be if the existing buildings could be repurposed and made handicap accessible. Commissioner Stackhouse explained that in working with the County, they can name the County Friends Association as another fundraiser arm through alcohol sales and can name certain 501C3's as their charitable contribution arm. A Friends Commission could be created for Parks and Recreation and the Friends money could then be distributed for use.

Ms. Rogers stated that another challenge for them will be to get an equitable and inclusive dialog. They would like to try in person contact as COVID allows, have pop-ups at parks, and are hoping to hold events in the spring and summer. Commissioner Martin suggested engaging with the Sunnyside Neighborhood or the Southside Neighborhood Association regarding STEM. He also suggested contacting the major event producers.

Ms. Rogers also stated that other concerns that have come up are noise, traffic, parking, and access to restrooms. Commissioner Martin stated that another concern of his is that there is no internet or cell reception near the Annex.

- Advise for Them in the Process?

Ms. Rogers reported that they are at the beginning of their effort and learning as they go. Staff hopes to have a synthesis of the initial assessment completed in the next month or two. They still need to complete a few interviews and produce a report that talks about the diversity of interest potentially on the property.

- Who Else Should They Engage?

Ms. Rogers reported that staff are growing their list of who to contact.

Rebecca Sayers, Director of Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Events (PROSE) reported that staff will continue to update the Commissioners as the process moves forward.

B. Date for the January and February 2022 Meetings

Ms. Sayers reported that the third Monday of the month in January and February falls on a holiday and asked the Commissioners what date would work for them to meet. The Commissioners agreed on January 24, 2022 and February 28, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

6. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS – COUNCILMEMBER REGINA SALAS

- Council approved the first reading of an ordinance establishing parking lot fees at the airport. The second reading and final approval will be held on December 28, 2021. The new fees won't take effect until the new parking lot gate arm and payment system has been installed.
- The new parking lot has been paved and the exiting lot will be renovated.
- The daily rates will vary depending in price.
- The parking lot fees were placed to recuperate the cost of building the new parking lot.
- The lots will provide over 800 parking spaces.
- Money has been allocated to the American Rescue Plan Act.
- A grant application that is not related to hospitality is open for business attraction, expansion, and retention.

- There is an innovative and carbon dioxide removal challenge to business's that divert and convert materials from the landfill into a product or service.
- Councilmember Salas reported that she is on the Regional Transportation Planning Board that represents ten metro planning organizations of the Council of Governments. They are advocating for more funding regarding bridges, streets, and transportation infrastructure in rural Arizona. This could mean accessing more money for the Lone Tree overpass potential, parks, recreation, community space and the public art program.

7. REPORTS – MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS OF PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Commissioner Martin asked for clarification about the field groomer mentioned in the Parks monthly report. Ms. Hagin reported it is an amazing piece of equipment that can laser a field in addition to field grooming, which will save the city money over time.

8. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS TO AND FROM COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

Commissioner Martin asked that with the ARPA money if there was any new information on the Boulder Point or Westside Park update. Ms. Sayers reported that staff has not received any further guidance and that there are no new updates. She mentioned that she has an upcoming meeting with some of the Grants and Contracts staff that are managing the funds and will inquire about it.

9. AGENDA ITEMS FOR JANUARY 2022 MEETING

- Election of Chair and Co-chair for 2022
- Active Transportation Master Plan Update – Martin Ince
- Lone Tree Overpass Project Information – Park and Civic Space Focus – Christine Cameron

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.