



## **Minutes Parks, Recreation, Golf and Double Butte Cemetery Advisory Board September 18, 2024**

**Minutes of the Parks, Recreation, Golf and Double Butte Cemetery Advisory Board meeting held on September 18, 2024, 6:00 p.m., Hybrid Meeting- Tempe Public Library (Cottonwood Board Room), 3500 S Rural Rd, Tempe, AZ, and virtual through Microsoft Teams.**

**Members Present:**

Elizabeth Hatch – Vice Chair  
Sharon Doyle  
Mary Farmer  
Thomas Klabunde  
Shereen Lerner  
Gerardo Lopez  
Cory Pechtl  
Lane Waddell  
Lisa Zyriek

**Members Absent:**

Susan Carlson – Chair  
Regina Ponder

**City Staff Present:**

Alex Jovanovic, Deputy Community Services Director – Parks (Staff Liaison)  
Richard Adkins, Community Services Urban Forester – Parks  
Joshua Bell, Management Assistant II – Recreation  
Craig Hayton, Community Services Director  
Julie Hietter, Community Services Administration Manager  
Erin Kirkpatrick, Community Services Manager – Recreation  
Shawn Wagner, Deputy Community Services Director – Recreation  
Jessica Wright, Community Health & Human Services Supervisor

**Other Guests Present:**

None

Upon the establishment of a quorum, meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Elizabeth Hatch.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

None.

**Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**August 21, 2024**

---

Motion by Lane Waddell to approve the meeting minutes of August 21, 2024. Seconded by Mary Farmer. Motion passed on a 7-0 vote.

Ayes: Vice Chair Elizabeth Hatch, board members Mary Farmer, Thomas Klabunde, Shereen Lerner, Gerardo Lopez, Cory Pechtl, and Lane Waddell.

Absent: Susan Carlson, Shereen Lerner, Regina Ponder, and Lisa Zyriek. Shereen and Lisa arrived after the vote.

### **Agenda Item 8 – Desert Conservation Commission Update**

Elizabeth Hatch moved up Agenda Item 8. Shereen provided an updated on the Desert Conservation Commission.

- Management plan currently being reviewed before going out for public meetings; final draft is likely in January, public outreach in October
- Preserve is approximately 300 acres
- Hayden Butte management plan previously completed will be combined with this plan
- Money identified in 5-year CIP plan; CIP funding for park improvements is tied to bond election, if does not pass then money would need to come from elsewhere
- Board members asked questions and made comments about:
  - How many acres is the preserve?
  - Is there a timeline for completing the plan?
  - Is there money to implement?

### **Agenda Item 3 – Girl Scouts Troop 203 Buddy Bench**

Shawn Wagner informed board of Buddy Bench community project by local Girl Scouts Troop 203.

- Bench is available for someone who wants to sit and be able to talk to someone; placed at Escalante Multi-Gen Center and only one currently known to exist in City
- Supplies donated by local hardware stores, wood from Urban Forestry
- Board members asked questions and made comments about:
  - Do Buddy Benches exist anywhere else?

### **Agenda Item 4 – Golf**

Lane Waddell informed the board that there were no updates from the subcommittee.

### **Agenda Item 5 – Heat Relief Efforts – Community Health & Human Services**

Jessica Wright presented on Heat Relief efforts locally in Tempe and regionally.

- Heat relief efforts officially run May – September 30; seen increase in heat-related deaths in Maricopa County; heat relief deaths this season has surpassed previous numbers
- Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) provides map of available resources; 6 City Cooling Centers, Jenny's Trailer provides mobile heat relief
- Partnered with Department of Public Health for funding, Arizona Faith Network offered daily operations; three church locations; funding for three years; additional heat relief locations that coordinate directly with MAG
- Worked with Lyft and 211 to provide free rides to cooling centers, HOPE also transported
- Board members asked questions and made comments about:
  - Are efforts working? Were there fewer deaths this year?

---

### **Agenda Item 6 – Urban Forest Update**

Richard Adkins provided an update on Urban Forestry.

- Responsibility for trees depends on where in City, HOAs, commercial property boundaries
- Summer maintenance, clean-up, prevention pruning; August heat hit a lot of trees hard
- Urban Wood Program; 3 benches milled, built and installed in Sister Cities courtyard at Library
- 425 trees last season, October to May; 53 cost match trees, 11 living tree memorials
- Cost Match Program: application, City pays 50% of tree cost, staff delivers, will not plant
- Some trees from City Hall will be milled, repurposed
- Growing Together Program that was grant-funded starts end of September
- Rain to Roots; recommendations for Code and policy changes, public input
- New maps coming: canopy map in December, engineered shade maps, community tree maps that will include submissions by community available October 7; URL will be provided to public to connect to survey to provide information; public communication releases, social media
- New development plans will be required to provide information on trees and engineered shade
- Board members asked questions and made comments about:
  - Who is responsible for trees that have died between wall and street?
  - Can you explain Development Review Commission's new requirement for trees, shade
  - What is Cost Match Program?
  - What will happen to trees being taken down at City Hall?
  - How does community participate in Community Tree map? How will they know?

### **Agenda Item 7 – Adaptive Recreation, Escalante, and Community Gardens**

Erin Kirkpatrick provided an overview of her workgroup that she supervises in Recreation.

- Adaptive Recreation supports youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities; housed at Westside Multi-Gen but programs also offered at locations throughout City
- Currently IBCCES Certified Autism Center, working toward Autism City certification
- Three community gardens on public property; each different offerings, all open to public; currently no plans for more community gardens
- Escalante has grown in services offered over years, bulk of memberships and participations is from surrounding neighborhoods; programs are free or low cost
- Adaptive, Gardens, and Escalante work with a lot of community partners; Escalante houses offices for Tempe Community Action Agency, Maricopa County Youth Workforce Development
- Youth Membership is free; after-school program, Kinder Kids, teen drop-in activities
- Board members asked questions and made comments about:
  - Are there plans for more community gardens?

### **Agenda Item 9 – Board Operational Updates**

Alex Jovanovic discussed with the board the current status of the discussion about a memorial donation policy.

- **Goals**
- **Next Steps**
- **Opportunities**

- 
- Alex asked if the board wants to continue pursuing a memorial policy
  - Parks does not receive many memorial policy requests, but has been asked about a policy before; some people have installed their own memorials in parks without permission
  - A model similar to a suicide awareness bench could be considered and included in CIP project
  - Living Tree Memorial and memorial plaques at Pyle are current memorial program options
  - Previously board expressed desire to get involved in helping with policy; will look to add memorial policy discussion as future agenda item
  - Advocacy statement draft discussed at previous meeting will be revisited at upcoming meeting
  - Board members asked questions and made comments about:
    - I think it's more up to the City whether or not there should be a policy
    - Do you get asked as to why there is not a policy?
    - If we thought it was a good idea to have a suicide awareness bench installed there's no way it could be done currently?
    - There is currently a memorial policy for planting a tree?
    - Do you want a process created by the board?
    - Send advocacy statement along with next meeting's documents
    - Wants board to consider having a vote on whether or not to have a memorial policy; likes board having a role in assisting with developing policy; why not have something if it's reasonable instead of turning people away

#### **Agenda Item 10 – Future Agenda Items**

None

#### **Agenda Item 11 – Public Meeting Attendance, Notices & Announcements**

Alex Jovanovic and Shawn Wagner informed the board of some upcoming events.

- October 9 at 5:00 p.m. rededication of Sister Cities Garden at Library; relocated from Kiwanis Park
- Kiwanis Park Dog park groundbreaking at 5:30 p.m. on September 20; construction likely to be completed late spring or early summer
- Other: Arts in the Parks, Movies in the Park, Escalante Fall Festival, Roller Derby exhibition at Museum
- Board members asked questions and made comments about:
  - Volunteers needed for National Make a Difference Day on October 26 from 9:00-11:00 a.m.; cleanup at Curry Elementary School and Selleh Park; would like to see if Park Rangers can be involved

#### **Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.**

Prepared by: Joshua Bell, Management Assistant II, (480) 350-8676

Reviewed by: Alex Jovanovic, Deputy Community Services Director- Parks, (480) 350-5811