



Minutes Desert Conservation Commission Aug. 2, 2022

Minutes of the Desert Conservation Commission meeting held on Aug. 2, 2022, 3:31 p.m., Meeting held in person at the Tempe Public Library (3500 S. Rural Rd., Library Board Room) and virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Members Present:

Kimberly Gaffney-Loza – Chair
Hassan Elsaad
Donald Burt
Ricardo Juan Leonard
Shereen Lerner
Laura Stewart
Jane Neuheisel

Members Absent:

Elba Quintero
Erika Acorn- Vice Chair

City Staff Present:

Craig Hayton, Staff Liaison - Deputy Community Services Director – Parks and Recreation/Interim Community Services Director
Tanya Chavez, Senior Management Assistant – Community Services Administration
Erin Kirkpatrick, Community Services Manager

Upon the establishment of a quorum, meeting was called to order at 3:31p.m. by Chair Kimberly Gaffney-Loza

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

No Public Appearances

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes

There was a Motion made by Donald Burt to approve the June 7, 2022 meeting minutes.

Seconded: Ricardo Juan Leonard

Decision: Motion Approved, 7-0-2-1

Ayes: Laura Stewart, Shereen Lerner, Kimberly Gaffney-Loza, Donald Burt and Ricardo Juan Leonard

Nays: n/a

Abstain – Hassan Elsaad

Absent: Erika Acorn, Jane Neuheisel and Elba Quintero

Agenda Item 3 – New Commission Member Introduction

Craig Hayton introduced new commission member Hassan Elsaad.

Agenda Item 4 – Grass Clippings at Rolling Hills Golf Course

Craig Hayton introduced members of the Grass Clippings team to provide a presentation on the current Request for Proposal at Rolling Hills Golf Course. Presentation included:

- Vision
 - Quality and Layout
 - Night Play
 - Food and Beverage
 - Family Activity Lawn
 - Conceptual Plan
 - Turf Reduction
 - New Golf Boundary
 - Excess Property
 - Sustainability Suggestions
 - Questions and Comments
 - Questions were raised about lighting standards including type of lights, number of lights and height of lights. They were concerned about how the lights would impact the dark skies and wildlife. The lighting and disturbance to animals was why Grass Clippings moved the driving range away from the zoo. There was also a question regarding the footprint size and if the reduction of 15 acres would be under Glass Clippings responsibility and they indicated yes. A commissioner asked what type of water source would be used and Grass Clippings advised that the same water source (from the canal) will be used. In addition, Grass Clippings will plant low water use grass around the greens.
-

Agenda Item 5 – Operational Items

Erin Kirkpatrick provided an update on the following operational items:

- Moeur Park Improvements
- Park Monument Signage
- Preserves Management Plan
- Community Services Parks Supervisor Recruitment

Agenda Item 6 Commission Goals & Priorities

Craig Hayton provided an update on the goals and priorities. He indicated goal one is complete and that the commission needs to further refine goals two and three. Additional conversation around the goals and priorities are updated in the content below.

1. Identify and establish partnerships (Complete)

- Other Commissions: PRGDBC, Historic Preservation Commission, Sustainability & Resilience Commission, Tempe Transportation Commission
- Volunteer organizations: Keep Tempe Beautiful, Clean-up Papago, Site stewards, Scouts, Master Naturalist
- Government organizations: 4 Cultural Committee Tribes, City of Phoenix, Maricopa County, Arizona Forward, Game & Fish, Cooperative Extension Service
- Recreation community: Bike/BMX, fishing, running, hiking
- Ecological organizations: Audubon Society, Arizona Native Plant Society, CAZCA/Desert Defenders
- Tempe Organizations: Tempe Chamber of Commerce, Tempe Leadership, Downtown Tempe Authority, Tempe Tourism

- Service organizations: Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club
- Organizations proximate or within preserves: ASU, SRP
- Other groups/organizations: schools (community college/K-12) & education programs, religious organizations, Care 7
- Protect, restore and enhance existing assets (cultural, natural, historical, etc.).
- Promote native biodiversity and abundance, for example, through quality habitat.
- Promote use of native plants and removal of invasive species.
- Encourage cultural use and understanding of native plants and wildlife.
- Comprehensively map preserves, as needed, for appropriate internal and external uses.
- Encourage and support appropriate community volunteer activities.
- Add, maintain and update inclusive signage.

2. Increase awareness through education. (Groupings: signage, maps, programs, info kiosks, other)

- Education awareness & accessibility (schools, youth organizations)
- Management planning process
- Have Resolution R2021.08 spark ideas
- Volunteerism (Stewardship idea)
- City sources (water bill, Tempe 11, website, Tempe Opportunities, History Museum, Reach screens)
- Social media
- Loma del Rio needs work for education (signage is old and readable)
- Riparian areas (unique sub-zones w/in preserves)
- Interpretive programs & elements (touch, sound, etc.) – Preserve Manager
- Maps that outlined and described the parameters of the preserve, connections points or links off the maps to other areas
- Technology - such as the use of cell phones
- Hike into history (schools)
- Signage (w/QR codes tied to specific elements like plants, history, etc.; rules & regulations)
- Information center
- Maps of boundaries
- Historical and traditional uses of area and honor those uses (look up first boat/s location on Salt River)
- Data gathered to learn about native plants, species. How we conserve and remove the ones that are not native. Why native plants are so important.

3. Participate in planning and design efforts. (What does the Commission want to participate in?)

- Plans: Within & outside preserves
- Design projects: within preserves
- Budget: CIP; operating & maintenance; grants
- Include recreation community
- Identify preserve users
- Tribal/indigenous communities

- Neighborhood associations
- County island community
- Parks police
- Parks maintenance
- Salt River Project – SRP
- Arizona State University – ASU

Agenda Item 7 – Future Agenda Items

- PIO Introduction
- Annual Report

Agenda Item 11 - Upcoming Public Meetings & Announcements

- Next meeting is Tuesday, Sept. 20 at 3:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Prepared by: Tanya Chavez, Senior Management Assistant, (480) 858-2215

Reviewed by: Craig Hayton, Community Services Director - Parks and Recreation,
(480) 350-5234