

CITY OF LAS CRUCES

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

June 16, 2023

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board held a meeting on June 16, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall Council Chambers, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM.

Members Present:

- Cassie McClure - District 1
- Kenneth Coppedge – District 2
- Aracely Tellez – District 3
- Laura Haas - District 6
- Fred Raish – At large member

Members Absent:

- Stan Engle - District 4
- Eric Montgomery - District 5

Others Present:

- Robert Nunez, Interim Director, Parks and Recreation
- Phillip Catanach, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation
- Hazel Nevarez, Senior Office Manager, Parks & Recreation
- Claudia Chavez, Interim Deputy Director Youth Services, Parks & Recreation
- Franco Granillo, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation
- Catherin Mathews, Landscape Architect, Parks & Recreation
- Greg Shervanick, Public
- Pat Acosta, and many of her staff
- Katrina Arndt
- Jason Baldessari
- Becky Baum, Recording Secretary, RC Creations, LLC

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting of June 15, 2023, at City Hall Council Chambers, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM was brought to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair McClure and recognized the meeting as having a legal quorum.

1. Introduction:

Board Members introduced themselves and stated the district they represent. Attending staff introduced themselves.

2. Conflict of Interest:

1 There was no conflict of interest.

2
3 **3. Approval of the Agenda:**

4
5 Board Member Haas moved to approve the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
6 Meeting Agenda with the amendment of moving 7.8 up to between 7.1 and 7.2 for
7 June 15, 2023, seconded by Board Member Tellez. Motion passed

8
9 **4. Approval of Minutes of April 20, 2023:**

10
11 Board Member Raish moved to approve the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
12 Meeting Minutes April 20, 2023, seconded by Board Member Haas. Motion passed,

13
14 **5. Public Participation:**

15
16 Greg Shervanick stated he had three comments. First he stated at the last City
17 Council meeting Parks and Recreation delivered a small portion of budget increase
18 to the Councilors, and Councilors asked for more equality in the ability of the Parks
19 and Recreation Department to achieve revenue and sustainability for all of the
20 parks. Greg feels that is unfair. He would have addressed specifically Board
21 Member Engle and his Councilor as equity is not same as equality and charging \$2
22 for City pools is not a high fee. He spoke with people at the Splash Pad who were
23 from Alamogordo who felt \$2 was equitable as they are charged \$4 in Alamogordo.
24 El Paso charges \$6. He implores the Board to speak to City Councilors to ask them
25 to vote for the increase to Parks and Recreation department in the fee schedule.

26
27 He would also like to discuss the parking lots of all the City's parks and the relevance
28 to users of the parks. Young Park has a variety of events. LCPD has been asked
29 to put up signs in the parking lot with legal counsel benefit, that the parking lot is for
30 the benefit of the users of the park. Although public property, it is not a public parking
31 lot.

32
33 Lastly there are a large amount of impact fees to use. The fire at the park on Espina
34 two weeks ago needs to be used to replace the play equipment. Suggested if
35 possible buying insurance with park impact fee money, to do that so that any
36 damages by vandalism or otherwise, can be paid for quickly to avoid many steps/
37 procedures.

38
39 Suggestion of this Board needing to be recorded in a visual context so everyone
40 can look at it in a visual sense.

41
42 **6. Action Items: NONE.**

43
44 **7. Discussion Items:**

45
46 **7.1 Skate Park Renovations - Catherine Mathews:**

1
2 Catherine Mathews stated they are working with consultant, Spawn Ranch.
3 Started with an assessment of existing skate park. Skate park users in the
4 community have been requesting renovations, upgrades, and attention to the
5 park. An assessment was done in spring 2020 of the skate park that included
6 a survey of the users to determine extent of the issues at the park and
7 developing some plans. In fall 2020 the New Mexico State Legislature granted
8 the City \$845,000 to complete the project. Design started this past winter with
9 public involvement survey and a design kickoff meeting in February 2023. The
10 consultant presented options that were shared with the public. Based on the
11 input and the consultant there is a near final design that was shown to the
12 Board.

13
14 Final permitting of the design will be next month or so, and dealing with some
15 drainage issues. Construction potentially from August 2023 through May
16 2024, with closeout approximately June 2024. Various options were shared
17 with the Board. All options were a smaller footprint than the existing park to
18 make it more cohesive and more skateable with less empty space that had no
19 purpose. Option A had Zia symbol, a bowl, and various features. Option B
20 has a larger bowl, same Zia feature, and different elements with colored
21 concrete, orange, grey, and turquoise metal features. Another option includes
22 many features from other options, but also a landscape plantar area. There
23 are drainage issues, and finalizing the budget before an option will be chosen.
24 FTBS acronym was included in the options, which means For the Brothers and
25 Sisters.

26
27 Chair McClure asked the timeframe of the park being closed which would
28 coincide with the aforementioned construction time.

29 30 **7.8 Park & Trail Wayfinding Plan - Catherine Mathews:**

31
32 Catherine Mathews stated this project is coming to a close. This was funded
33 through New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) with the
34 Recreation Trails Project grant. The grant is to design a plan for wayfinding.
35 This will help users, visitors, and residents to locate parks, find trails, get
36 around to points of interest throughout the City and other recreational
37 opportunities. The design principles are comprehensive, consistent,
38 conspicuous, signs visible, clear, and contextual. Color, design, location of
39 signs, types, all part of making the system coincide with the principles.

40
41 This project started with public involvement with stakeholder sessions/
42 interviews, day of action talking with people specifically on trails for
43 information. Also a survey was done. There was a visioning session with
44 various attendees. And then another session showing the draft design
45 acquiring input. There was a two part analysis report created. At the beginning
46 the consultants outlined the goals, timeline, and provided contextual overview

1 in which they personally experienced the parks and trails along with taking
2 photos and talking with people.
3

4 The second report delved into the actual signs, the content, and visual look,
5 and fitting into the community. The visioning session was to imagine
6 journeying through our trails and/or parks and develop what someone might
7 need to see in a wayfinding plan. Geographic plan data and priority areas
8 were discussed. What community features to highlight, illustrated, connect to
9 with the system. Category of trails and parks we have. Talks about visual
10 design of colors, patterns to make wayfinding unique and indicative of Las
11 Cruces. Also discussed was code compliance.
12

13 The final report provides guidance for implementing the wayfinding system,
14 information design, overview of sign types, discussion of graphic elements,
15 and installation guidelines. Sign categories include identification signs,
16 directional, regulation, informational, and warning signs. Also color coding and
17 message content and the preference was shown. Also discussed were rules
18 and regulations and how that fits on a sign.
19

20 Some examples were shown. Primary signs would be like monument signs,
21 secondary ID signs for small parks or portions of park, trail ID signs, directional
22 signs, regulatory signs, warning signs, rule signs, informational signs. All signs
23 coincide with the font, types of information provided, and color schemes,
24 making total cohesive with all signs in the community. The plan also details
25 the goal of constructing the signs, materials, colors, dimensions for
26 consistency throughout the system. A main trail sign is a map kiosk which will
27 be located at intersections or trailheads.
28

29 The wayfinding plan is also meant to guild future implementation of wayfinding
30 through the City. There is a matrix to help determine which type of signs to be
31 illustrated in the plan are appropriate for which types of locations. There are
32 installation guidelines also including within parks.
33

34 Question of how to determine how many signs needed for the parks?
35 Catherine Mathews stated the matrix was specifically created for that purpose
36 for clear and distinctive guidance of what kinds of signs for what types of parks.
37 Currently there is a very small amount of the grant remaining and those funds
38 will be expended on getting signs out. The decision has not been made yet
39 which parks/trails. There is no funding for the whole system as of yet.
40 Materials for easy graffiti removal have been discussed.
41

42 Various situations/personas were discussed on how things would work and
43 how to access different locations and how to be pointed to various other
44 features, food, transportation, outside of the parks/trail system. They do want
45 to call out schools, fire stations, shopping areas to access from the tails.
46

1 This project will be ongoing project as new facilities will necessitate signage.
2 Also asked if this will be eventually online in an app. QR codes on the signage
3 was discussed. This current plan did not thoroughly discuss online but as a
4 department it is something they do need to think about.
5

6 **7.2 Las Cruces Youth Soccer Association - C. W. Ward:**

7
8 C. W. Ward was not present.
9

10 **7.3 Youth Development Diversion Program Presentation - Pat Acosta:**

11
12 Pat Acosta presented her staff and they introduced themselves. The program
13 is youth development diversion and diversion program, used to be JCP
14 (Juvenile Citation Program). They provide educational mentoring and
15 preventive services to youth and families. The program started as youth
16 violence initiative and has been going for 10 years. This is funded by a grant
17 by CYFD and matched by the City. In 2009 the office of Juvenile and Justice
18 Department and Delinquency program provided the program a best practice
19 program. All staff is trained and certified by One Circle Foundation: for student
20 justice, emotional way of coping with things, physical and mental health. They
21 are a trauma informed program.
22

23 The services cover all of Doña Ana County including Anthony, Chaparral,
24 Hatch. Also getting referrals from the schools. Phone is 541-2349 and 890 N.
25 Tornillo. They have done food for the elderly. Also working in the garden and
26 then also how to use the garden products in cooking. They also clean the
27 cemetery. They are currently doing community service that embraces
28 empathy.
29

30 The age range is 12-18, but must be 17 at time of enrollment. There are
31 referrals from schools, probation officers, SRO officers. They have three
32 different level classes. They can have as much as 20 youth. Level two is 25
33 hours with community services. The classes are separated by gender.
34 Parents can call, not just referrals from officers.
35

36 Question if the Board could help. It was mentioned jobs and job training. It
37 was also asked if the Parks and Rec hire high school kids. Youth need to be
38 16 for a job. Franco Granillo stated they have worked with several different
39 youth programs. They give them work that is part of sustainability, learning
40 actual maintenance for Parks and Recreation, and give them educational
41 tutorials for learning. Phil Catanach they have student recreation aids who are
42 16 and older and keep a 2.0 grade point average. They also work with the
43 county for the interim program that is going. City has about 100 interns.
44 Robert Nunez stated they are wanting to work with Las Cruces Public Schools
45 through the CTE (Career and Technical Education) Program.
46

1 They do work with a social service agencies but not CASA. Question on where
2 instructors are found or if the staff does it. Pat Acosta stated the they
3 specifically have diversion specialists. They have intake workers. The frame
4 of the program is how the grant is written. The currently have four bilingual
5 staff.
6

7 A question of if the youth get to pick the activities and programs. The youth
8 do not get to pick what is being taught. So if the youth come in for vaping, they
9 will get a preventive class on vaping. Every group they get does vary.
10

11 Question of if this program has gone before Council. Robert Nunez stated it
12 has gone before Council numerous times. CYF has this program on a four
13 year contract.
14

15 **7.4 Las Cruces Public School (LCPS) Agreement Update - Robert Nunez:**

16
17 Robert Nunez shared the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) via
18 PowerPoint. On comment that came up with regard to Las Cruces Youth
19 Soccer is the use of the space available at Field of Dreams. With this
20 agreement LCPS and City of Las Cruces are exchanging playing areas.
21 Currently the City is taking care of and responsible for fields 1-5. LCPS does
22 have fees for using the fields. The MOU is available for public view.
23

24 Board Member Coppedge stated he hopes that C. W. Ward does come and
25 present. As a coach he has had problems with gates getting unlocked in a
26 reasonable time. Robert Nunez stated that they take care of the league
27 agreements and with the transition of property there have been some
28 exchange conflicts. The City will reach out to C. W. Ward and discuss
29 utilization of City properties.
30

31 **7.5 GO Bond Update (2018, 2022) - Robert Nunez:**

32
33 Robert Nunez stated this presentation was presented to City Council at a work
34 session. Currently GO Bond 2018 question two is the new Animal Service
35 Center, and they are working closely to get the final remaining kennels
36 available and open. Public art has just recently been placed at the Animal
37 Services Center. Parks and Rec has the dog park that is just behind the
38 Animal Service Center that has been open approximately a month.
39

40 Next is GO Bond 2022, the three questions are new Fire Station #9, park
41 improvements, and the East Mesa Public Recreation Complex continuation.
42 Fire Station #9 to be in Metro Verde area, price tag of \$9.8 million, total design
43 cost was \$723,000. Their kickoff meetings are next week and out for bid
44 hopefully February 2024. Park improvements, \$1.98 million. The priorities are
45 La Llorona Park improvements, restrooms, upgrade amenities, trail repair, and
46 in discussions with IBWC in regards to getting permit approved/updated to

1 start improvements for the restroom. If there are extra funds those will be used
2 for exercise equipment replacement at Tellbrook Park off Las Alturas. The
3 East Mesa Public Sports Complex, continuation, with GO Bond of \$4.9 million.
4 Council approved state shared gross receipts tax in the amount of \$2 million
5 for a total of \$6.9 million. \$2.25 will be used for remaining scope from Phase
6 1, and in Phase 2 using \$1.9 of Musco lighting, and continuation of \$2.75
7 million. The new scope of \$2.75 million, four sand volleyball courts, two
8 basketball courts, concession area, restrooms, more street furniture
9 throughout the area, site grading. There is a 10 acres of community park area.
10 Also some site grading where the future skate park will be located. There will
11 also be trees, shrubs, seating, and erosion control, playground equipment,
12 shade structure, and sod for the 10 acre park. Sports lighting, parking lot
13 lighting, and various other lighting.

14
15 A question of bollards/barriers for protection of sports fields. Robert Nunez
16 stated there have been discussions. The areas are fenced in, but there are
17 areas where all terrain vehicles may have access, so bollards and/or large
18 boulders to secure the area.

19
20 Question of when completed. As it is under construction, some areas close to
21 100%, restrooms are about 95% completed, hope in next six months for the
22 public. Looking at August for the sod to be placed.

23
24 Question about La Llorona, improvement to river access. Cathy Mathews
25 stated that the main focus is the restroom and need a clear cost on that. The
26 next would be replacement/upgrading of the site furnishings. At this point
27 there are no plans for entry point to the river. It was mentioned that one of the
28 big uses for La Llorona is people entering the river. Through IBWC there are
29 regulations the City is allowed to do to the river specifically. The staff will take
30 a look at this further.

31 32 **7.6 Youth Services Program Tour - Claudia Chavez:**

33
34 Claudia Chavez insisted the Board to tour the facilities. They are in full mode
35 with the summer programs, Weed and Seed, afterschool program, and Teen
36 Connections. Afterschool programs are at three middle schools, Zia, Camino,
37 and Sierra from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Youth Development and Diversion
38 program offers evening classes and afternoon classes. Also Keep Las Cruces
39 Beautiful abating graffiti and beautifying the City. They would like to provide a
40 three hour tour to see the sites and what they do. They will propose some
41 dates and times to be e-mailed to the Board.

42 43 **7.7 Summer Special Events - Phil Catanach:**

44
45 Phil Catanach stated community events provide and support diverse
46 entertainment opportunities to residents with focus on community. Mentioned

1 supporting Renaissance Fair, Spring Fest, and Pachanga. They do concerts,
2 parades, Movies in the Park, kids expo this Saturday with 20 vendors, live
3 entertainment. Next Movie in the Park is at the end of June, Strange World.
4 All movies in the park will all be at Young Park this year. Music in the park is
5 one of the bigger events for the City of Las Cruces, and 70% of the music is
6 from Las Cruces and/or area bands. There will be 17 concerts with 33 different
7 musical acts. Next Wednesday, 4:00-8:00, Make Music Concert, a nationally
8 recognized day for communities to make music. There is event is the Electric
9 Light Parade on July 3, which starts with a Fun Run and 5k 7:30 starting at
10 Meerscheidt recreation center up to Apodaca Park and return. At 9:00 is the
11 parade, which this year the theme is Red, White, and Boom, and there will be
12 40-60 floats. The parade usually lasts about 90 minutes. They work with the
13 Veterans Advisory Board to pick the Grand Marshals. This year there are
14 seven grand marshals from the Afghanistan/Iraq war. The 4th of July concert
15 and fireworks at the Pat and Lou Sisbarro Park. The fireworks are at 9:45.

16
17 Question if Las Cruces is doing anything for June as Pride month. At present
18 Parks and Rec does not have anything this year.

19
20 **8. Staff Member Comments:**

21
22 Claudia Chavez stated that this Saturday would be the kids expo at the Downtown
23 Plaza at 10:00. Trash and fashion show part of Keep Las Cruces Beautiful will be
24 from 11:00-12:00. Keep Las Cruces Beautiful has been really busy with maintaining
25 the City graffiti abatements. Out of school time started last Wednesday and go until
26 the Friday before school starts on the July 14th. There are 70 kids at each of the
27 three middle schools mentioned earlier, and also Weed and Seed, Safe Haven, and
28 Teen Connection Program. The 4th of July celebrations as mentioned. Also stuff
29 the bus at Memorial Hospital on July 15th, they put up a booth, provide information
30 to the community. National Night Out at Downtown Plaza August 1st, 6:00-9:00
31 p.m.

32
33 Franco Granillo stated they are working on maintenance schedules to keep up with
34 the growth and warm weather. Also working towards field preparation for
35 tournaments and leagues. They are replacing trees that have died or in decline.

36
37 Catherine Mathews stated at Benavidez Community Center Park installed fencing
38 and new walkway from the parking lot into the AARP fit lot. Also beginning
39 renovation work at Gallagher Park, replacing play equipment, and new benches and
40 bicycle racks.

41
42 Phil Catanach stated they have adult basketball league, little sluggers T-ball league,
43 youth volleyball, July 22nd all night volleyball tournament from 8:00 p.m. to morning,
44 flag football and cheer and the registration is in July with season starting in August.
45 Celebrated 50th anniversary on May 27th for Meerscheidt Recreation Center.
46 Outdoor pools, regional aquatic center, and Las Cruces Natatorium all open. Pools

1 are being used, 4,480 individuals to the pools, not including the splash pads that get
2 approximately 100 people a day. There is a kids expo this Saturday. There was a
3 therapeutic dance for developmental disabilities last night. Fit lot classes throughout
4 the summer in the early mornings. Father's day concert this Sunday. Make Music
5 Day on Wednesday. And getting ready for 4th of July, the parade, concert and
6 fireworks.
7

8 Robert Nunez mentioned many of the aforementioned activities going on. Also
9 working with Friends of Organ Mountains on some hikes. They have requested from
10 the police some help with the parking, as mentioned by the member of the public.
11 Working on a survey with a contractor through City Manager's office for program,
12 facilities, and events, and in this progress possible work session for the Board.
13 Cooling stations will be provided throughout the City. Discussions on how to assist
14 the skate community during the construction of the renovated skate park. Also
15 looking into funding for security in some of the locations, tennis and pickleball.
16 Working with the finance department for the new fiscal year starting in two weeks.
17


18 **9. Board Member Comments:**

19 Board Member Haas requested the PowerPoints be sent to the Board.
20

21 Chair McClure went to the 50th anniversary celebration and stated the staff were
22 amazing and engaging with her children.
23

24 **10. Adjournment:**

25 Board Member Haas moved to adjourn, seconded by Board Member Coppedge.
26
27
28
29

30 
31 _____
32 Chairperson
33