



Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Minutes:

CHAIR WHITE called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

PRESENT: CHAIR WHITE and COMMISSIONERS SCHULTZ, SHERMAN (via teleconference), ARMENIAN, BECKER, NEIGER, BRIARE (via teleconference), ASSELIN, HOWARD (via teleconference), JIMENEZ and KELLER

EXCUSED: COMMISSIONERS McCURDY, GEBRE, HENLEY and FOEMMEL

ALSO PRESENT: GREG WEITZEL, Director of Parks and Recreation, APRIL DI GIOVANNI, Administrative Secretary, JOHN RIDILLA, Deputy City Attorney, and GABRIELA PORTILLO-BRENNER, Deputy City Clerk

2. Announcement Regarding: Compliance with Open Meeting Law

Minutes:

ANNOUNCEMENT MADE: This meeting has been properly noticed and posted at the following locations in accordance with the State of Nevada Executive Department Declaration of Emergency Directive 006: The City of Las Vegas website – www.lasvegasnevada.gov and The Nevada Public Notice Website – notice.nv.gov.

3. Public Comment: Comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters on the agenda for action. If you wish to be heard, come forward and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion, as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed, may be limited.

Minutes:

Prior to hearing this item, CHAIR WHITE asked new member, COMMISSIONER KELLER, to introduce herself. The Commissioner stated she is happy to be involved and looks forward to working with the members of the Commission.

KARLEE PHELPS expressed her appreciation for closing playgrounds for the past six months to protect the community, but thought it was time to reevaluate that decision. She expressed arguments regarding COVID-19 research and thought the benefits of reopening the playgrounds outweighed the risks. She spoke about distance learning and the need for children to be outdoors and for improved information. Although the allotted time expired prior to MS. PHELPS completing her comments, CHAIR WHITE indicated that the Commission understood the point she was trying to make.

DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY JOHN RIDILLA advised MS. PHELPS the written copy of her comments would be made a part of the record.

4. For possible action to approve the Final Minutes by reference of the Regular Meeting of March 3, 2020

Motion made by Richard Becker to Approve

Passed For: 11; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 4

For-Richard Becker, Jesus Jimenez, Steven Neiger, Audrey Asselin, Malcolm D. White, Lisa Sherman, Bob Briare, Adroushan Armenian, Larry Schultz, Melody Howard, Micaela Keller; Excused-Eric Foemmel, Elizabeth Gebre, Mike Henley, William McCurdy;

5. Report by the Department of Public Safety regarding issues at City facilities and parks – All Wards

Minutes:

DEPUTY CITY MARSHAL MICHAEL REINARZ provided a detailed accounting of the August 2020 Deputy City Marshals Report. He provided various statistics related to the total number of calls for service, enforcement actions, arrests, traffic citations and warning citations, as well as those that related to transient issues and park violations. Copies of the report were disseminated to the Commissioners and a copy submitted to the City Clerk's Office for the record, which is included in the backup.

COMMISSIONER SCHULTZ asked MARSHAL REINARZ how he would characterize the general climate during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to that six to 12 months ago. MARSHAL REINARZ stated COVID-19 has made things unpredictable and while it may have attributed to fewer calls for service, it has also allowed for a tighter focus on areas that needed addressing resulting in a higher level of enforcement. He noted that the calls for service generally were for the same types of issues, but approximately 72 percent of the calls they respond to result in enforcement. The lower number of calls for service was due to the fact that initially people were staying indoors, but now they are starting to come out.

COMMISSIONER NEIGER asked if the Marshals have been conducting any special enforcement related to the Governor's Directives. MARSHAL REINARZ informed the Commissioner that more than 479 verbal warnings for mask violations were given out, which typically occurred on Fremont Street. He did not have specific numbers related to violations in sports complexes and fields. While they may speak to individuals in the parks and open spaces about social distancing, the degree of enforcement done on Fremont Street, due to it being a more closed-in environment, is not done in the parks. COMMISSIONER NEIGER wondered how the Marshals deal with complaints at sports complexes or other large gatherings. MARSHAL REINARZ indicated they respond to complaints such as soccer teams not social distancing or wearing masks, but do so in an advisory capacity; there has been no enforcement action involving warning citations, citations or arrests in these situations.

CHAIR WHITE asked if the Marshals were seeing any trends with regard to the homeless population moving. MARSHAL REINARZ confirmed stating there has been a large push to move the homeless population out of the Fremont Street/downtown area and that a number of arrests and citations have been made to that effort. He noted the homeless mostly relocate to other areas, which sometimes includes the parks, etc.

MARSHAL REINARZ added that all community-oriented policing activities were suspended due to COVID-19, and there have been only five COVID-19 related events involving the homeless population. He explained there has been an uptick in activity due to the commencement of a program where the Marshals follow the street cleaners in order to move the homeless to ensure that job can be done safely. A total of 742 people were warned to move out of those areas so the street cleaning could be done.

6. Report by the Department of Operations and Maintenance regarding park maintenance – All Wards

Minutes:

GREG WEITZEL, Director of Parks and Recreation, indicated the Park Maintenance Manager could not be present and that he would be reporting on this matter. MR. WEITZEL commented it has been six months since the Commission met, and that it was great to be able to hold a meeting again. Referencing the monthly reports that have been provided, he noted that the Parks and Grounds Maintenance Division has been reassigned under the Department of Parks and Recreation, so these reports will now be coming from them specific to parks and maintenance issues such as graffiti and trash, etc., along with any accolades.

MR. WEITZEL referred to the CIP Construction Update included in the backup. He reviewed those projects that have been completed within the last six months, which included the Alyn Beck Memorial Park, Trigo Hill Park/Gilmore Cliff Shadows, Woofert Park, the Las Vegas Senior Center, Floyd Lamb Park – Mountain Bike Trails, Huckleberry Park and the Stupak Community Center – Pre-School Room. He also described those projects still under construction in the various wards.

COMMISSIONER SHERMAN asked if MR. WEITZEL could elaborate on the change of administrative offices to the Dula Community Center as a result of the City seeking to sell the Development Services Center (DSC) and needing space at City Hall for other departments. MR. WEITZEL explained there was a large restacking that occurred as the result of 90 positions that were housed at the DSC being relocated to City Hall. This involved a lot of movement, and he offered to provide information to the Commissioners as to the final layout. He noted, however, that this provided an opportunity to bring the Department's administrative functions together under one

roof. Adaptive and Municipal Services were previously spread out in multiple centers and are now located in the Dula Community Center along with the administrative division. It was a lot to do in a short amount of time, but he felt it was a good move. He also noted that the City may look to build additional facilities across the street in the future.

COMMISSIONER SCHULTZ commended MR. WEITZEL on the materials that were provided during the hiatus in the way of newsletter updates, as he found them to be very helpful in keeping connected as to what was going on. With the reintegration of Operations and Maintenance into the Parks and Recreation function, he asked if any of the leaders from Operations and Maintenance were inherited. MR. WEITZEL confirmed, noting STEVEN GLIMP, Park Maintenance Manager, is still a part of the team and those familiar with the functions are still in place. He indicated the Commissioners would be provided with the new organizational chart which outlines the new structure.

Commenting that the Floyd Lamb Hay Barn has been somewhat controversial, COMMISSIONER SCHULTZ asked if anything was hindering its progress. MR. WEITZEL stated no, and that they have been working very closely with multiple permitting bodies as well as the State and Local Historical Preservation Officers on this project every step of the way. It has been a teamwork approach involving multiple departments working together to get the project done, and he thought the end result will be a very well-done facility. He noted a letter and frequently asked questions were mailed to the approximate 6,000 surrounding households to clarify any misinformation related to the project. COMMISSIONER SCHULTZ was familiar with the questions and the video, which he thought was helpful and a first-class product. MR. WEITZEL added that the project will be completed in the first quarter of 2021, and he explained at the request of COMMISSIONER SCHULTZ the scope of work anticipated to be completed during that timeframe. He noted the various delays, but stated they would provide the Commissioners with the ribbon-cutting date as soon as it is known.

COMMISSIONER BECKER echoed COMMISSIONER SCHULTZ'S comments regarding the materials that were distributed during the months they were unable to meet. As to construction, he asked for some input with regard to Bruce Trent Park. MR. WEITZEL stated they have been working with COUNCILWOMAN SEAMAN on funding for renovations at this park. The playground is old and in need of replacement; the types of units the Councilwoman would like to see have been identified. Additionally, the pavilion structures needed to be removed immediately due to rust and deterioration. The Councilwoman asked that instead of replacing the smaller pavilions, a larger one be installed. The playground will be constructed as a potential community build project in the first quarter of 2021. He noted there are other improvements needed at the park, which include tree trimming, trail and signage improvements, smart park technology related to irrigation and automated restroom locks as well as other technological improvements that will make it a more efficient operation. He stated the neighbors are being kept informed of what is happening at the park, and he expressed excitement over its future plans. For those not familiar with this park, he pointed out that it is named after the first Director of Parks and Recreation in the city. COMMISSIONER SHERMAN commented how beautiful this park is and asked if the Farmers Market would be able to continue to operate during the construction phase. MR. WEITZEL confirmed this, and also commended the Farmers Market leadership on doing a great job revising their delivery system so that the Farmers Market could remain open during the pandemic.

In response to the question by CHAIR WHITE as to whether special projects now fell under the Department of Parks and Recreation, MR. WEITZEL explained currently, there are three different special event sections – Council events, community events and parks events – and that the Council and community events are now under their department. The idea is for the creation of a one-stop-shop to enable easier permitting, etc. MR. WEITZEL stated they are working on the continuous improvement process for special events, and he will report out to the Commission on that subject at a future meeting.

7. Report by Greg A. Weitzel, Parks and Recreation Director, regarding the effects of COVID-19 on the Department of Parks and Recreation – All Wards

Minutes:

GREG WEITZEL, Director of Parks and Recreation, reported that the effects of the pandemic have greatly affected the Department of Parks and Recreation, as well as the City as a whole. When the pandemic first hit, like everyone else, they believed it would be for a short period of time and everyone would come back to work as normal, but that turned out not to be the case. He noted although playgrounds were closed as the result of the Governor's Directive, the City was able to keep all of its parks and trails open. Staff were quickly reassigned;

some to an employee youth care program, which provided youth care for essential workers. A healthy parks program was also established to help keep the parks clean due to the overwhelming number of people utilizing them. This program was quickly mirrored by multiple other agencies across the country of which he expressed he was very proud. Staff did a great job and should be commended for working long, hot days to keep the parks clean.

From the employee youth care program, the Vegas Strong Summer Academy was set up at several centers with more than 700 youth participants. While more of a daycare program, there were a lot of activities typically held at summer camp, which provided a great opportunity for kids to spend some time out of the home. The families that participated in this program provided a lot of positive feedback. Currently, the Vegas Strong Fall Academy is taking place, which is designed to help students with online learning. He noted they are also partnering with the Office of Cultural Affairs to do arts and cultural programming as well as the Department of Youth Development and Social Innovation, which is helping with the educational component of the program. He commended staff for working together as a team and for establishing this program in such a short amount of time. He noted the program is in its second week, is being held at 10 locations, including libraries and community centers, has almost 700 registrants, and is going very well.

MR. WEITZEL stated there is also an Adaptive Academy at the Dula Community Center for those students needing extra help, which he believed the City of Las Vegas to be the only municipality in the valley with this type of program. He stated these programs are in response to the Clark County School District (CCSD) closing and have kept staff very busy.

MR. WEITZEL stated after the CCSD Superintendent held a meeting during their reopening plan with all of the Parks and Recreation Department Directors across the valley to identify ways to work together, he took it upon himself to organize a meeting to figure out what they could do to stand up these programs. He stated he was very proud of the agencies coming together and noted the hours and costs are similar across the jurisdictions to ensure affordability, avoid a competitive situation and to still be able to provide a quality program. They did the best they could with all of the facilities they have and were able to set up approximately 5,000 seats between all of the agencies in the valley and to provide staffing for the program in a short amount of time. He commended everyone again that was involved in doing this for the students.

MR. WEITZEL noted that the active adult centers and playgrounds are still closed, but they are hopeful the Governor will allow playgrounds to be reopened in the immediate future. However, during the closure, they have been able to complete multiple upgrades, such as touchless features in restrooms, installation of plexiglass at the center reception areas, along with temperature and health screenings. Additionally, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) was provided to all staff, and they have upgraded the cleaning schedules at all facilities. He again expressed pride in staff who have done an incredible job during a very trying time to keep facilities clean and programs open.

MR. WEITZEL stated many more actions have been taken, but those mentioned were the highlights. CHAIR WHITE commended MR. WEITZEL on doing a wonderful job and being able to reassign staff because so many people have lost their jobs.

8. Report by Commission members regarding parks issues and events within their respective Council Wards and at large – All Wards

Minutes:

COMMISSIONER BRIARE reported although he will be out of town, there will be a micro garbage pick-up at Bob Baskin Park on September 19, 2020.

CHAIR WHITE explained for the newest member, MEMBER KELLY, that the Board is encouraged to talk to their Councilmember and/or constituents about what is happening in their respective ward and to report at this meeting each month.

9. Report by Greg A. Weitzel, Parks and Recreation Director, regarding upcoming Department of Parks and Recreation activities – All Wards

Minutes:

GREG WEITZEL, Director of Parks and Recreation, stated staff will continue to provide monthly reports to the Commissioners to keep them informed.

He then proceeded to review the strategic goals and priorities for Fiscal Year 21, which started July 1, 2020, a copy of which is included in the backup. The first major goal is to finalize the Reorganization and Organization Change Management Plan, which includes a timeline and implementation schedule that somewhat changed because of the pandemic. He specifically made note of the Special Events Transition Committee Teams and Grounds Maintenance Transition Committee Teams. They are working on everything from work rules to how they communicate and collaborate on numerous projects and programs. He stated the reorganization just started July 1, 2020, and that it takes time for everyone to become comfortable because not only did the Department of Parks and Recreation physically move, but some of the jobs changed where they are now working by function, which is different for many staff.

The second goal relates to System Restoration Models – Reopening Plans, which adhere to the Nevada United Roadmap to Recovery and is part of the Governor’s Directives and LEAP (Local Empowerment Advisory Panel) Guidelines. These change daily, but they have very detailed reopening plans for every major function in their department, which he encouraged the Commissioners to review. He noted these plans have been shared nationally, as well as internationally, and he commended staff, especially SUSAN QUINTANA, Administrative Officer, who has done a fantastic job. The hope is to move towards normalcy, and these plans will help with that.

MR. WEITZEL briefly reported on the Vegas Strong Academy, noting that while the centers may not have the traditional programming people are used to, they have been repurposed to provide essential services needed in the community.

MR. WEITZEL reported the third goal is SNPLMA (Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act) of which there is \$200 million available for parks and recreation projects in the valley. The City is allowed to apply for three projects, and staff is diligently working with the City Manager’s Office on those to submit for funding by the September 14, 2020 due date. Capital Improvement Projects continue to be a major goal as well.

Goal number four relates to grants and other funding sources. MR. WEITZEL stated the Position Justification Committee approved a new Grant Coordinator position; that person will help identify and apply for federal, state and local grants that will assist them with their mission, their programs and facilities.

The fifth goal is CAPRA (Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies). The original submittal date was February 2021, but that was delayed due to the pandemic, and the City now has until February 2022. He noted the accreditation process is very detailed and involves a system master plan and department strategic plan, which is the sixth goal. A kickoff meeting was scheduled in February/March 2020, but again, that was delayed until January 2021. He stated he would appreciate the assistance of this Commission throughout the process, which will involve public meetings, stakeholder meetings and collecting data and information to help plan the future for the next five years. This goal includes an operational review, which involves identifying what is working now and what needs to be done moving forward.

The seventh goal is the Special Events Transition Plan. They are looking to do a one-stop-shop for City services and develop policies, procedures and a security plan for special events, as well as looking at a possible update to the Fee Waiver Policy.

The eighth goal is Hundred Plan in Action which involves the reopening and repurposing of the James Gay and Ethel Pearson Parks. He noted that a formal presentation on the Hundred Plan in Action would be given to this Commission at a future meeting.

The ninth goal is SMART Parks and Maintenance Management Plan, which involves a new parks maintenance software selection and will provide a new level of accountability in the Parks Operations and Maintenance Division. This will also involve draft levels of service, sanitation and an athletic field maintenance plan. He said they are currently working on two ordinances – Shade Tree and Wildlife Maintenance or a no feeding policy in the parks. The no feeding of wildlife ordinance is scheduled to go before the City Council in the next month.

Lastly, MR. WEITZEL noted they are looking to bolster their volunteer program by creating a new framework and working with community partners like Get Outdoors Nevada who will assist with a new VIP (Volunteer in the Parks) Program by organizing the Healing Garden projects, programs and special events there along with two volunteer projects in every ward as determined by the Council. He noted those dates will be communicated as they are set. That agreement is scheduled to go before the City Council this month.

With regard to the volunteer program, CHAIR WHITE commented that it sounded as if the Commissioners could work with their Councilmembers to find out in which parks they would like to promote that program. He expressed his support in facilitating any meetings necessary.

COMMISSIONER SCHULTZ thanked MR. WEITZEL for a very comprehensive and well laid out set of strategic goals and priorities. Referencing the reorganization and the comment made about now working by function, he wondered how it worked in the past. MR. WEITZEL provided several examples where after reviewing employee duties, it did not make sense from a functional standpoint, and explained they are merely putting the function where it belongs in the division or with the appropriate staff member where it makes the most sense. MR. WEITZEL noted some of what was being done previously could be attributed to being short-staffed during the last recession where staff members helped pick up tasks.

With regard to goal nine, COMMISSIONER SCHULTZ referenced a multi-page questionnaire that was a way to grade every aspect of each park under the former Parks and Recreation Director from the overall condition of the park, to the restrooms, the trash bins, the landscaping, tree trimming, etc. MR. WEITZEL was not familiar with this instrument, but said he would follow up.

COMMISSIONER BECKER offered his services in helping with CAPRA, as he has personally helped other agencies in obtaining their accreditation in the past. He also asked for the status on youth sports and wondered if the City was doing anything to help the State move along in re-opening those programs. With regard to both youth and adult sports, MR. WEITZEL stated currently they are only permitted to hold practice, clinics and drills, but no play. They are following the guidelines and are working with multiple partners and other jurisdiction Directors to figure out a path forward to be able to play, but it is currently still on hold. COMMISSIONER BECKER asked if a scrimmage would be considered practice/clinic, to which MR. WEITZEL responded that he would consider a scrimmage as play.

10. **Citizens Participation:** Public comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters within the jurisdiction of the Commission. No subject may be acted upon by the Commission unless that subject is on the agenda and is scheduled for action. If you wish to be heard, come forward and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion on any single subject, as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed, may be limited.

Minutes:

Following a question by KARLEE PHELPS as to whether this Commission has the power to re-open playgrounds under the Governor's transition to a more flexible and responsive long-term mitigation strategy for COVID-19, GREG WETZEL, Director of Parks and Recreation, responded it did not have that authority. MS. PHELPS asked for direction as to whom they should be advocating such a change. MR. WEITZEL deferred to DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY JOHN RIDILLA, who explained that the City, as all jurisdictions in Nevada, is bound by the Governor's Executive Orders regarding COVID-19 and the re-opening of parks, restaurants, bars, etc.

11. **Adjournment**

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Debra A. Outland, Deputy City Clerk

Greg A. Weitzel, Director of Parks and Recreation

THIS MEETING WAS PROPERLY NOTICED AND POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATE OF NEVADA EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY DIRECTIVE 006
The City of Las Vegas website – www.lasvegasnevada.gov
and
The Nevada Public Notice Website – notice.nv.gov