

CARSON CITY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the February 23, 2008 Meeting

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A workshop meeting of the Carson City Parks and Recreation Commission was scheduled for 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 23, 2008 in the Community Center Tahoe Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Chairperson Donna Curtis
Vice Chairperson Pete Livermore
Charles Adams
Tom Keeton
Steve Lasco
John McKenna
Kathryn Shabi
James Smolenski
Todd Westergard

STAFF: Roger Moellendorf, Parks and Recreation Department Director
Vern Krahn, Park Planner
Will Geddes, Senior Deputy District Attorney

NOTE: A recording of these proceedings, the commission's agenda materials, and any written comments or documentation provided to the recording secretary during the meeting are public record, on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office. These materials are available for review during regular business hours.

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (1-0059) - Chairperson Curtis called the meeting to order. Roll was called; a quorum was present.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS - None.

1. ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None.

2. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA - None.

3. STAFF UPDATES - None.

4. NON-ACTION ITEMS:

4-A. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING FORMULATION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION FISCAL YEAR 07 / 08 AND BEYOND (1-0075) - Chairperson Curtis welcomed the commissioners, and referred to the discussion outline which was distributed to the commissioners and staff prior to the start of the meeting. She expressed the hope to "get involved in some issues," and requested to keep "background discussion, history ... to a minimum so that we can get right to the point ..." She emphasized the importance of the commissioners providing input.

(1-1440) Chairperson Curtis referred to the workshop discussion outline, and requested input as to additional topics. In conjunction with the recreation center, Commissioner McKenna suggested discussing the existing Community Center and "other arts needs." He discussed the concept of arts as vocational

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education, and advised of discussions regarding the possibility of the school district constructing a two-story arts / vocational addition at Corbett School. In response to a question, he inquired as to the community's need for theater space. Mr. Moellendorf advised that the Community Center theater was designed to accommodate a balcony. He anticipates the Community Center gymnasium will still be needed for sports league programs, and that the new recreation center will be primarily for drop in use and secondarily for leagues. Vice Chairperson Livermore anticipates that members of the Arts and Culture Commission will be selected by the Board of Supervisors within the next sixty days. The Arts and Culture Commission will be charged with determining the community's need for theater space.

Chairperson Curtis discussed funding issues. Vice Chairperson Livermore noted the three parks and recreation funding sources: the general fund, residential construction tax, and Question #18. He provided background information on residential construction tax and Question #18, and advised of discussions with Chairperson Curtis regarding the possibility of developing a ballot question for a "more permanent funding stream for parks and recreation and libraries." Commissioner McKenna discussed the concept of a separate parks and recreation district "with its own taxing authority and its own board so that the voters ... can figure out what recreation they want and what they're willing to pay for so we don't get into these discussions of what's more important, potholes or grass." He noted that general funds were never designed to provide recreation amenities. Chairperson Curtis advised that she serves on a public safety committee which has been reviewing its roles, and is considering a separate public safety district. Vice Chairperson Livermore and Commissioner McKenna responded to questions regarding the method by which a parks and recreation district would be formed. Mr. Moellendorf expressed support for investigating the possibility. Commissioner McKenna advised that Question #18 was the first step toward a parks and recreation district. Vice Chairperson Livermore provided additional background information on Question #18.

Commissioner Westergard suggested establishing a work group to investigate the possibility of a parks and recreation district. Mr. Moellendorf suggested considering that the parks and recreation district could transcend the City's boundaries. In response to a question, Commissioner Westergard expressed support for considering an enterprise fund. In response to a question, Mr. Geddes advised that commission action would require a quorum. He suggested considering another option to request a District Attorney's opinion. Mr. Krahn acknowledged a comment that the concept of crossing jurisdictional boundaries may present additional requirements. He pointed out, however, that "regionalism is already happening" in that the Board of Supervisors just approved the concept of a regional water system and the Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization ("CAMPO") includes representatives of Douglas and Lyon Counties. Commissioner Keeton explained the distinction between an enterprise fund and a parks and recreation district. Commissioner McKenna clarified that the intent of establishing a parks and recreation district would be to remove the existing general fund allocation. It would represent "a net reduction to the general fund of the City and a designation of ... taxes to go to recreation ..." In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf estimated that 12 percent of the general fund is allocated to the Parks and Recreation Department and to the Library. Commissioner Shabi expressed disagreement with a previous suggestion to enhance Question #18, and support for taking "the time to build it from the ground floor up ... not trying to build onto something. ... Just start from a clean slate and build whatever it is that has to be done, including legislation ... and do it right." She expressed support for crossing jurisdictional boundaries because residents of adjoining counties use Carson City facilities. Discussion took place with regard to coordinating the time line with the 2010 election. Commissioner Lasco agreed with the approach described by Commissioner Shabi.

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Mr. Moellendorf provided additional clarification of the difference between an enterprise fund and a parks and recreation district. He noted the benefit of a parks and recreation district in that the current \$6.5 million allocation would be left in the general fund to provide relief for other departments. He advised that \$6.5 million “and more” would have to be recovered through the parks and recreation district. Commissioner McKenna suggested further discussing the parks and recreation district concept in a more focused workshop meeting. He pointed out that Question #18 was intended to work within an existing framework. He further clarified his intent to include Carson City, northern Douglas County, western Lyon County, and possibly southern Washoe County. “Out of the entire parks and recreation business, ... take the ... general fund amount that the City donates to parks and rec now and put that into a separate government entity that has its own operating board, its own charter ... We make another layer of government. Then that layer of government has to listen to its users to provide what those users are willing to pay for.” Commissioner McKenna responded to questions of clarification and questions regarding the mechanism of a parks and recreation district.

Following discussion, Commissioner Keeton suggested designating a goal to arrive at a funding solution and agenda a meeting for another time and place. Commissioner McKenna agreed, and requested Chairperson Curtis to agenda a commission item to “get it out to the people that we’re thinking this in a serious way.” At Chairperson Curtis’ request, Mr. Geddes reiterated the suggestion for the commission to submit a written request for a District Attorney’s opinion. Following additional discussion, Commissioner Westergard agreed with an earlier suggestion for the commission “to become more educated” about the subject concept prior to inviting the public to discuss it. He suggested requesting a District Attorney’s opinion may be premature. He pointed out that consideration of a regional district would require an Attorney General’s opinion. Mr. Geddes clarified that the District Attorney’s staff would research what is allowed under the law. He responded to additional questions of clarification.

(2-0001) In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf advised that “because projections are so tight for next year, [the parks and recreation department] budget is really fixed for the following year.” He suggested looking beyond this year and next year with regard to how to fund parks and recreation. Mr. Krahn summarized the discussion, as follows: to explore the idea of a parks and recreation district in consideration of regionalism / consolidation in a time table associated with the 2010 election; to consider arts and culture in conjunction with parks and recreation, the school district, and the library; to explore the commission’s options, under the Nevada Open Meeting Law, to form a subcommittee or a working group.

Commissioner Lasco discussed the importance of “bringing people to Carson City for specific reasons,” and the possibility of developing a referee school. He suggested partnering with such entities as the Carson Area Chamber of Commerce. Vice Chairperson Livermore provided background information on the economic impact report developed by Recreation Supervisor Joel Dunn. Chairperson Curtis expressed support for Commissioner Lasco’s proposal, and related details of her attendance at a recent parks and recreation conference. In response to a request for additional information, Commissioner Lasco discussed the need for consensus among the community’s lodging and restaurant proprietors, and the transportation entities. He discussed the importance of “pro bono involvement, more true community involvement from our community leaders, from our citizens.” He offered to assist in soliciting the community involvement.

Mr. Moellendorf advised that the City of Sparks is finishing up “the largest artificial athletic field project in the country.” He discussed the “huge impact” this will likely have on Carson City in light of the number of regional softball and soccer tournaments held here each year. Discussion followed, and Chairperson

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Curtis suggested forming a working group. Additional discussion took place regarding the need for quality lodging to more adequately accommodate tournaments and other events in Carson City. In response to a question, Commissioner Lasco expressed an interest in attending the next Convention and Visitors Bureau meeting at which the downtown branding project is agendaized. Chairperson Curtis suggested there are likely parks and recreation master plan element implementation measures relative to Commissioner Lasco's proposal. She reiterated her suggestion to form a working group to follow up on the proposal, and additional discussion followed.

Mr. Krahn summarized the discussion, as follows: Request Recreation Supervisor Joel Dunn to present his economic impact report to the commission; and consider the possibility of a joint meeting between the Convention and Visitors Bureau Board and this commission. In response to a comment, Vice Chairperson Livermore provided additional background information on the Chamber of Commerce Quality of Life Committee's faith-based initiative. Commissioner Keeton expressed support for the proposals and the discussion, but pointed out that all the revenue from tournaments and other competitions is allocated to the City's general fund "not into parks and recreation." Commissioner McKenna pointed out that "as long as parks and recreation is part of the City ..., we have no control over what happens to parks and rec." Chairperson Curtis recessed and reconvened the meeting.

(2-1475) Chairperson Curtis referred to a recent report to the commission by the former City Manager regarding Question #18, and advised that once the recreation center is constructed "it's going to take up most of the funds" allocated to Question #18 "for several years."

Vice Chairperson Livermore advised that the former City Manager had presented a list of proposals to the Board of Supervisors to balance the FY 08 / 09 budget. One of the proposals was to increase parks and recreation fees by ten percent to generate \$140,000. Vice Chairperson Livermore advised that no new services, personnel, or equipment will result from the increase. He noted that the proposal didn't provide any direction as to "where you get that \$140,000." He referred to the Fairgrounds improvement project, including the \$1 million investment by Bodine's casino, and advised that the facility will be state-of-the-art upon completion. He suggested that the Fairgrounds could represent a large revenue stream for parks and recreation rather than increasing other fees and charges. Commissioner McKenna expressed opposition to a \$140,000 fee increase "if it would be an increase in the amount of money people take." He expressed no opposition to increasing fees and charges "if we're undercharging based upon competitive market." Vice Chairperson Livermore expressed opposition to providing "new police cars and library books on the back of parks and recreation fees and charges." He suggested that Mr. Moellendorf and his staff could provide information on what the market would bear. Chairperson Curtis expressed the opinion that fees are undercharged because indirect costs are not included. Commissioner McKenna pointed out that taxpayers pay for the parks and recreation facilities and their fees are not reduced by the amount of tax paid. He noted the importance of reaching a balance "... or give me back my property taxes and my sales tax and be a business." Mr. Moellendorf noted the discussion related back to Commissioner McKenna's first proposal to consider a parks and recreation district.

Mr. Moellendorf explained that the \$140,000 was based on the ten percent increase in budgeted parks and recreation revenues of \$1.4 million. "Sixty percent into the budget year, ... we're probably hitting about 42 percent. So we're not making our revenue as budgeted." Mr. Moellendorf advised of a variety of reasons the budgeted revenues have not been reached. He explained that the Parks and Recreation Department had submitted projected revenues each year, "and every year the Finance Department has

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ratcheted that up a little bit.” Incremental percentage increases end up “getting away from you.” Mr. Moellendorf expressed the belief that the budgeted revenues were never very accurate. He further noted decline in participation over the years, and discussed the associated reasons. He advised that he and Parks and Recreation Director of Operations Scott Fahrenbruch are working with the Recreation Division staff to consider park rental fees. Mr. Moellendorf advised that “to hit that \$140,000, outside of any new income that might be there with the Fairgrounds or any other type of programs that may come along, everybody’s going to feel some pain to do that.” He noted that many of the discounts provided over the years may have to be considered very carefully and reduced. He discussed opportunities, including the adult futsal program and the possibility of starting a youth futsal program. He noted the parks and recreation master plan element goal to recover 100 percent of direct program costs. In reference to Chairperson Curtis’ comments, he advised that staff is considering the possibility of recovering indirect costs. He noted the net result of increased fees.

In response to a question regarding the decline in participation, Mr. Moellendorf noted the “magical line where fees hit and become a disincentive.” Vice Chairperson Livermore discussed the opportunity to operate the Fairgrounds as a “business profit center ... especially with the relationship of Bodine’s.” He advised that Bodine’s representatives have discussed plans to bring events to the Fairgrounds. In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf advised that the \$140,000 is applicable to the coming fiscal year. In response to a further question, he advised of the expectation that the \$140,000 will be institutionalized to offset the general fund deficit. He discussed the goal to “erase the City’s deficit,” including that there has been funding allocated from the City’s contingency fund.

Chairperson Curtis advised that budgets would be presented to the commission in March. Mr. Moellendorf acknowledged the possibility of further budget reductions. In response to a further question, he discussed the three rounds of budget cuts in the current fiscal year during which the Parks and Recreation Department has lost about five employees. He clarified that the positions were lost through attrition. He advised that an additional five percent was cut from the FY 08 / 09 budget. He provided a “real time” example of the budget cuts. Commissioner McKenna pointed out that the commission had been presented with “one part of somebody else’s solution that we have no power over and we’re asked to take the public brunt of this fee raise.” He expressed the opinion that the City had used an advisory citizen committee “as a scapegoat for its inability to plan.” Chairperson Curtis reiterated that budgets would be agendaized for a future meeting.

(2-2700) Chairperson Curtis advised that she and Commissioner Keeton had been meeting with Mr. Moellendorf and Mr. Krahn to review the approximately 81 parks and recreation master plan element implementation strategies. She suggested that she and Commissioner Keeton continue meeting with Mr. Moellendorf and Mr. Krahn and “see if we can ... get this to a commission meeting soon.” In light of the number of new commissioners, Commissioner Keeton suggested requesting input as to master plan element implementation strategy priorities. Commissioner McKenna suggested leaving unfunded master plan element implementation strategies as unfunded. Following discussion, Chairperson Curtis suggested reviewing the master plan element implementation strategies in consideration of justifying a parks and recreation district. Mr. Krahn provided background information on the origins of the parks and recreation master plan element implementation strategies. He advised that the overall parks and recreation master plan element represents a vision document dovetailing into the City’s comprehensive master plan “which was looking out ten, fifteen, twenty years to City build out.” Chairperson Curtis noted that part of the master plan process is “to revisit it, update it, etc.”

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(2-3005) Chairperson Curtis provided background information on the Neighborhood Outreach proposal, and advised that it had not been included in the parks and recreation master plan element. Vice Chairperson Livermore expressed support for the proposal, but a preference that programs be held in a public facility to provide opportunity for “everybody to come be part of it.” Commissioner McKenna described the Neighborhood Outreach proposal as “a solution that’s looking for a problem,” and expressed the opinion that it doesn’t fit Carson City. Vice Chairperson Livermore suggested a demonstration project may determine need. He agreed with a suggestion that a request for such a demonstration project should come to the commission rather than the commission taking independent action. In response to a question, he provided background information on the former police athletic league. Chairperson Curtis advised that Special Programs Manager Barbara Singer is researching the mobile recreation concept in other communities, including the reasons for starting the programs.

(3-0033) Chairperson Curtis reviewed her vision for the “Adopt-A-Park” concept, and requested input of the commissioners. Commissioner Smolenski advised his understanding of the concept had been similar to the “Adopt-A-Highway” program, in which a fraternal or civic organization could become involved. He suggested this may reduce Parks Department maintenance costs. Mr. Moellendorf described the two concepts as (1) reaching out into the community, and (2) more of a volunteer effort. He cautioned the commissioners that volunteer projects can be successful to reduce maintenance costs, but do require administrative and staff support. He expressed support for the proposals with minimal staff involvement. He discussed scouting projects as an example of a benefit to parks and recreation facilities which require a great deal of administrative and staff support. Commissioner Smolenski clarified that his concept would be ongoing, with maintenance activities performed twice a month. Commissioner McKenna discussed the importance of volunteer coordinators becoming sufficiently trained to conduct the projects without Parks Department supervision. He discussed the method by which Tahoe Rim Trail Association volunteer crew leaders conduct projects. Discussion followed, and Chairperson Curtis suggested including the adopt-a-park concept in discussions with the Convention and Visitors Bureau Board.

(3-0405) Chairperson Curtis reviewed the list of work groups included in the discussion outline, and invited the participation of interested commissioners. Commissioner Smolenski expressed an interest in the recreation center planning meetings. Mr. Krahn provided an overview of the agenda for the next river projects meeting. Commissioner Shabi expressed an interest in the wellness and WE CAN meetings. Commissioner McKenna expressed an interest in the river lands management meetings, and Mr. Moellendorf offered to have Open Space / Property Manager Juan Guzman contact him. (3-0805) Commissioner Adams offered to participate in the recreation center planning meetings.

In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf offered to submit a written request to the District Attorney’s office regarding the parks and recreation district proposal. He will agendize a report to the commission at a future meeting. Vice Chairperson Livermore described a previously-proposed round-up for recreation program, and responded to questions of clarification. Mr. Moellendorf agreed to look into reviving the proposal. Mr. Krahn discussed the importance of considering the involvement of the Foundation for the Betterment of Parks and Recreation in the proposals discussed during the workshop.

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5. ACTION ITEMS:

5-A. ACTION TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AN OPERATIONS AND BUSINESS PLAN DEVELOPED BY KEN BALLARD OF BALLARD KING & ASSOCIATES FOR THE PROPOSED INDOOR RECREATION CENTER (1-0095) - Mr. Moellendorf provided background information on the Recreation Center Operations Pro Forma included in the agenda materials, and discussed recreation center construction costs. He reviewed and discussed the Expenditure - Revenue Comparison of the pro forma document. Vice Chairperson Livermore and Mr. Moellendorf discussed the possibility of combining key staff positions and utilizing volunteers between the recreation facility and the Boys and Girls Clubs. In reference to the Facility Options category, Mr. Moellendorf noted that a skate park would be “nice to have,” but probably wouldn’t “make a lot of financial sense.” Commissioner McKenna suggested that skate parks, like basketball courts, “should be spread all over town.” In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf advised that the cost of the skateboard facility at John Mankins Park was about \$150,000. Chairperson Curtis expressed appreciation for the cost recovery figures included in the pro forma, and suggested that a leisure pool “would change those numbers much more to the positive.” In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf estimated the cost of the splash pad at over \$100,000. He explained that the projected revenues associated with the facility options are anticipated because of the availability of the listed amenities; they won’t generate revenue “in and of themselves.” In response to a question, he anticipated that the skate park facility would not be lighted. He advised there isn’t much problem with graffiti at the City’s skate parks, and discussion followed. He responded to questions of clarification regarding the maintenance and operation expenditures listed on the Expenditure - Revenue Comparison. He acknowledged that the splash pad would be a seasonal amenity, open four to five months per year, but pointed out this would also represent a reduction in operation and maintenance costs. Commissioner McKenna suggested considering the possibility of including refrigeration coils, as part of the splash pad, to accommodate an ice skating rink. In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf described the features and design of a splash pad.

Mr. Moellendorf provided an overview of the remainder of the pro forma, and described it as a “very thorough document.” He reminded the commissioners that the pro forma is a planning document, based on the consultant’s research of community demographics. He advised that cost recovery rate and facility efficiencies will be based on management and marketing of the offered programs. He requested the commission’s recommendation of approval, and advised that the pro forma would be offered as a plan for review by the Board of Supervisors. Chairperson Curtis noted that fees would need to be reviewed and discussed. In response to a question, Mr. Moellendorf advised that filling seasonal and part-time positions is becoming increasingly more difficult. In response to a further question, he discussed the likelihood of a net increase of 2 to 3 full-time employees for the new facility.

Chairperson Curtis entertained a motion. **Commissioner McKenna moved to recommend to the Board of Supervisors an operations and business plan developed by Ken Ballard of Ballard King & Associates for the proposed indoor recreation center. Commissioner Smolenski seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-1.**

6. COMMISSIONERS’ ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION - Previously covered.

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7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (3-0895) - Mr. Moellendorf provided an update on Kyle Horvath's disc golf proposal.

8. ACTION ON ADJOURNMENT (3-1025) - Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adjourn the meeting.

The Minutes of the February 23, 2008 Parks and Recreation Commission workshop are so approved this 3rd day of June, 2008.

DONNA J. CURTIS, Chair