Minutes of September 13, 2012 PRAB meeting

Attending: Robinson, Pachner, Allen, Sharp, McCoin, Green, Watson, Twarogowski, Pryor, Ewing, Smink, Picaso, Wright, Copeland

5:35 The meeting was called to order by Keith Pryor

August minutes approved

John Mankus of the Skyline Soccer assn., based near DU, serves about 2000 students. “We have interest” and resources to help care for the Harvard Gulch stadium field. Not asking for exclusive use of it. We do have resources, expertise, and we’d like to open a dialogue with the community.

Pryor: Thank you, John, now I’d like to introduce Shane Wright, our new appointee for at-large.

Wright: I’m happy to be here, I work at Groundwork Denver and I’m looking forward to learning more about what the board does.

Lauri (Manager’s Report): I’ll make this short, you have a copy of my notes in the packet. The rules and regulations ordinance passed council this week. Bob Finch put a ton of work into it. It didn’t get called out on first reading, passed on second reading. We have administrative citation authority now. We don’t have the process in place for collecting fees yet, and no approval on that from council yet.

Watson: Bob’s process was so amazing, I’d like to give a thank you, An applause for Bob’s great work, he really did this right.

Lauri: That would be great, coming from this board.

Secondly, parks and rec staff put together an expo Sept 19th. Dunk tank with Scott Gilmore.

Pachner arrives.

Lauri: De-Brucing is on the ballot. As staff, we can’t advocate. I can’t ask you to vote for or against. I can answer questions in the evening. We’re not allowed to spend city money on this once it gets on the ballot.

Watson: Are the specifics on the internet?

Lauri: On the city council website.
Lauri: Regarding the civic center, in addition to the standing Mondays and Tuesdays, I might close it other days as well but it shouldn’t be at a level that should be a problem for the public. The grass was very tender after the Taste of Colorado.

Three public meetings. On Heron Pond, that is money that we’ll be getting from the settlement for the Arsenal. The final meeting of Westwood Park at Cornerstone Baptist Church. Geneseo.

What has you feedback been on the Broadway Terrace?

Lauri: We put appropriate signage up, and I’m happy to report I haven’t heard a peep.

Pryor: Any other questions for Lauri?

Fred Weiss presented the Parks and Rec 2013 Budget Presentation. “I spoke with Jay April earlier today, and the economics committee will meet over the next week or two and work on a white paper for the next meeting.”

We experienced a huge increase in 2010.

Pryor: So obviously the administration is dictating this. If the de-Brucing does pass, he’s giving a direction where some money should go.

Weiss: There’s two elements to the mill levy. Before you free rec centers for kids, plus 500k per year cumulative…where else do you have a need? We will get more staffers in the operations department. We fulfill the mayor’s goals to the best of our ability. And for us, that one made a whole lot of sense to us. It fit in with our overall game plan, and the other issue we were able to make suggestions for.

Ewing: The reduced tree enforcement: I walk faster because the trees are really starting to show their age. What about birthday parties?


Watson: For cost recovery, what was that for last year?

Lauri: I don’t know off the top of my head, but I’m happy to get that for you.

Watson: Then regarding no-hires, how are those reflected on the budget.

Weiss: No more holding it open to keep it on the books. That is citywide. We have eliminated positions, and some of these expansions we’d have to get permission for.
Were there layoffs? Was the budget impacted by change in headcount? We will be adding another aquatic coordinator at Stapleton. I know two for sure. The rest are on-call dollars.

Weiss: Last page, golf pays for itself.

Pryor: Thank you, Fred. Next we have a Red Rocks update.

Mewhinney: I’m Erin Mewhinney, I’m the mayor’s policy director and with me is Brian Kitts with Arts & Venues. The mayor wanted to vet a question to the public, specifically permanent signage at red Rocks. We wanted to come to you as informed citizens, not necessarily as parks board, with regard to Red Rocks. It doesn’t fall under the formal purview of the PRAB.

Brian: Part of what I do is manage the sponsorship development program. Theaters and arenas last year combined with arts. Since the merger, we oversee the capital fund, One Book One Denver, 5 Points Jazz Festival. At Red Rocks, the sponsorship is treated a little bit differently. We consider things like, does it interfere with the view of the stage? We’re very protective of the historical parts of the venue. Since the park opened in 1948, there are historical parts of the venue. The third part is the fan experience. We’ve resisted flashing logos, logos on stage, logos on rocks. In areas that have been added on, like the visitors center and the upper plaza are allowed some advertising.

We wouldn’t back off our policy of year-round signage. The sponsor went to the mayor’s office and asked that we change our policy regarding signage that faces into the venue or might face into the audience. Red Rocks in the winter is largely pristine. I am here to ask your gut level reactions about allowing signage on a year-round basis? Signage facing into the venue, into the seating areas?

Pryor: Does anyone have any specific questions?

Sharp: Signage can been giant neon signs to small placards. What are we talking about?

Bryan: Banner installation along the top rail. On the spotlight boxes. We’re talking about a quarter million dollars a year.

Anne: Is there a compromise here? Can we do it during concerts, but not otherwise?

We can, that is one of the compromises that were offered. We’ve been through this in nine different iterations.

Smink: Limit to additional signage? Have you thought about how you’d allocate spots around the venue?
Bryan: I’m very aware of how many sponsors you can cram into a square yard. Yes, there’s lots of other things we can do, lots of other clients?

If this were to happen, what would the funds be used for?

Kitts: Upkeep on performing arts, etc. funds public art programs

James: What are you not able to do, and would this additional revenue allow you to do something differently. Is there a reduction in service? Is there a facility degrading?

Bryan: Yes and no. We have to wait on capital improvement projects. Might we have to buy water in the future? There are things we could do in all of our venues

Ewing: I’m just blown away. You’re going to have the biggest fight on your hands. This is a sacred cow of all sacred cows. It’s so rude of the sponsors. We are preservationists, too. It has such beauty that it is beyond belief. There are people who live all around it who are going to go ape-shit, quite frankly. We don’t want it everywhere, just give us one place. There are a lot of people who don’t want to see advertising in their face.

Picasso: People are blown away by the beauty of the amphitheater.

Robinson: I think signage would degrade the mystique. I think the artists would be offended, too.

Marcus: You all should be applauded for continuing through this process. The mayor’s office is right to suggest it here. I think from a community standpoint, we have to find other ways to find revenue. This isn’t quite right, but this is the conversation that could occur. Keep the conversation going.

Allen: Great to have the beauty, great to have the attraction, but the benefits aren’t there.

Sharp: I’m totally against permanent signage, but I see no problem with considering signage.

McCoin: Fan experience should be extended to all users.

Green: I have to ditto Mary’s comment. We’re getting into an area we shouldn’t be in. If it’s anywhere, it’s Red Rocks.

Watson: I concur. Thank you Brian. Thank you both for bringing it to the Board and executive committee. I know there’s additional opportunities for additional revenue. But there is a balance between increasing revenue. As someone who loves Red
Rocks, I appreciate the ask but I believe that we should have a different negotiation stance. I think it’s going a bit too far. It’s not for sale.

Pryor: There is a bit of gray water between being a mountain park and being a venue, and you’ve done a great job with balancing. When you are a concertgoer keeping it as pristine as possible to have it desecrated with signage it is not something I’m interested in.

Ewing: Friends of Red Rocks will rise up out of the grave.

Smink: The data point that I think is missing, how many people will stop going to Red Rocks if the signage is up?

What sort of revenue does Red Rocks bring in? What kind of signage is there now?

Brian: Coors, Jim Beam, etc. The carts that sell the alcohol. Health One, anyone who has a booth at the top of the amphitheater. Jamba Juice sampling. Coors has a significant presence up top, and Pepsi is on top of the visitor’s center. The next time you’re up at Red Rocks for a show check it out. It’s a decent piece of revenue, it can be up to a million dollars a year.

Shane: My feeling is that you shouldn’t put anything permanent in Red Rocks.

Copeland: I take issue that you can leave things during the concert season in effect is permanent signage. Temporary advertising, that goes away when the concert is over, but not for the whole season.

Pryor: Bryan, Is that what you were seeking? Did you have any other questions?

The mayor also wasn’t into permanent signage, either.

Lauri: Children’s Museum will present. This will have to go to city council for approval, so we’re just looking for a recommendation.

My name is Sarah Carpenter, Sarah Brenker, Stephanie Wood, Toni Ryan, Jonathan Goldstien, Gretchen. Thank you for willing to hear us.

How is the Children’s Museum managed?

We are a nonprofit.

[Presentation, followed by the question “how many people attended the public outreach meeting?”]

Ewing: If only one person attended the community meeting, that’s not enough. Florence Navarro is one of the board members. I think you should expand on that
front? Florence spoke to this being a community concern, and I really think that you should do more community outreach.

Tony Ryan, I’m an attorney. You raise a great point about the process. I can tell you that it will be the fencing that will be an issue. We are assuming all liability. It’s a loss of space to the public along the river. We opened that up more for more free events. Our hope is that we’re activating this for families who otherwise wouldn’t be. I hope that you offer more community option.

Outside of the monetary value, we can’t flip it, it has to stay a Children’s Museum. Additionally, there’s more of a storied history for dumping, etc. we’re taking on responsibility for those sites.

Twarogowski: I support the idea.

Robinson: Yes, this is a net gain to the public, much better than what’s there now. I think this will improve the area. The general community can’t really access it now. Nobody from Highlands is walking over and using that park.

Picaso: The community that Mary was talking about is La Alma and Sun Valley. That’s the input that we’re looking for.

Gretchen: We had a community meeting about five years ago as well. We had only one person to show up. It’s completely unactivated.

Ewing: You don’t have to wait for them to come to you; you can go to their meetings.

Picaso: You could go to La Alma, Rude Park.

Pachner: I think this is terrific, and I think we should move forward on this. I’ve cycled this land, it is a very underused park that could be activated.

Allen: You can do more reaching out, explain what’s going on. What I see here is more of a master plan view of the area.

Watson: I love the idea.

Allen: The points you made, I would’ve never thought of that. One thing I would reiterate is that the public process is important. Perhaps going to some of the community meetings or a website where people can give you feedback. Council will ask. It’d be nice if you can say that you’ve met with more than one person.

We are very committed to the community.

Watson: Could our communications team help. Because it is a collaboration, can we assist in targeted communities?
Lauri: We announced that meeting through our usual community outreach process. But I agree that it would help to go to the next meeting of the Jefferson Park Assn. and you can get their feedback.

Pryor: I just have a couple points. I encourage you, that you want kids to be engaged, get outside. How is the kid supposed to get any exercise? We’ve moved our entrances into the parking lot. You’re promoting car behavior. You are turning your back on to the park, you are not engaging the park. Why are we putting a fence around this? We should negotiate. I think we should be able to work around an agreement that could be a destination park for some of these underserved communities? I think the community outreach process to be improved. You aren’t making this a great process for kids. This is unacceptable.

Gretchen: We feel the opposite, that we are embracing the park. We see from the top of the museum, that it is one seamless experience. It’s not that we want people and we’re trying to fix and correct the intuitive piece. When we look at this property similar to the zoo, and they are on city land, our biggest concern is that they can lose sight of their children. We have to have that fencing because of the river and the highway. What I hear tonight is that we need to do more outreach. We’d love to go to those neighborhoods in person. Our collaborative opportunities are huge.

Pryor: Would you like me

Lauri: If you’d like to take a vote for support.

Noel: The only thing that bothers me is the north entry. In Colorado, the North entry gets icy. I’d like to see the very public entry in the sunshine.

Gretchen: We are looking at the challenges of that.

Ewing: I don’t like the short time frame.

Watson: I’ll make a motion in the affirmative that this gets taken to the council...

Ewing: With the stipulation that there is proof of further public outreach public process.

Watson: I accept that motion.

Wright: I think connecting kids to the river in a tangible way.

Pryor: All in favor.

[Passed]
Watson: So our annual retreat, but it’s the annual meeting and elections of the executive committee.

We have an hour for the general discussion meeting, then we have elections, look at the bylaws. Every year we have three to five volunteers. Florence has volunteered to help put on the election. All the volunteers need to do is present the slate. Then you decide how the vote will occur. I hope some of the newer board members will volunteer to help. Chairs of the values committees need to present what your committee will do for this year. We’ll decide if the committee structure will remain the same.

The meeting will begin at 4:30 or 5, and it will go until 8. It is a longer meeting. Public input on the first part of the meeting.

Watson: That’s it, but I’d strongly encourage folks to consider board seats. We are looking for folks to consider whether they want to be president, vice president, secretary. Any other announcements?

Pryor: Be Healthy Denver is going to host seven meetings throughout the city. The mayor will be looking for feedback. Run by the Office of Environmental Health.

Pryor: Meeting adjourned.