

Meeting Minutes- DRAFT
DENVER PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
January 13, 2020 – 5:30- 7:30 pm
Virtual Meeting: Via Zoom

PRAB Meeting Norms

Be respectful and presume positive intentions.
Seek first to understand and then to be understood.
Stay focused on topics at hand.
Allow space for all to have a voice.
Listen without judgement.
Live our values of equity and inclusion.

Board Members In attendance:

Noel Copeland, Fran Coleman, Lee Rains Thomas, Frank Rowe, Meredith Levy, Lynne Mason, Amy Razzaque, Leslie Twarogowski, Lisa Calderon, Molly McKinley, Jack Paterson, Chandi Aldina, Florence Navarro, Marla Rodriguez, Trena Marsal, Andre McGregor

Absent: Pam Jiner

CALL TO ORDER

Marla calls meeting to order at 5:32

Reviews PRAB norms

Lee takes roll call with question- favorite holiday foods

Welcome to new member- Andre McGregor, Park Hill native, excited to join the board

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Approve November Minutes with amendments

Fran makes a motion to approve minutes, Leslie seconds

Unanimously approved

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Courtney DeWinter

-Canada Geese

Advocates for Canada Geese, in August presented information regarding pesticides use in parks and distribution of goose meat. Questions that the EPA regulations actually regulate pesticides. Was the meat tested for all pesticides used? **Asks for formal vote of PRAB and asks for opposition of goose culling.**

Jesse Parris

- Unhoused sweeps

What parks and rec involvement in unhoused sweeps? What is the parks department doing?

Tess Dougherty

-Bathrooms and Handwashing stations

Research team allies to abolitionists. Exploring what funding and efforts have been put into helping unhoused people. Can find a list of bathrooms online, but they are not accurate or are not stocked. Some are closed completely. Also to note, when people do not have access to restrooms it affects not just physical health, but mental health. Bathroom access can actually change people's lives. Why have there been so many barriers? Not even \$300,000 for hand washing and restrooms for unhoused neighbors. Together, we can make Denver a better city for everyone.

David Hagan

-camping/sleeping in Denver Parks

Bathroom issue- all citizens should be able to use the restrooms. Has noticed at some parks the restrooms port-o-lets are not clean. They can be cleaner and we can use our power to make this change. We could be nicer and let people actually camp in parks and other parts of the city.

Shannon Hoffman -Public access to bathrooms and water in parks

District 10 resident, thanks for inviting headwaters protectors to come next month. Pandemic CDC recommends have functional water taps and remain open 24 hours a day. Provide hand washing stations, hand sanitizers. Asking for access to bathrooms and water for most vulnerable population.

Ellen Kessler -Canada Geese

Decoys have been getting stolen from parks. Hopefully, we can come up with a solution. Likely it will begin to have egg oiling in march. Believes the program is working. Hawk Quest- can be rented out to be naturally perceived predators for geese.

Harmony Cummings -Bathroom Access

Parent, concerned with lack of bathroom access. Child needed to use restroom and could not find access. The lack of restrooms is an issue for all. As a female, specifically challenging and hopes the department can remedy this for all residents.

Ean Tafoya

Thanks to Leslie as she leaves the PRAB. Suggests a Facebook event for PRAB board in order to live stream meetings and consider how to translate documents into Spanish for access. Have so much work to do with our unhoused and knows parks can be part of the solution.

Kenyon Moon

Wild bird rehab, individual comments. Shares observations- comparing notes from other bird watchers, local population of Canada geese seems much reduced. Cacking geese seems to be normal. This is regional and not specific to a park. Other parts of the US and Canada are normal to high.

Georgia Guernsey

Has seen cut out and sees them moving around. City park RNO is aware of cutbacks in staff and maintenance and would like to volunteer- trash pick up, digging, planting. Would like to see more formalized program with specific projects and scheduled events for volunteers. Youth corp, Outdoor Colorado. Getting to know the community and build relationships with others. *Follow up

Marla asks Scott to respond and to let community know current restroom situations.

Scott replies- Councilwoman Kneich put in for funding and hopes to make progress with additional portable restrooms.

Parks land was part of the lawsuit 2 years ago regarding homeless clean ups in parks. Department is required to do certain things now. For example- Items left in the park- need to try to connect items with individuals. Tag things in parks and keep them in city storage. We do participate in clean ups in parks and green ways. May see rangers at clean up sites in other parts of the city. Good relationships and trying to make people feel comfortable and safe to connect people with services.

Parks department enforces parks rules and regulations for all people. At 11:00 pm the parks close and at 5:00 am they open. Will follow up with other information for what the city is doing regarding sweeps and clean up.

6:21- closes public comment

EQUITY COMMITTEE

Black Lives Matter Proclamation

Lisa shares context for creating this statement. Sub committee began work, Black members continued work, considered Game Plan and asked for feedback from the board. Helped create the precise statement below.

BLACK LIVES MATTER SOLIDARITY PROCLAMATION

DRAFT

- Whereas, there are many causes of social injustices that harm individuals and communities, this proclamation by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) seeks to acknowledge and redress the long and sordid history of racial oppression against Black people from slavery to present-day systemic oppression and ongoing historical trauma; and
- Whereas, during the summer of 2020, thousands of people across the Nation and Denver united in an uprising to save Black Lives and to promote racial, economic and social justice leading to a momentous turning point in Denver's history; and
- Whereas Black people are disproportionately impacted by the negative health impacts of climate change, environmental racism, and economic disinvestment; and
- Whereas Black people often lack the infrastructure to safely walk, bike, or roll to parks within 10 minutes of where they live; and
- Whereas ensuring equity in the distribution of parks and park resources and programming is a priority within the City and County of Denver and Black communities so that ALL residents have the opportunity to improve their personal health and well-being; and
- Whereas promoting equity within the system, especially by investing in Black neighborhoods with the highest unmet needs is of high importance; and
- Whereas providing parks and programming should reflect Denver's Black community and cultural identity; and
- Whereas ensuring ecosystem restoration that prioritizes historically Black underserved areas, should be done in conjunction with collaborating organizations that supports and reflects African American art, culture, history and community events; and
- Whereas utilizing the Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) budget is an opportunity to invest in historically marginalized Black communities, including prioritization of partnerships with entities that are Black-led and explicitly value equity and inclusion in order to redistribute wealth and access across all neighborhoods equitably; and
- Whereas increasing equity and inclusion among staff and Parks and Recreation Board (PRAB) members related to race, income, gender, ability, and other dimensions of diversity contributes to growth for those who are learning AND healing from the effects of anti-Blackness, discriminatory policies and marginalization; and
- Whereas specifically considering methods to engage Black youth from historically marginalized communities in outdoor programming is necessary to remove barriers to access including providing necessary gear or scholarships, transportation, and developing trust with Black families is essential to promoting equity within Black communities; and
- Whereas equity outcomes are achievable by investing in safety, belonging, and redistribution of resources in historically marginalized neighborhoods for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) which include people with disabilities, womxn and LGBTQ+ folx, even though it will take generations to recover from the consequences of the COVID pandemic;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD OF DENVER:

PRAB acknowledges that the effects of intergenerational racism against Black people is a public health and economic crisis in Denver and the United States, and advocates for racial justice as a core element of Denver Parks and Recreation policies, programs and procedures.

We support equity frameworks that correct embedded policies that discriminate and perpetuate anti-Black racism; and

We support educational efforts to address and dismantle racism including how racism affects individual and population health; and

We support providing tools to assist PRAB members and community members to engage actively and authentically with Black communities; and

We support applying an anti-racism lens to outreach with Black communities.

PASSED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

CHAIR

Additional comments from board members: Lots of voices contributed to this incredible statement. Equity is such an important tenant that we all believe in. This is very important. Connection to Game Plan. This helps define equity within the Game Plan. Appreciate expressed for all who worked on this and specifically the Black women who spent extra time. This addressed many points and is very in depth. Need to continue to work on this.

Fran Motion to adopt, Frank seconds. Passes unanimously.

PRAB COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning and Design committee- Met 12/15. Meredith presents:

- Conversation with Denver Bicycle lobby about car free parks. Team will meet with department next meeting to review the survey data and hopes to make a recommendation for the department. All parks are not the same and each is considered differently. Important to keep access for events. Currently a temporary solution.
- Bathroom access/ water access in parks. At start of covid, safety precautions closed restrooms. Could not hire seasonal workers to clean. Usually April/May- October. Restrooms are not winterized generally. That is why they are closed during winter months. \$350,000 allocated to make sure restrooms open in 2021 (from City Council). Other problems in bathrooms occur, illegal activity, etc. DPR master plan exists and is being updated now.
- Worked to identify priorities and mission in future meeting. Committee wants more port-o-lets and accessibility
- Denver Days works (mentioned in public comment)
- Surveys still open on DPR website. Engagement opportunity for DMNS and Nature Play- trying to gather feedback. DMNS/natureplay with info to request a kit.
- **Add notes from chat**

Scott- thanks for helping with the feedback and surveys. We have an incredibly diverse board and the board can help get the surveys out to all communities.

Marla- Will be discussing restroom issue at committee chair meeting.

Potential to have a retreat at the start of this new year, perhaps March when we have a full board and new members have been appointed.

Sustainability and Resiliency- Fran presents.

Sent email to PRAB on 1/31 with context for committee. Will be working to identify year long topics to discuss and learn about at next meeting. *Add email?
Lee shared that we discussed water use in parks and heard from the Headwaters protectors.

Operations and Budget committee- Frank shares that committee will regroup in February and will miss Leslie on not only the committee, but the whole board.

Outreach committee- Leslie is now going to be co-chair. Thanks community for sharing thoughts tonight. Moving forward, the committee is officially the outreach committee. Great turn out. May be asking for presentations on certain topics in the future and would like to find out how public can ask questions to department. Another topic- traffic mitigation around park. Brainstormed ideas like applying for grants and supporting each other. Potential open spaces citizen led initiative. Survey land acquisition for parks, would like to extend to gather more feedback from people of color. Need to clarify what is the path to get art in the parks, like the lily pad art at City Park. PRAB can help with outreach for youth and under-represented

Scott- application to create art in parks. Wants to make sure we can take care of art in the parks. *share website

Jesus- strategic acquisition plan survey is not extended, but will have other opportunities for outreach. (Lynne and Florence are on this committee)

Lisa- if we are missing significant voices from the community, that is a problem.

Chandi would like to participate on outreach committee.

Noel- various communities are more likely to take surveys. Needs tweaking to get better representation and figure out creative ways to engage community.

Scott- working on this. Critically important that we hear the right voices and are addressing inequities that have been going on in this city for years.

Marla asks for follow up when new info is available.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Update on Covid re-entry.

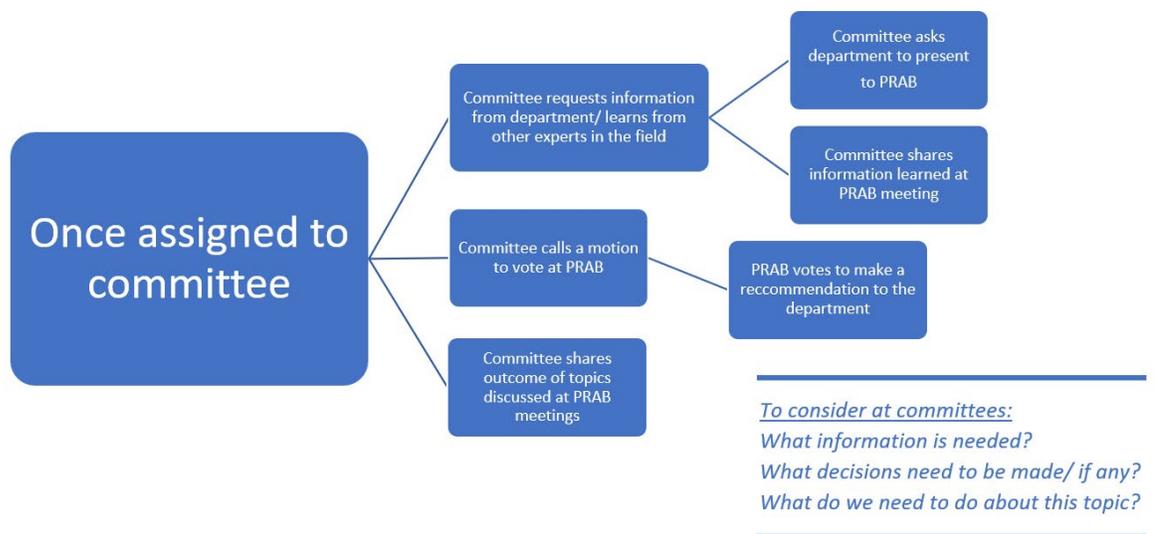
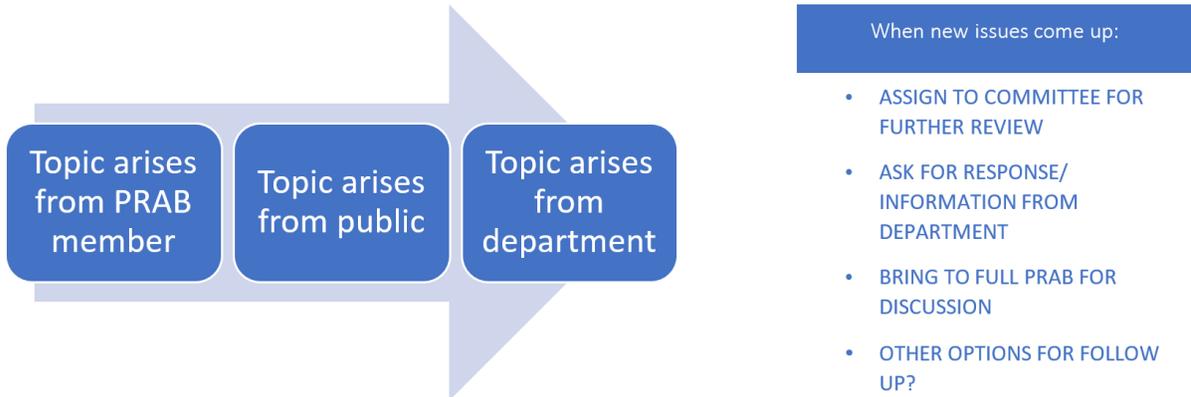
Scott- rec centers are at a limited number of people inside with level orange restrictions. Considering equity and cannot staff equitably. John will be coming up with plan to open rec centers as soon as possible. DPR has not started permitting events yet, even though other areas have begun. Some are open- learning labs for students, food distribution sites, emergency shelters.

OTHER ITEMS

Onboarding Process		
Parks and Rec staff sends out welcome email with important PRAB documents	PRAB chairperson reaches out to make connection, answer questions and review PRAB functions	A mentor on PRAB will be assigned to be a point person for new member

Short discussion of onboarding process and will need to follow up with new members and recent members to gather feedback and make adjustments.

Process for PRAB, short discussion, need to revisit at future meeting



Board Announcements/New Business

Lee- Brings up mountain parks and asks if perhaps it needs to be it's own sub committee since it has such unique needs and opportunities. Will follow up at chairperson meeting and revisit at PRAB.

Meredith- Suggest people visit the Lowry outdoor skating rink. It's not used much and it is a great space.

Marla- Will begin planning a retreat for March sometime. Board is interested in retreat and sees the value. It will be good to have a retreat once new members have been appointed.

ADJOURNMENT