

DENVER PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

March 10, 2021 – 5:30- 7:30 pm

Virtual Meeting: Via Zoom Webinar

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:

Audrey Carrillo, Fran Coleman, Lee Rains Thomas, Frank Rowe, Meredith Levy, Lynne Mason, Amy Razzaque, Andre McGregor, Lisa Calderon, Molly McKinley, Jack Paterson, Chandi Aldena, Marlene De La Rosa, Marla Rodriguez, Florence Navarro, Trena Marsal

Absent: Pam Jiner, Ramsey Harris, Deana Perlmutter

Arthur explains that this is a new format- zoom webinar instead of a zoom meeting. Participants will have a different experience.

CALL TO ORDER

Marla calls meeting to order at 5:36, reviews board norms (above)

Lee takes roll call.

Welcome to new member-

Audrey Carrillo (dist 1)- North Denver native, 34 years of working with Denver Parks and Rec.

Sad to have Noel retire- such a knowledgeable and thoughtful member of the PRAB for many years. We very much will miss him and thank him for his contributions.

We need to have Noel come back for a real send off!

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Approve February Minutes

Trena makes a motion to approve minutes, Florence seconds.

Unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kurt Spindler Dog off leash petition

Advocate of Denver parks designating off leash hours for dogs at various parks. Off leash hours for all. Sees it a pressing issue: (Dist.1) dog owner that takes many walks. Petition to have designated off leash hours in parks (1,300 signatures). Believes residents need access to off leash hours for dogs. Would like further discission.

Anne Stanwick Dog off leash petition

Against off leash park hours. Frequent park user, dog owner. Dog owners are legally required to register dogs. In walking Sloan's lake, 44 piles of dog poop. 12 dog parks in the city. Concerned about off leash dogs. Shared space- not respectful to have dogs off leash. Has seen many people not following the rules. Could use this to generate funds. Petition for off leash hours creates an unsafe situation for all.

Mary Frances Nevans Canada Geese Task Force
 Dist 9 resident. Task force has met 3 times, has finalized a mission statement and will be reviewed and ratified at March meeting.

Mary Francis Dog Off Leash Petition
 Advocate of Denver parks designating off leash hours for dogs at various parks. Began off leash dog hour petition. With many dogs, feels that it is needed to have more space to exercise dogs. Often dog owners go against off leash laws. Would like to have off leash laws similar to New York City. Sees this as an important issue and would like follow up.

Mike Naes The Park People
 Board of trustees on the Park People, volunteers that care for the parks and trees of Denver. Denver digs trees is the biggest project. Free and low cost trees, focused on low canopy areas, raised money for parks as well, refurbishment and construction. Plant celebration and memorial trees. Request- need more help, especially with delivering trees, parkpeople.org also more volunteers for other roles. See this website for additional details.

www.theparkpeople.org

PRAB COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee: Retreat discussion

Marla- April 24 is the date. Will be a zoom retreat from 9-2. Will be facilitated and we hope to make it very productive and meaningful. 1 on 1 meetings were held earlier this year and we are planning a retreat based on themes we have heard.

Lee shared draft retreat objectives and current responsibilities of each committee.

Retreat Objectives

Connect our work on the PRAB to the Game Plan
Develop a shared understanding of the role of PRAB
Define and clarify the role of committees
Review existing committees and make adjustments
Build connections with one another

New members please choose a committee at the next meeting. (meeting times can change if needed)

Resiliency and Sustainability Meets last Friday each month @ 1:00 Currently has 3 PRAB members	Issues related to natural resources, water use, energy, urban forest, mountain parks, waterways, green infrastructure, wildlife management, pesticide management.
Operations & Maintenance, Budget & Finance Meets last Monday of each month @ 12 Currently has 3 PRAB members	Issues related to park rangers, service standards, rules & regulations, permits, safety, facility maintenance and technology, fees.
Planning and Design, Funding, Access, and Accessibility Meets 3 rd Tuesday of each month @ 5 Currently has 5 PRAB members	Issues related to emerging trends, acquisition, mobility and connectivity, inter-agency projects and collaboration, historic facilities and innovation, mountain parks.

<p>"PRAB Outreach Committee" Outreach, Community Engagement, Communications, Parks and Recreational Programming Meets 1st Wed. of each month @ 5 Currently has 1 PRAB member</p>	<p>Issues related to marketing, sponsorships, partnerships, fundraising, parks naming, volunteers, education, stewardship, human resources, Sports, youth programming, active older adults, outdoor education, arts and culture, health and affordability.</p>
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Florence- An opportunity for us to build connections with one another. Also, ground ourselves in the Game Plan and understand how we can connect our work on the PRAB to the Game Plan.

Chairperson meeting update: Park Hill Strategic planning group, Chandi and Andre will share updates with PRAB each month. Planning committee is also making sure to connect about PRAB.

Outreach Committee (Lisa)

1st Wednesday of the month 5-6

Park Hill golf course committee make up and lack of diversity in economics, possible conflicts of interest.

Hopes to connect with the PRAB members on the Park Hill Golf Course steering committee.

Public meeting rules and notice of notes and meetings. Inconsistent posting in notes from meeting- operations committee will dig into. Meetings being recorded and publicly accessed. Glad to be gathering input to inform the while paper recommendations. Clarification- newly formed geese task force is a community group and not part of the PRAB committees. Community co-chairing is a model that can be successful, would like to continue discussions.

Marla- We will post a link to request the recording of PRAB meetings- try to make it easier.

Retreat can help us align and further determine how committees flow.

Planning, Design, Funding, Accessibility (Meredith, Molly, Lynne, Pam, Florence)

Met on 2/16.

Topics discussed- game plan understanding and how to connect it to committee work.

Continue to have mountain parks under this committee, perhaps with a quarterly sub- committee.

Importance of connecting with city council members to understand budget priorities.

Upcoming: access to parks- including mountain parks, pickle ball

Surveys:

Acquisition plan meeting -tomorrow at 5:30 on DPR website and on facebook

Dist. 5- 3/18 @ 5:30 Verbena Park upgrades

Wash park north boathouse/ old playground area 3/18 @ 5:30

Florence- Skyline park community meeting, moving along in the process with some design ideas.

When meeting with council person and parks planner, get an overview of projects in each district.

Lots of surveys- share broadly across social media.

Often DPR posts info on Nextdoor and other places, but we as PRAB can help get the word out.

Operations, Maintenance, Budget (Frank, Trena, Amy)

Gathering budget recommendations for the executive director. Our charge is to provide recommendations to the department on the budget in the form of the white paper. We are discussing the 2022 budget. Began brainstorming ideas and how to provide those recommendations. Thinking of new formats. Common sense language, visual. Want a process, not a product. Shared document to gather feedback from all PRAB members.

4 buckets: Game plan, Equity, Black Lives Matter, Community voice

Marla- would like for committees to discuss and provide input.

Resiliency and Sustainability (Fran, Lee, Jack)

Met on 2/26- energy, air pollution, greenhouse gas reduction- will follow up with more learning in the committee (3/26 @ 1:00)

Trash program (presentation tonight)

Community task force has come together and is working on geese management efforts.

Park Hill Golf Course

Chandi and Andre are the PRAB representatives and they gave an update after the 1st meeting.

Grounding in equity. Began with talking about what is possible, what is not possible. Roles and responsibilities for group members were reviewed. Learned history as well. Reviewed some data about current status.

Conversations need to include what conservation means to development. Balance of respect of presenter and how to ask questions appropriately.

Public meeting 3/25,

Lisa also attended meeting- concerns were raised about city attorney interpretation, comment is very limited for public input.

How is PRAB going to be interacting with this committee as we have questions and comments?

Lynne reminds us that conserving Park Hill golf course was a recommendation on our white paper last year.

Marla- reminds us that we do have representation from PRAB on this planning group. Encourages us to send any questions/comments to our representatives- Chandi and Andre.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director's Report Parks and Recreation Advisory Board March 10, 2021

Introduction of Mark Bernstein, Chief of Staff

- 20 Years with DPR
- Most recently - Downtown Planner
- Has led numerous projects and initiatives for DPR:
The Outdoor Downtown Master Plan; Downtown Children's Playground; temporary art exhibits in Commons and Civic Center parks;
Greater & Greener International Parks Conference; Pocket Park on 21st Street; & more!
- Strategic oversight on planning and implementation on major projects (Game Plan); lead policy work; drive department wide administrative and operational process improvements; manage inter agency and intergovernmental relations

Major Projects Update – These three projects will be going to City Council for approval because of an ordinance that requires approval for new construction of a building over 3000 square feet:

GVR Pool - 15.6M total budget, 100% Elevate Denver Bond Funded

- Design and construction of a new state of the art indoor pool facility – an addition to the existing Green Valley Ranch Rec Center
 - 16,000 SF new constructed space
 - 43' Height to match existing building massing and elevations

- Extensive Public Outreach Process:
 - (2) in-person public meetings
 - Public Meeting #1 - 09/10/2019
 - Public Meeting #2 - 11/13/2019
 - Youth Focused Group Meeting - 12/17/2019
 - (1) Virtual Public Meeting
 - #3 Final Design Video Posted - 09/03/2020
- Schedule:
 - Currently out to bid via DOTI hard bid + workforce program
 - Construction completion anticipated late 2022

ELK Building - 3.75M total budget, DPR and ELK Partnership

- Design and construction of a new environmental learning center for kids at Montbello Open Space
 - Building 4,000 SF new constructed space
 - 30' Height to maximize daylighting
- Park Outreach
 - Extensive outreach was done during the Montbello Open Space master planning process in 2017-2018
 - Masterplan included location, size and orientation of proposed ELK building
- Building Outreach
 - (1) The outreach event that was intended during building design process has evolved into groundbreaking for ELK's 25th anniversary in 2021
- Schedule:
 - Currently out to bid via DOTI on calls
 - Construction completion anticipated early 2022

Rosedale – 5M total budget, 10% Bond remaining from DPR CIP

- Design and construction of a new office building for the SW maintenance district, including improvements to the site and existing structures to create a new headquarters facility
 - New office building 4,990 SF
 - 20' Height to maximize daylighting
 - #1 Priority for maintenance facility upgrades system-wide
- Outreach
 - DPR will take proposed building plan and elevations to local RNO's Spring 2021
- Schedule:
 - Currently finalizing design and preparing for bid to DOTI on calls
- Construction completion anticipated early 2022

Off leash dog hours proposal -

- Petition circulated by Mary Francis who spoke during public comment along with other speakers.
- Response to petitioners and request from Councilwoman Sandoval, joined by Council members Kniech and Kashmann:

“Thank you for reaching out and sharing your idea and the petition you started, I had not heard of this program in NYC. When it comes to animal protection any type of ordinance change would need to have both Animal Protective Services and Parks and Rec. opine on how this change would affect all involved, and the impact on the current ordinances and rules in place. I am going to be connecting you with the various City experts to help get this conversation started so please be patient with us as the appropriate agencies look into this and reply.

Director Nightengale and Lt. Rolfe,

Please see the idea below and let us know if this is something that you all are familiar with and could it be adapted for use in Denver? Any thoughts you have on this would be greatly appreciated, both pros and cons.

Deputy Director Gilmore and Ms. Coffman,

Can you please speak to if this type of change would be allowed in the Parks Rules and Regulations and what the current park hours are. Has anyone else brought this idea forward to Parks so that maybe it has already been vetted?

Appreciate everyone's help in looking into this idea and if it could be used in Denver what that process might look like."

- ED Recommendation – assign to Planning Committee to gather information and feedback, discuss and develop process for next steps along with DPR staff

OTHER ITEMS

Update on Recreation- John Martinez, Director of Recreation

***PowerPoint included**

Acknowledges the recreation staff over this past year through all the challenges.

Staggered hours at fitness centers to help with staffing issues.

Questions about reservation system and how rec centers were chosen?

John- At least 25% phone or in person reservations, will be available through the DPR website soon.

Equity map and other uses in some rec centers helped determine the order to open the centers.

Broyhill Trash Program

***PowerPoint included**

Jill Coffman, assistant director of parks operations

Very encouraging to have updated trash and recycling.

New Business/Announcements

Using rec centers as shelters for emergency response.

Happy- We provide facilities and staff, but not the services. Requirements to be a shelter center.

Working on upgrading as needed. At request of emergency services department.

Scott- we are prepared and planning for this storm. Rangers are trained to help in all types of situations. They help inform people of emergency shelters when needed.

Lisa- chat function, how to manage this function? Wants PRAB to make this determination.

Jesus- disabled chat amongst attendees, but should be able to send messages to panelists, just not each other.

Marla- we can review that and understand that further.

ADJOURNMENT

7:39

