

Meeting Minutes- DRAFT

DENVER PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

June 9, 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, Lee Rains Thomas, Frank Rowe, Meredith Levy, Lynne Mason, Amy Razzaque, Andre McGregor, Lisa Calderon, Molly McKinley, Pam Jiner, Jack Paterson, Chandi Aldena, Marlene De La Rosa, Marla Rodriguez, Florence Navarro, Deana Perlmutter, Trena Marsal

Absent: Fran Coleman, Ramsey Harris

CALL TO ORDER

Marla calls meeting to order at 5:38, reviews board norms (above) and re-committed at retreat. We can all hold each other accountable and call each out if we are not living our norms.

Lee takes roll call after public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Approve May Minutes with changes from Lisa to include Outreach notes.

Lisa- Was out of town for the last meeting. Number of items were covered in the outreach meeting that were not included in the notes. Suggestions for outreach committee when chairperson were not present seems off base. No notes were sent out. Public comment section. Rec centers were not discussed. Will talk about another committee. Community members create agenda. Sending out notes- after meetings. They should be included in the minutes.

Jack makes a motion to approve minutes with changes, Frank seconds.

Unanimously approved.

Meredith abstains (not present for May meeting)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Patrick Murphy- Sloan's Lake Car Free parks

Supports car free parks and especially the west lakeshore drive near Sloan's Lake. A new community of people have been able to connect. Would like these roads to remain closed to car traffic. Grateful for the space in the park without cars.

PRESENTATIONS:

Strategic Acquisition Plan: Vote

***Presentation attached** (Luke McKay, Chris Geddes, Kathy LeVeque)

Q& A

Lynn- 2A \$ and relationship to land/ park acquisition- confusion of how process happens. Would like to see the big picture of acquisition of 2A and other city money.

Would like to understand more of the strategy and larger picture.

Frank- In favor of the plan. In line with game plan, equity based, gets investments to communities that need it most, toolbox implementation.

Marlene- Sent questions to Kathy- do we have responses broken down by neighborhoods? Feels like a low turnout from Latinos and people of color.

Lisa- Flagged similar issue about lack of representation. Significant improvement after earlier feedback. Commends staff for going back and working on getting more involvement.

Concern about TPL parks score ranking- Denver dropped to 18th. 5% of land in Denver is parks and average is 15%. How will this plan help to improve our ranking?

Appreciate the focus of equity.

TPL ranking went up from 22nd to 18th. With this plan and funding want to create high quality park spaces in areas that are lacking parks. Really focusing on equity as a lens and an issue.

Tried to do targeted and focused outreach to areas that were not being reached. Paid adds were in areas of highest need- specific targets into neighborhood.

Marla- we can help spread surveys and public engagement opportunities as PRAB members. Seems to be an amazing plan that allows for flexibility while focusing on equity.

Lynn- possible briefings about the plan in person this year. Get out in the communities and talk about this plan.

Frank makes motion to approve plan, Marlene seconds.

Unanimously approved to support acquisition plan and make recommendation to Director.

Mountain Park Quarterly update

***Presentation attached**

Brad Ekert

Red Rocks CCC camp- determining long term visioning for the site. Preserve and make relevant.

Chief Hosa lodge- restore

Daniels- determine water sources- water to ropes course, base camp

Echo lake is losing water, doing studies to learn why.

Youth corps helped with the logs at base camp.

Groups have been camping and have access to hiking trails.

Outdoor rec has invested a lot in the base camp area.

What has been the outreach to help with accessibility?

Partners with Outdoor rec, Historicorps and working on programs to get people out to the parks- my Denver, hired a coordinator. Providing accessibility spaces for people with mobility issues.

Covid re-entry- what is the plan? Timeline?
Happy- Outdoor rec programming update coming soon.

PRAB COMMITTEE REPORTS

***Get notes from Meredith, Lisa, Frank, Fran**

Executive Committee: Retreat discussion

The retreat was very recently, still don't have the notes and haven't debriefed with the facilitators. Overall, was a productive retreat and there are many things to follow up on. Starting in July, there will be an open house before meetings starting at 5:00. We will try in next month and see what adjustments need to be made.

Social happy hour- check doodle for PRAB social hour coming soon.

Outreach Committee (Lisa)

Meets Wednesdays before PRAB meeting. Last meeting 6/2.

Attendees

- Angela Garcia
- Karen Kalavity
- Georgia Garnsey City Park Neighbor
- Maggie Price Congress Park Neighbors
- Marlene Delarosa PRAB
- Gerald Hamel, Make a Chess Move
- Laura Morales, DPR
- Florence Navarro, PRAB
- Woody Garnsey, Save open space
- Lisa Calderon
- Audrey Carillo
- Jesus Orrantia DPR
- Maggie Price
- MJ Anderson
- Brooke Badon
- Mary Frances Nevans

Agenda

Welcome

Introductions

Updates

- Isabella Thallas Park renaming
- Yes for Parks and Open Space ballot initiative

Discussion

- ParkScore Ranking of Denver
- Parks permitting process

Updates on bathrooms in parks
Public notice and recording of meetings
Input for PRAB Retreat

Next Meeting

Inquiring how much money came in from the Prop 2A tax
Requesting justification for chemical (Roundup) use in parks as well as issues regarding flagging after application.

Updates

1. Lake cleanup has been overwhelming in severity of need. Cleanup at Barnum Saturday 5 June.
2. Adopt a Flowerbed has been successful. 60 people have signed up.
3. Yes for Parks and Open Space Ballot initiative has enough signatures for ballot.
4. Park bathrooms are all open
5. Isabella Thalles' mother, Ana Thalles is working with D9 interns to rename the park

Discussion

1. Want more info about Prop 2A tax revenue next Tuesday.
2. Parks permitting process is counter-intuitive
 1. Direct links are not functional.
 2. D9 Constituents have been complaining that it is difficult to navigate permit system without the aid of a Parks staff member.
3. TPL ParkScore ranking:
 1. Ranking of cities with best parks - Denver increased to 18th from 22nd but still not in top 10.
 2. Need to prioritize growth of parks.
 3. 5% of land in Denver is park but the average for the nation is 15%.
- d. Will address in PRAB in Strategic Acquisition Plan discussion next week.

Recordings of PRAB Meetings

- . Can get council hearings online, but not PRAB meetings. Should be consistent.
- a. Access has to be granted by staff members and only temporarily.
- b. Recording of chats and hand raising are not recorded.
- c. Accessibility for public input needs more consideration.
- d. Laws state that accessibility upon request is the only requirement
- e. Information accessibility is also an issue within PRAB and the outreach committee

Increased community voice

- . Proposed solution is a community co-chair for PRAB
- a. Increase access through the lens of equity and reexamining how effective communities are

PRAB Suggestions for retreat:

1. Improve recordings and notice of meetings
2. Include written public comments
3. Technology now allows for easier recording and dissemination
4. Increase dialogue in committees. No dialogue with public comment.
5. Allow the chat function and ability to see how many people are speaking/attending
6. Improve PRAB meeting etiquette (don't have backs to the public when on camera, when to have cameras on, i.e. when speaking.).

Next Meeting

Inquiring how much money came in from the Prop 2A tax

Strategic Acquisition Plan updates
Report back from PRAB Retreat

Lake clean up updates- overwhelming need
Adopt a flower bed has been successful with over 60

No name park Park ave and 17th- meeting on Thursday at 5:30
Would like more information on 2A funding, permitting office
Recording of PRAB meetings are not posted online.
Recoding of the chats, hand raising.
More attention to public input.
Chat, cameras,
Renaming- community engagement and accountability committee.

Planning, Design, Funding, Accessibility (Meredith)

Gathering more info to respond to off leash dog petition. Met with rangers and Denver animal control.
Looked at statistics. Not writing many more tickets for off leash than now. Total contacts- verbal, written and citations. Also animal control- dog off leash (not in parks)
Would like to bring this up in July for the PRAB meeting. Learned a lot of new information and many issues were brought up:
Domestic/ wild animals
Streets and schools nearby
Possible safety issues

Will be reviewing at next committee meeting. Invites all PRAB members to participate and will bring forward a recommendation from committee.

Lisa- how can we look at this through a BLM lens? Arrests/ citations
Meredith clarifies that rangers do not make arrests.

Operations, Maintenance, Budget (Frank)

*** Separate attachment**

Sent out white paper to all PRAB member for review and feedback.
Suggestion to add more specificity regarding restrooms in parks.
Game plan, equity, BLM statement considered.
Recommendations are broken into high, medium and low
All input is included, to ensure all voices were heard.
Will use this draft and then add any comments. Work to incorporate comments.

Lee makes motion to approve white paper recommendations, Florence seconds.
Molly – excited about process and the recommendations. Also, would like to look into meeting accessibility, closed captioning, live translation

Upcoming for the committee- review the naming policy, chat function/ community engagement

Unanimously approved.

Resiliency and Sustainability (Jack) Met on May 21, 2021

Geese Management/high season for nesting:

- S&R Committee was briefed by DPR Wildlife Program Administrator;
- Geese management operations are underway by DPR;
- Parks for culling in past: City; Sloans; Washington; Garfield; Harvey and Garland. No culling for 2021;
- Fewer nests in 2021, eggs came later due to cooler spring and maybe high park usage by people and dogs during COVID;
- 1,542 eggs oiled by May 14 by DPR staff and trained volunteers, oiling will be done March-May;
- Thank you to volunteers especial from Canada Geese Protection supporters;
- DPR has applied to USDA for allowance of outreach to HOAs in vicinity of parks that may allow DPR to oil eggs in nests on private properties;
- Non-lethal geese control measures being used:
 - Water -borne “Goosinator” geese harassment tool used Sept.-March;
 - Grid/flag system laid out in selected athletic fields in SW Denver over winter to deter geese dwelling there;
 - Four dog/handler pairs certified by USDA harass geese at selected golf courses;
 - 40 Coyote cut outs deployed in parks Sept.-March, volunteers made several of them and deployed them, thanks again. 18-20 coyotes were stolen or vandalized;

Future Committee subjects and Game Plan:

Decided to recheck alignment of the committee’s work with strategies in Game Plan. Found strong alignment of 2020 and 2021 work, will review in detail for any strategies overlooked going forward. At PRAB retreat in June in work session on PRAB committees we entered a note for S&R Committee to continue to implement Game Plan “Adapt” strategies listed on pp. 78-79. Game Plan strategies provide a good index to measure progress by DPR implementing Game Plan sustainability and resiliency goals.

Climate Issues:

S&R Committee had good briefing from Climate Office on source of electricity for DPR (in-Denver use), found to be using around 47% renewable electricity now and should ramp up to 80% renewable grid electricity under Xcel plans approved by PUC and state legislation. Adding to this are solar panels being installed at four DPR rec centers with potential for more installations under Xcel/PUC solar gardens program.

Plan on following up with Climate office on energy use in buildings, 2021 Building and Energy codes revisions underway and any other city programs aimed at DPR buildings. Also following up with Climate office on clean vehicles in the DPR fleet (hybrid/battery/CNG/Biodiesel) and plans going forward. After gathering enough suitable information it is intended to invite Climate Office to present on climate issues for DPR to full PRAB later in summer.

Park Hill Golf Course Update

Chandi and Andre- Met last night. Felt that it was a productive meeting. Still working to developed shared understanding of the steering committee.

Andre- lives within 0.8 miles, but did not get a survey in the mail. Wants a clarification that surveys went out to the right houses. Concern was brought up in the meeting about the creation of the survey previously and now how it was collected. Many people said they did not get the survey. Concern about location of community input. Online vs. paper. Will forward report with PRAB.

Lisa- felt that it was not productive. Online post it notes was difficult. Seems that Latinos have not been adequately represented. Lack of analysis of research. Repeated issue, not being resolved. Wants to have nearby constituents. Would like to have District 9 representative on the steering committee as well.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
June 9, 2021
Executive Director’s Report

Recreation Update:

We have discontinued the reservation process and capacity limits at recreation centers. These changes will allow more opportunities for guests to get a workout during current business hours. In addition to the operational changes, we’ve also identified 3 additional outdoor pools to re-open this summer - Swansea, Aztlan and Eisenhower, along with accelerating recreation center re-openings so that all of them will be open by September rather than the end of the year as originally planned. Additionally, we plan to reopen 8 indoor pools in mid-August upon the closure of the outdoor pools and will have the remaining indoor pools open by the end of September.

Proposals for Federal Stimulus Recovery Funding:

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- **RESTORE RECREATION HOURS/PROGRAMS AND IMPROVE PARK MAINTENANCE TASK FREQUENCY**
 - 6.0 FTE Abolished positions to be restored mid-year 2021 in Mountain Parks, Forestry, Planning Design and Construction, Recreation Coordinators
 - Restore Full-time FTE which were partially budgeted in 2021 across DPR in Recreation, Parks, Parks Permitting
 - Restore Budget for on-call positions in Recreation as well as Parks
- **RESTORE MOUNTAIN PARKS SUPPLIES/MATERIALS**
- **RESTORE PARKS OPERATIONS SUPPLIES/MATERIALS**
 - Contracted mowing of medians
 - Other supplies

Proposals for Federal Infrastructure funding and proposed General Obligation Bond:

Criteria for federal infrastructure funding emphasizes economic recovery, equity, readiness, multi-agency collaboration, multi-benefit projects and scalability, and there’s similar criteria for the proposed general obligation bond. DPR has submitted projects from our six-year plan as well as deferred maintenance that best meet these criteria and are not yet funded or are only partially funded.

2022 Budget:

We have received drafts of the PRAB budget recommendations and will be prepared to highlight the areas within our budget submission that align with these recommendations and share our rationale in areas that may not be completely aligned.

Return to the Workplace Plans:

Office staff are retuning to the Post Building in phases, starting with Directors and above the first week of June, then managers and supervisors in July and the remaining employees in August and September. Like many other agencies, we will be using a hybrid model with employees working at least two days a week in the office and working from home the remainder of the week, all schedules based on business needs.

Fountains:

Interactive fountain at City Park will be the only splash pad that will be opened this summer and just a few of the decorative fountains will be operational due to budget and staffing constraints as well as the condition of many of our older fountains after not being operational for more than a year.

Molly- update on federal funding, bigger picture, any fund requests through mayor's office?

Lisa- Thanks to Johnny Valencia in parks office.

Concerned that kids are being asked to prove low income status?

Why do we have hurdles in place for kids to access pools?

OTHER ITEMS

Board Announcements/ new business

Appreciation for input and participation.

My Denver card discussion- how can kids apply?

Arthur will follow up with my Denver card info.

ADJOURNMENT