

PRAB MEETING Minutes, Wednesday, August 11, 2021

PRAB Members Present: Fran Coleman, Frank Rowe, Meredith Levy, Amy Razzaque, Andre McGregor, Angela Garcia, Molly McKinley, Jack Paterson, Chandi Aldena, Marlene DeLaRosa, Ramsey Harris, Marla Rodriguez, Florence Navarro

PRAB Members Absent: Audrey Carrillo, Lee Rains Thomas, Lynne Mason, Pam Jiner, Deana Perlmutter, Trena Marsal

DPR Staff: Director Happy Haynes, John Martinez, Laura Morales, Arthur Gilkison, Jesus Orrantia, Sheila Urban, Yolanda Quesada

The meeting opened at 5:30 p.m. Marla started the meeting at 5:33 p.m. and stated no one was signed up for public comment. At 5:34 p.m. Arthur announced that we did not have a quorum.

The **PRAB Meeting Norms** were read off by PRAB Members:

“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.”

We proceeded to the Off-Leash Report. It was decided that we used the PRAB flow chart that was established at our retreat to determine whether the final report presented by the Planning, Design, Funding, and Accessibility Committee needed a committee report. The flow chart was presented, and the committee followed the sequence of how the topic came to PRAB, which was initially through public comment, and it was assigned to the Planning, Design, Funding, and Accessibility Committee who worked on the topic with the Department of Parks and Recreation by utilizing the existing dog leash policy. Meetings were held, and the response was written and because the Planning, Design, Funding, and Accessibility Committee met all of the sequences of the flow chart it was determined that this policy did not require the vote of PRAB. The report states that no action will be taken at this time to change the Denver Parks and Recreation’s off-leash dog policy, and this is the link with the detailed recommendation. (See July 2021 minutes.)

Attendance was taken and Fran read off the names of all those not checked in. The attendance of PRAB members and DPR are noted above.

Marla announced that the Community Chat was utilized prior to the PRAB 5:30 p.m. meeting and that there was good participation. Quorum was determined at 13.

The July PRAB minutes were moved and seconded with three minor corrections, which Fran will send to Lee. Molly abstained and all approved the minutes as amended.

Marla noted that there were two people that had checked in for Public Comment and because we did not have them earlier, she had each of them introduce themselves and provide their concerns.

Carla Torres-Zegarra stated that she is concerned about the limited shade for our playgrounds. She stated that the first years of children’s lives result in more sun exposure, which will determine their cancer exposure as they age. This statistic should be taken into consideration as we plan our playgrounds.

Danielle Mossburg stated that she is new to Denver. She stated that Denver’s Playgrounds are fantastic, however adding more shade would make them greater.

Public Comment was closed at 5:58 p.m.

Florence gave the Executive Committee report and stated that the Community Chat will be provided going forward prior to each scheduled PRAB meeting. A Google form is being considered and the committee will review it. The Executive Committee wants protocol for the community chat. Marla stated that we will try to have a rotation of members to attend and lead the Community Chat. Florence also stated that as topics come up that we are work on a spreadsheet to keep track of issues and how they are assigned and their eventual outcome. Laura is presently developing the spreadsheet.

Florence provided an update on the Mountain Parks. She wants to know the interest of PRAB members for a mountain parks tour. A doodle poll will be sent out to gauge this interest. Ramsey is new to the board and originally from California and definitely wants to learn about the Mountain Parks and other PRAB topics.

Florence stated that elections are coming up (usually in October) and wants PRAB members to begin to consider running for leadership roles and that it also looks good on our resumes. The more important thing is we can help with developing agendas. Also, looking for volunteers to lead the nominations committee.

Marla moved to committee reports:

The Community Engagement and Accountability Committee does not have a chair and every committee needs to have three PRAB members.

Meredith provided the Planning, Design, Funding, and Accessibility Committee report and stated they did not meet last month because they worked on the Denver Off-Leash Dogs and preparation of the recommendation. The committee will meet later this month.

Frank provided the Operations & Maintenance, Budget & Finance Committee report and stated the committee met on July 26th. He said Mr. Moore gave an overview on recording of PRAB meetings, which has been a request of the public. He said that there are a lot of bandwidth issues in accomplishing this and cannot just be posted to the website. Thus, this is still a work in progress. How will PRAB operate once we begin to have in person meetings? Is it appropriate for Board members to participate on zoom in order to have hybrid meetings? Input from community to type in an issue and then follow the flow process to appropriately assign it. Happy will join the next meeting to discuss naming of parks. Topics brought to the Operations & Maintenance, Budget & Finance Committee will then be forwarded to the proper committee.

Florence reported on her attendance of the Community Engagement and Accountability Committee and for now seems to be a separate committee and that the executive committee is figuring out how it should progress. Also, they no longer have a zoom link. She stated that the committee has several community members participating with a wide variety of topics ranging from flower beds, type of irrigation water used in parks, geese, etc.

Fran asked how we can move back to the original intent of the Outreach Committee was to get feedback on surveys and projects that DPR would be working on. It has somehow evolved to a large community monthly meeting that is more than PRAB. Is there anyway we can let the community operate on its own and that PRAB somehow come back to its original purpose? Marla stated that the committee needs three members and a chair for it to be considered a PRAB committee.

The newly formed Recreation & Programming Committee will have its first meeting on Wednesday, August 25, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. Marlene agreed to be the interim chair. Marlene stated that she is engaging all of the community and not just the same people in order to create a broader reach to get all topics.

Andre and Chandi gave updates on Park Hill. Andre stated that at the last steering committee meeting that an easements attorney gave an overview on how easements work. Chandi stated that the steering committee spent time discussing food security and food deserts. It was noted that there is a grocery store at 40th and Colorado Blvd. The City of Denver did have a workshop of residents to learn what was their vision on the future of Park Hill should be. Questions were asked about parks and rec amenities, connecting to more greenways, and having more open space.

Fran asked if they were aware of the ballot issues that seem to be competing on Park Hill. Andre and Chandi acknowledged that one is to protect open space and keep the easement as it is. The second one is to change the easement to allow development.

Fran reported that the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee did not meet in July. August's meeting will feature Florence Navarro and Darrell Watson who were the co-chairs of the Game Plan. We will learn from them how the game plan came to be, who all participated, the goals, and its implementation. We will then consider what parts will be reported to the overall PRAB.

The Executive Report was presented by Happy Haynes and is attached. After Happy's presentation she opened up to questions. Molly asked if Happy would have a response to our PRAB budget recommendations? Happy replied yes and they will go to the mayor. Meredith asked if there will be an update on rec centers and their hours? John Martinez stated that a press release will be sent this week and it will indicate which rec centers and indoor pools will be open. All of the outdoor pools will close on Labor Day except for Berkeley which will remain open because the indoor pool has mechanical issues. Happy stated that John and the aquatic teams have done an amazing job this summer, because the pools were packed with lots of kids. Frank said that he wanted to give a good shout out for the work resiliency program that helps kids get jobs. Meredith asked what we can we expect from the after and indoor school programing. John replied that they are working with the marketing team on what is being planned. John plans to brief the Recreation & Programming Committee on August 25th.

Marla asked for board announcements and new business. One question that was asked by Marlene is how to obtain permits to use athletic fields. These type of requests go to the permit office.

Florence emphasized as a reminder for PRAB members to give serious consideration to run for a leadership position.

Andre asked how we should identify ourselves when we are in the public especially in the parks and rec centers. It was agreed that we need to check on providing PRAB members with badges that identify us as being volunteer representatives and part of the DPR system.

Training for new members is needed and will be forthcoming.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Minutes respectfully written by Frances Natividad Coleman a.k.a. Fran Coleman 😊

Attachment: Executive Director Report