

**PARKS AND RECREATION  
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

In-Person and WebEx

Location: Government Center, 2001 S. State Street SLC, Utah 84190

December 13, 2023 | 11:30AM-1:00PM

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**In Attendance**

**Board Members:** Carl Fisher, Chris Hill, Mont Millerberg, Soren Simonsen, Robynn Masters, Connie Burgess, John Warnas, Lynette Wendel, Daniel Schoenfeld, Jerry Cordova-Ong, Lisa Dean

**Absent:** Nate Salazar, Jaren Cooper

**Staff:** Martin Jensen, Danielle Calacino, Doranne Pittz, Patrick Leary, Brent Laulusa, Callista Pearson, Jon Ruedas, Jan Donchess, Jerry Brewster, Liz Sollis, David Johnson

**Citizen Participation:** N/A

**Call to Order**

Carl Fisher calls for the introduction of all attendees.

**Public Comments:**

No public comments are made.

**Business Item – Approval of Minutes**

Carl calls for a motion or any discussion on the November 2023 minutes. Soren Simonsen motions to approve the minutes, Lynette Wendel seconds, all approve.

The board agrees to tentatively meet on January 10, 2024, but there is a chance it could get bumped till February 14, 2024.

**Director's Report**

Martin discusses division-wide updates:

- He thanks the board for their support in getting the My County Rec Pass program approved by County Council.
  - Martin details that County Council put a caveat on the program, approving it for a one-year trial, from June 2024 to June 2025. He says he has hope the reporting will show the good impact that the program will have.
  - Lynette thanks Martin for being courageous and doing the hard work to bring it to the Mayor and Council.
  - Martin says it's time to start working on implementing the program come January, and he really wants the school board members to share the information with their leadership at the school districts, and to help get information about the program to the students.
  - Martin says they are expecting an estimate of 150,000-200,000 My County Rec passes to be utilized within the next year.
- Martin details the full budget that was passed by County Council, and the budget will be conservative.

- We have been asked to reduce spending by 4% in personnel and 3% in operations.
- If the economy is in a better position later, they will release those funds.
- Initially we were put on a hiring freeze, but the Council has done away with that, but still requiring hoops to jump through when needing to hire.
- Martin says the division right now is in a good spot, and cautiously watching what the economy does.
- Chris Hill asks if maintenance gets to stay where it is, or if it's being restricted due to budget; Martin says that we are choosing not to cut maintenance, and we are reducing spending elsewhere like with travel.
- Martin reassures the board that our focuses are on everyone keeping their jobs and making sure we're still providing services for our patrons.
- Martin discusses the 2025 Facilities Master Plan, and says we hope to have a draft in the first or second quarter that the board will get to read.
  - He explains that it's the 10-year plan which lays the foundation and acts as a roadmap for the next decade, and where we will spend the next round of the ZAP (Zoo, Arts, and Parks) tax.
  - Martin tells the board that they will get the first chance to look it over and give their input, and the final steps are giving it to the Mayor and Council for their review and adoption.
  - Martin says that a member of this Advisory Board will sit on a committee for ZAP in 2026 that will be a part of handing out close to 150 million dollars.
  - Jerry Cordova-Ong asks regarding the budget, if the County is withholding paying people fairly or offering promotions; Martin tells him that part of the 2024 budget was a 4% increase to everyone's salaries, but that it is a top priority of the Mayor's Office and Council that the County is paying equitably.
- Martin recognizes Jan Donchess who is retiring from Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation after 37 years.

Jerry Cordova-Ong asks about the Salt Lake County Athletic Fields, and an update on them. Martin gives a quick run-down on the situation, detailing that the project was delayed due to manufacturing issues and weather. He continues to say that it was supposed to be done on October 1, but now it is delayed until April 2024.

Carl asks, regarding the My County Rec Pass program, if we conducted forecasting about potential new passes and new fees from parents that would help keep revenue up. Martin says that everything we have done so far is hypothetical, but we are working off Denver's statistics, and how their revenue went down in the first 2 years, but by year 3 revenue went back up. Martin goes on to say that we hope to trend in that direction, and Liz says that the program will be complimented by a new point of sale system.

Carl also says that it would be neat if at some point in the program, we build relationships with other community organizations and nonprofits, and through partnerships, these organizations can provide classes and events like, "Learn to Ride a Bike Day", so the kids participating in the program can also get outside of the facilities as well. Martin says that Doranne and her team are already working on and making lists of different activities and classes that will be offered to the kids through the program.

Martin says that his expectations for year 1 are to get the program up and running, getting kids signed up, and for the program to grow. Doranne says that she loves that Carl mentioned introducing outdoor education and those kinds of experiences, because the programming that will be offered really has an intentional focus. Doranne continues to tell the board that there is going to be a manager position that will be overseeing this program, and that person will be helping to organize and implement these ideas.

Mont Millerberg asks what the price for an annual County recreation pass is currently, and Doranne gives him the breakdown on our current pass fees.

### **Business Item – Jordan River Bridge Naming Proposal**

Martin tells the board that anytime we name something after someone, the County has a formal ordinance. He details the steps of the procedure, which goes:

- The proposal starts with the Mayor and Council.
- The Mayor then brings it to the correct department to initiate a formal procedure.
- It's brought to the Advisory Board who then decide to consider it or do away with it, with a formal vote.
- If the Advisory Board votes yes, the division does more research and hosts a public meeting to receive feedback.
- The division then brings the recommendation from the public back to the board, and the board votes a second time to approve it and moves it forward to the Mayor and Council for final adoption.

Martin asks the board if they want to consider this proposal, and if so, we will host a public meeting, and pull some more information about the family and the bridge along the trail.

He says that Mayor Hall of Bluffdale has endorsed it, supports it, and has asked us to consider it.

Without reading out the email, Martin goes on to explain the proposal from the family, Rick and Colleen, who have lived in Bluffdale their entire lives and have dedicated decades of their lives to planning efforts and volunteering on the Jordan River.

He says that maybe in January Soren can lead a walk along the trail in that area and the board can see the trail and bridge; Soren offers to give a walking or biking tour to the advisory board this coming Saturday, as he's hosting an event with the Jordan River Commission in partnership with the Hogle Zoo.

Chris asks when an object is named but needs to be replaced at some point, does it get given the same name once it's replaced, or can it get renamed to something else. Martin says that once something is replaced, there would be a decision to put the name back on it or leave it, and most of the time the name is put back on.

Martin says that when a large company wants to name something, typically their proposal is accompanied by a financial agreement for a certain amount of time, like with the Mountain America Expo Center, which was previously named the Southtown Expo Center.

Lisa Dean asks if there would be a plaque placed on the bridge showing the name, or would it just be changed on maps; Martin responds saying that it could be either and that the County tries not to do plaques because they easily disappear, but more than likely they will still place one.

John Warnas asks that in an instance where the name becomes appropriate for removal for whatever reason, can that be done; Martin says that yes, it's within the County ordinance that a name can be removed if needed.

Carl calls for a motion to move forward with the proposal and calls for the Parks & Rec staff to initiate a public hearing for the naming of the bridge. Robynn Masters motions, Soren seconds, and all approve.

Martin presents Carl Fisher with a plaque commemorating his time serving on the advisory board, and gifts him a personalized street sign as well. He thanks Carl for all he has done for the County and Parks & Recreation and says we will miss him.

### **Associate Directors 2023 Recap and Moving Forward to 2024**

Doranne Pittz presents on Recreation's 2023 challenges and successes:

- Main challenge: mass communication; worked closely with Community Engagement to fix.
- Main successes:
  - pools were open and fully staffed this year,
  - capital improvements within the recreation centers took place such as replacing HVAC, chillers, etc.,
  - updated all security cameras; status is in phase 1 and phase 2 will be in 2024,
  - increased Wi-Fi access points in centers,
  - standardized registration dates and saw an increase in registrations which improved the customer experience,
  - shifted budget on Martin's and Robin's schedules by 2 months because it is quite large,
  - culture within recreation shifted and it's been good and exciting.

Patrick Leary presents on the Parks, Trails, and Open Space's 2023 challenges and successes:

- Main success: had many ribbon cuttings on new facilities during 2023.
- Main challenges:
  - mitigating conflicts out on the trails, especially on the Butterfield trail systems,
  - hiring professional tradespeople; electricians, irrigations specialists, etc., and will continue to deal with that into spring of 2024,
  - keeping up with all the new facilities such as Bingham Creek Regional Park, Butterfield, etc.

Jon Ruedas presents on the Planning team's 2023 challenges and successes:

- Team grew from 6 to 9 people.
- Main successes:
  - the opening of Bingham Creek Regional Park, Pioneer Crossing Regional Park, Valley Regional Park Softball Complex, Parley's Trail final connection, Butterfield Canyon Trailhead Regional Park, Dimple Dell Regional Park trail heads and Magna Regional Park trails,
  - working on 4<sup>th</sup> quarter transportation projects such as the Bingham Creek Trail Master Plan and the Tri-Canyons Master Plan, which is a collaboration with the Forest Service,
  - renovations to parks to make them more water efficient with ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds and TI (Tenant Improvement) funds, which include Harmony Park, Hunter Park, Mountain View golf course, the Redwood Nature Area, Athletic Fields in Murray, Granite Park, and Creekside Park,
  - several childcare projects took place due to a grant we've been receiving, which include playground and interior upgrades.
  - many master planning projects such as Crestwood Park and Valley Regional Park gained momentum.

Brent Laulusa presents on the Fiscal Operations team's 2023 challenges and successes:

- Main challenges:
  - team has 12 positions but faced significant turnover with two retirements and two others leaving for other opportunities,
  - went through 5 internal audits,
  - County revamped the way employees request certain types of leave, and it affected our division significantly because we use a different timekeeping system,
  - complicated financial arrangements, for example: blended funding due to interlocal agreements, grants, etc.
- Main success:
  - approved for a new Recreation POS (point of sale) system which is accompanied by one merit employee position that will help with the implementation of said system.

Jerry Brewster presents on the Golf team's 2023 challenges and successes:

- Main successes:
  - did 430,000 rounds of golf this year among all 6 courses,
  - seeing an 11.3-million-dollar revenue this year,
  - fully staffed with all full-time positions hired,
  - Dustin Pimm, 1<sup>st</sup> assistant golf professional at Mountain View golf course received an award from the Utah local section of the PGA,
  - Mountain View golf course irrigation improvements happening in 2024.
- Main challenge:
  - due to rainstorms this year, South Mountain golf course accrued 1 million dollars in damage, which will be fixed in 2024.

Liz Sollis presents on the Community Engagement's 2023 challenges and successes:

- Main successes:
  - Callista and Jackie joined the team this year, and Danielle will become an official member of the team in 2024,
  - hosted many successful public open houses and ribbon cuttings,
  - did lots of recruitment with ads on city buses, city journals, etc.,
  - received lots of feedback through a customer experience survey which we continue to push out,
  - focused a lot on record requests and board management,
  - worked successfully with Flood Control on the tree removal at Wheeler Farm, which was an important public engagement experience.
- Going into 2024, Community Engagement will be working on:
  - My County Rec Pass program
  - implementing the new POS system
  - more public open houses for the Facilities Master Plan
  - working closely with ZAP and Arts & Culture for the reauthorization of the ZAP Tax
  - the transition from the .org domain to the saltlakecounty.gov domain
  - ramping up the customer experience survey and continuing branding and recruitment

Martin says it's been a successful year and thanks everyone for playing a part in it.

### **Board Business**

Martin tells the board that next year we'll sit down with everyone and fill them in on how much longer everyone's terms are, along with filling vacancies and nominating and appointing a new chair.

Doranne gives Liz a shout out and mentions that Liz received appreciation from the County Council, and how her and her team are important to the division.

Lynette asks if it's okay the board isn't voting on a new chair at this meeting, because we will have no one running the meeting come January. Martin tells her that we aren't quite ready today to vote for a new chair, but we are able to run our next meeting without one. He says that if someone is willing to be an acting chair for the next meeting, then they can talk to him about doing so.

Liz says that we have been actively recruiting and are doing a big push to get lots of applicants for the board.

Jerry Cordova-Ong wishes everyone a Merry Christmas, and Carl thanks the board and Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation for being an important part of his life.

**Adjourn**

Soren Simonsen motions to adjourn, Lynette Wendel seconds the motion, all approve.

DRAFT