



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

In-Person and WebEx

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

April 10, 2024 | 11:30AM-1:00PM

In Attendance

Board Members: Lynette Wendel, Connie Burgess, Robynn Masters, Chris Hill, John Warnas, Dan Schoenfeld, Lisa Dean

Absent: Nate Salazar, Jaren Cooper

Staff: Danielle Calacino, Patrick Leary, Doranne Pittz, Callista Pearson, Jerry Brewster, Walt Gilmore, Jon Ruedas, Brent Laulusa, Adam Johnson, Julie Peck-Dabling, Joey McNamee, David Johnson, Michelle Hicks

Citizen Participation: Collin Dumke, Sandra Haak

Call to Order

Lynette Wendel calls the meeting to order and for everyone present to introduce themselves.

Public Comments:

No public comments made.

Business Item – Approval of Minutes

Lynette calls for a motion or any discussion on the March 2024 meeting minutes. Chris Hill motions to approve the minutes, Robynn Masters seconds, all approve.

Division Director Recruitment Update

Joey McNamee, Associate Director of Community Services provides an update on the recruitment of the new Division Director. Tells the board that the position closes on April 14, that there's been quite a bit of interest in the position, and details how they have set up the process.

Chris asks if they are building a diverse pool of applicants for the position, and Joey tells him that Salt Lake County is committed to draw from the broadest pool of applicants but regarding targeting specific groups, that must be done more thoughtfully due to legislation. They discuss advertising the position, and Joey says they are not limited in outreach and are posting the job everywhere they can, including national boards.

Director's Report

Julie Peck-Dabling recognizes outgoing board member Lynette Wendel for her time on the board, for her visionary leadership, and for all she's done in the community. Lynette thanks the board and touches on all the opportunities she has had on the board to positively impact the community and everyone around her. She continues saying she is going to miss serving on the board but is excited to let the next board members develop their leadership.

Julie tells the board they're working on the Annual Report for 2023 and are close to having it ready. She then hands over the time to the sections to give their updates.

Section Update

Doranne Pittz begins with Recreation updates and tells the board that pre-registration for the My County Rec pass officially opened on April 1, and they saw 4500 registrations in the first week alone, and as of today were at 7900. She says the centers with top registrations are JL Sorenson, Gene Fullmer, and Dimple Dell. The centers with the lowest registrations are Central City, Northwest, Sorenson Multi-Cultural Center, and Redwood. Doranne says they think that is happening because we haven't been able to work directly with Salt Lake City School District and rolling out information in their areas has been slower due to that lack of partnership. Callista Pearson says they have reached out to the Salt Lake City Mayor's office for assistance with communicating with the school district and are looking to contact community councils as well. Callista also mentions that our Central City facility manager has had prior communication with the new superintendent of the school district and is going to reach out to her directly.

Callista tells the board that they are planning an event on May 31 with Mayor Wilson to promote the My County Rec Pass program before it officially begins on June 1. She says that most City Journals will have an ad in them over the next couple of weeks as well.

Lynette asks if maybe they could work with the chamber or multiple chambers for businesses on the west side of the valley to promote the program so those employees and their families can know more.

Chris thinks the lack of partnership with Salt Lake City School District is a problem and wants to work on remedying it by possibly talking to the Council and doesn't want the burden to be on us. Julie agrees and says it would be a good idea to talk to County Council and that partnerships with the school district are very important and perhaps the change of leadership at Salt Lake City School District has caused the drift between our organizations.

Colin Dumke mentions that he's noticed many influencers' social media posts discussing the My County Rec Pass program and perhaps some of those posts can help target the Westside communities.

Doranne quickly touches on HB 257 and how it impacts Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation. She details how they have three separate work groups tackling the legislation and she is heavily involved. She says that our facilities are already in compliance so they are more focused on the conversational pieces and customer service, so staff can handle all situations.

Lynette asks if Doranne sees a trend where locker rooms are going to be designed to give greater privacy all together, and Doranne says that yes, they are headed towards locker rooms having individual private changing rooms like those at the Draper Recreation Center, and have master planned it out for future renovations. She says that individual changing rooms bring their own challenges, but it is trending that way.

Patrick Leary gives updates for the Parks section and tells the board that the annual Flood Control preparation meeting happened with anxiety for flooding potential being less this year and preparations are underway for spring run-off. They don't anticipate the pond in Sugarhouse Park to flood this year, but there are high water levels in the Jordan River that is causing erosion issues along the banks which is impacting some of our golf courses. He adds that mobile sandbagging stations are also not happening this year.

Walt Gilmore provides updates from Planning and tells the board they are updating their 5-year capital maintenance and capital projects lists with each section. After each section gives their lists back to Walt's team, they then must go through the selection of choosing what is high priority and what is not.

He touches on the 2025 Facilities Master Plan and how they split it into five planning areas so they could concentrate on different issues in each of the areas so it wouldn't be too overwhelming of a process. They are continuing to meet with the different cities, jurisdictions, and organizations to hear what their communities want and need.

Lynette tells Walt that he and his team did a great job on their public outreach events and loved being able to help and see it firsthand.

Robynn asks about the five planning areas the team recognized and how do they utilize them, and Walt clarifies that the sections help to dissect what amenities Parks & Recreation currently offers and where are our gaps within each area.

Joey discusses funding and gives a breakdown of how the ZAP (Zoo, Arts, and Parks) tax works and how it allows the County to then go out to bond and fund all the significant infrastructure investments.

Along with the collection of the ZAP tax, once it's approved it is then managed by an Advisory Board that is made up of Salt Lake County community members and Mayors of cities and jurisdictions within the County. Joey continues to explain how the ZAP Advisory Board will then sort through and rank applications from municipalities; then the Mayor and Council make the final decision on what projects are approved and receive funding.

There is further clarification that the Master Plan acts as a formal designation for new amenities and renovations to existing amenities, and acts as a guide for what projects are of priority throughout the whole county.

Walt finishes by mentioning open space, and how they are busy working with the State and different cities doing many appraisals of properties and alludes to exciting things to happen in the future.

Brent Laulusa gives Fiscal updates to the board mentioning that there are three active audits in progress. He says that the new IT Manager for the division, Ryan Jensen, is starting soon and has lots of applicable experience to bring to the job. Brent quickly mentions that HR has been piloting a virtual I9 appointment for new hires and have been testing it with our recreation centers and so far, it has been successful. Lastly, he mentions the budget and various interim budget adjustments going through that are project oriented. He explains that in many cases prices have increased since projects began and are needing adjustments to cover the expenses.

Adam Johnson quickly gives Golf updates to the board regarding the flooding concerns affecting a few of the golf courses and signage has been placed to warn golfers. He mentions two major projects that are underway which are the Mountain View irrigation system and the bunker renovation at South Mountain. Lastly, he mentions that their Junior Golf program is at 85% capacity, and they are hosting the National Veteran Golden Age Games through the Salt Lake County VA in August at Mick Riley.

Callista Pearson gives Community Engagement updates to the board by mentioning the Wrangler Trailhead Ribbon Cutting at the Dimple Dell Regional Park on Saturday, April 27th at 8:30 am. She also mentions they've been busy helping the roll-out of the My County Rec Pass and keeping information updated on the status of the Butterfield Trails.

Naming of the Bridge in Bluffdale

Julie quickly tells the board that they will be voting in May on the naming request of a bridge along the Jordan River Trail in Bluffdale. She hands out Salt Lake County Ordinance 2.48.040 Guidelines for naming or renaming public places to the board and says it's important they have a critical look at it before May's meeting.

Airsoft Guns in County Parks Discussion

The board welcomes Sophie Schwankl back and Sophie tells them that since the last meeting she researched where regulated airsoft gun arenas are in the Salt Lake valley and shows them a map of where they are located. She mentions there are about 7 around the valley but there are none directly in Salt Lake County; she continues to say that because there are these designated areas she still believes that airsoft guns should not be allowed in public parks.

Lynette asks the board if they would like to move forward and recommend an airsoft gun ban at our public parks and Chris says that he fully supports recommending the ban. Lynette then asks David Johnson for legal advice on what we can and cannot ban in our public spaces and if the board can deliberate supporting a ban.

David says that, off the cuff, he doesn't think airsoft guns qualify as a firearm and recalling from Utah code, he thinks it must be an explosive projectile. He continues to say that if it's truly something the board wants to recommend, it would take the form of a policy not an ordinance.

The board and David continue to discuss the difference between a policy and an ordinance, with a policy being a rule and an ordinance having more legal enforcement power.

Robynn says she doesn't understand why it shouldn't be an ordinance when the use of airsoft guns is a safety issue and Julie says that ordinance has to go through County Council as they make legislation and Lynette says that it could evolve into that, but the policy would at least establish expectation.

There is quick clarification too on how the County can have a policy in place, but local jurisdiction's rules, laws, and ordinances would also still apply even if it's in a County owned and operated park.

Michelle Hicks chimes in and tells the board that Sophie is planning to go and talk with all the other cities and collaborate with them to make it a policy or rule within their own jurisdiction; so, she is really wanting and needing the board's support to then work on a policy with David Johnson.

Lynette asks David if they can take a motion that a letter gets written to support policy and David says yes and legal review will come when drafting the policy.

Lynette then entertains a motion that the board draft and support a policy to ban airsoft guns from County public facilities in the Parks & Recreation department. Lisa Dean motions for the board to write the letter of support, Chris seconds, all approve.

Michelle thanks the board for listening to and inviting Sophie back, and Lynette gives thanks to Michelle and to Sophie and tells Sophie if they can support her in their own communities to let them know.

Board Business

No other business was discussed.

Adjourn

Connie Burgess motions to adjourn the meeting, Robynn seconds, all approve.