

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD PARK
RECREATION & PUBLIC GROUNDS COMMISSION
January 14, 2021**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order by Chairperson Taddei at 7:03 pm.

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Taddei, Vice Chairperson Phillips, Commissioners Dun, Culbreth, Faith, Schwartz, and Fix.

Staff Present: Matthew Williams, Interim City Manager; Sonny Culbreth, Management Assistant; Kyle Ames, Deputy Director of Public Works; Pat McCoy, Sports Coordinator; Tricia Kramer, Director of Community and Recreation Services; Stacey Frederico, Building Safety/Public Works Administrative Assistant.

City Council: Vice Mayor Paul Faith.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Taddei led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Response to Call to the Community

There were no requests to speak during the November 19, 2020 meeting.

IV. Business

A. Minutes

Vice Chairperson Phillips **moved, seconded** by Commissioner Dun to approve the Minutes of the meetings held on November 19, 2020 with a grammatical correction; **unanimous approval.**

B. Swearing-in of New Commission Member Brian Faith

Vice Mayor Paul Faith swore in new Commissioner Brian Faith.

C. Swearing-in of New Commission Member Brian Culbreth

Sonny Culbreth swore in new Commissioner Brian Culbreth.

D. Discussion of Proper Meeting Etiquette

Mr. Williams stated any new Commissioners are required to sign that they have received the Open Meeting Law materials within a certain period of time following their appointment. He reviewed the following with the Commission:

- Commissioners can communicate via email with multiple staff members at a time, but cannot email “reply all” to the Commission as a whole.
- Commissioners cannot debate items between members via email.
- A quorum is a majority of the board and is required to hold a meeting.

- Members should all address and be addressed properly; Chairperson, Vice Chairperson or Commissioner.
- All votes need to have a motion with a second and need to be asked if anyone opposes.
- Items can only be discussed if it is on the agenda.
- Discussions should stay on point, organized, and minimal in time.

Mr. Williams discussed with the Commission that seat terms are for 3 years but with the recent vacant seats being filled the new Commissioners would be up for renewal March 2021. Mr. Williams stated that he will go to City Council to recommend to extend the term of these to new Commissioners seats to the term of 2022.

E. City Way-finding Signage

Mr. Williams reminded the Commission of this topic at the November RPG meeting and asked the Commission to look at a photo of way-finding signage included in the agenda packet. There are several way-finding signs on the perimeter of the City to direct visitors to the downtown services. These signs are old and have the old City logo and the Mayor has asked that staff to look into this. There are several ways to go about replacing these signs. An inexpensive way is to resurface the signs with the new logo and wording but using the same frame. Another option is to create a whole new sign which will cost more.

Mr. Williams knows the Commission suggested making this an art project with one of the schools but stated due to COVID-19 and schools being closed that this would be better suited for the sign design shop. Getting schools involved is great but the art project should be geared more to a mural or something similar.

The Commission discussed and shared several thoughts and ideas on the way-finding signage. The Commission decided on removing some of the current words and replacing with new wording. Mr. Culbreth suggested allowing staff to reach out to a sign shop and getting some mock ups of the sign that then the Commission can view and decide on.

Commissioner Schwartz **moved** to get a quote on the sign with an updated logo and replace the word 'Shopping' with 'Recreation Center' and replace 'Services' with 'Library' **seconded** by Commissioner Dun; **unanimous approval**.

Commissioner Fix suggested replacing the word 'Restaurant' with 'Dining.'

Commissioner Fix **moved**, to amend the motion and change the word 'Restaurant' to 'Dining,' **seconded** by Commissioner Schwartz; **unanimous approval**.

F. Tree Carving Quotes and Designs

Mr. Williams asked the Commission to refer to a photo included in the agenda packet of a damaged tree at the lake. This tree has been assessed as a hazard and will be removed by West Coast Arborist. It sits on a prominent point at the lake and will be noticeable when removed. Staff has discussed having the tree cut at 10ft from the ground and having a carving done on it. The Commissioners are in favor of the idea and made several suggestions of what the carving could possibly be, but are open to the ideas of the artists.

Vice Chairperson Phillips **moved**, to obtain three quotes from artists for ideas for the tree

trunk at the lake, **seconded** by Commissioner Dun. Motion was amended by Vice Chairperson Phillips to remove the limitation of three quotes. Following a brief discussion Chairperson Taddei amended the motion to obtain quotes and designs from local and other artists that incorporate owls, a peace pole, a fishing child, and a duck. **Motion failed for lack of a second.**

G. City Tree Health Issues

Mr. Ames stated there are several Pine trees dying in the City and through a bore sample, it has been determined there are Bark Beetles present. He stated the beetles are prevalent due to drought conditions and most of the pine trees are infected. Soil testing was also done and the pH is too high. The best balance for pH is between 5 and 6 and the soil tested was around 8. He requested a friend with an agricultural background consult with helping Staff get the soil balanced. The Ash trees in Rose Park have been tested and it was determined there is too much saline in the water, dehydrating the trees. Following the consultant's recommendations, efforts are being made to save the trees through aerating methods and soil enhancements. Mr. Ames stated there are orange trees that may have reached their life-span and may need replacing, but Staff has been proactive with trying to rehabilitate as many trees as possible.

Chairperson Taddei asked if there is a plan to replace the trees with the beetles, what type of trees will go in their place, or will the trees be rehabilitated. Mr. Ames stated the dying trees are not savable and it is recommended they be replaced with native trees. Pines require a lot of water and are not meant to be in the desert climate. There are several native trees that can be chosen to replace them that are better acclimated to heat and dryer conditions.

Commissioner Fix asked if the pine trees can be carved in addition to the tree at the lake. Mr. Ames stated it is not recommended to carve them, due to the possibility of the beetles spreading to healthy trees.

V. RPGCOM Topics for Referral to City Council

There was no discussion on this item.

VI. Staff Report on Current Events

Mr. Ames reported the following for the Public Works Department:

- Crews are working on Scheduled Maintenance
- Regular sanitization of playground equipment
- Completed removal of Christmas decorations
- Exterior renovations of Recreation Center began
- Assist with Special Events
- Hired two new employees, Julia Compton and Raul Rivera

Ms. Kramer reported the following for the Community and Recreation Services Department:

- Christmas in the Park Festival held.
- Virtual Parade was successful and is available online for viewing.
- Synthetic ice skating rink was added to the event and a gingerbread competition.
- Mayor's reading of a Christmas story done virtually and available online for viewing.
- Aquatics team participating in Forums with other municipalities to discuss how to move forward this summer; no decisions have been made, due to COVID.
- Preschool offered virtual learning in November and December; In-person learning began

January 4th.

- Youth Sports moving forward with outdoor basketball for the winter season.

Chairperson Taddei asked Mr. McCoy to elaborate on the sports programs. Mr. McCoy stated the outdoor Basketball season began in the beginning of January and is going well. Registration for Spring Basketball, Soccer, and Spring Flag Football will remain open until the end of February. There are already 61 kids registered for Soccer and currently 235 kids registered for winter basketball. Chairperson Taddei asked how those numbers compare to last year, prior to COVID. Mr. McCoy stated the numbers are lower, but good when considering the pandemic.

Commissioner Culbreth asked for details on the improvements being done at the Recreation Center. Mr. Ames stated the perimeter wall is getting new stucco, the rusted rod-iron fencing surrounding the orange trees was removed, and the outside of the Recreation Center building is being repainted.

Commissioner Schwartz asked what the white striping around the lake is for. Ms. Kramer explained the Trout Derby is planned for January 23rd and striping was put down to ensure proper spacing of event participants. Registrations are available for 10'x10' spaces for individuals or families, up to four people. There will be six feet in between each space and there is a total of 100 spaces. The area in front of the condos will be blocked off as a restricted area. There will be an adult's session from 7:30 AM to 10:30 AM and a kid's session from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM, to ensure the crowd is controlled. Chairperson Taddei asked if additional Trout are added to the Lake in the afternoon for the kid's session. Ms. Kramer stated they put all the Trout in the lake several days in advance.

Mr. Williams welcomed the new Commissioners and stated the Open Meeting Law presentation from the Arizona Ombudsman will be sent to them, adding if they have any questions to reach out to him.

VII. Commissioners' Report on Current Events

Mr. Culbreth suggested the Commissioners watch the City Council meeting next week to learn about new information from Staff regarding City Center developments.

Chairperson Taddei asked when the State of the City will be held. Mr. Williams confirmed it will be held on February 13th, adding the presentation will be pre-recorded and a live Q&A will follow the showing of the presentation.

VIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Fix **moved, seconded** by Commissioner Dun to adjourn the regular meeting; **unanimous approval**. The meeting was adjourned at 8:16PM.

APPROVED:

RECREATION AND PUBLIC GROUNDS COMMISSION

Anthony Taddei, Chairperson