

## TUCSON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the Tucson Parks & Recreation Commission that the Tucson Parks & Recreation Commission will hold the following meeting, which will be open to the public.

**Wednesday, February 22, 2023**

Hybrid Meeting

In-person at the Tucson Parks & Recreation Administration Office, Mesquite Conference Room  
and Microsoft Teams Virtual

### 1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Steve Poe at 3:24 p.m. Those present and absent were:

**Present:**

Commissioner Azul Navarrete-Valera, Ward 1 Representative  
Commissioner Manon Getsi, Ward 2 Representative  
Commissioner Robin McArdle, Ward 3 Representative  
Commissioner Beki Quintero, Ward 5 Representative  
Commissioner Steve Poe, Ward 6 Representative

**Absent:**

**Staff Present:**

Lara Hamwey, Tucson Parks & Recreation  
Greg Jackson, Tucson Parks & Recreation  
Mike Hayes, Tucson Parks & Recreation  
Sierra Boyer, Tucson Parks & Recreation  
Dawnee Moreno, Tucson Parks & Recreation  
Diana Schroeder, Tucson Parks & Recreation

**Other:**

Jennifer Shopland, Friends of Rio Vista  
Antonio Ramirez, City Council Ward 1 Staff, Communications and Policy Director  
Rebecca Pallack, Constituent

### 2. Approval of Minutes: January 25, 2023 (Action Item)

**Motion was made by Vice Chair, Quintero duly seconded by Commissioner McArdle to accept the January 25, 2023, minutes as submitted. Motion was carried by 4-0. (There is no representation for Mayor and Ward 4)**

### 3. Call to the Audience

No one wished to address the commission.

**No action was taken.**

### 4. Landscape Service Provider (distributed in meeting packet)

Deputy Director, Mike Hayes spoke on the item and shared a Request for Proposal for contractor services. The document contained detailed information on Scope of Work and contract obligations. Mr. Hayes explained two different types of services, Mow-Only and All Inclusive. The mow only is done on several weekdays and is based on the various seasons as well as site specific stipulations. It was also mentioned

that the parks with restrooms are considered mow-only. The department services all the city park restrooms. Mr. Hayes spoke briefly about the reporting tool, SeeClickFix. SeeClickFix is a request and work management software program. Staff and the public can report issues and repair needs through the software program.

Commissioner Poe inquired about a request that was submitted for graffiti on poles located at an area near the Catalina High School swimming pool. Mr. Hayes made note of the information.

**No action was taken.**

5. Renaming of Christopher Columbus Park

Commissioner Navarrete-Valera provided a presentation on the “Renaming Christopher Columbus Park”. In addition, Ms. Navarrete-Valera spoke about the history of Christopher Columbus, and indigenous people. She also spoke about Danny Lopez, who was an educator and an elder protector of traditional Tohono O’odham culture and language. She added that Mr. Lopez made an impact on indigenous youth throughout Tucson and the Tohono O’odham Nation. Ms. Navarrete-Valera proposed renaming Christopher Columbus Park to Danny Lopez Park. Ms. Navarrete-Valera mentioned that there were 137 signatures received in support of renaming the park. The efforts to rename the park were shared on social media as well. There are more than 300 signatures supporting and counting.

**Commissioner Navarrete-Valera made a motion duly seconded by Commissioner McArdle to approve the renaming of Christopher Columbus Park to Danny Lopez Park.**

There was discussion.

Director Hamwey explained the renaming process in detail and made a recommendation to submit a letter of request for the renaming along with the letters of support, petition, and signatures. This will allow for the renaming process to begin and a 45-day public notice process to take place as well.

The board showed support for the renaming and decided to wait on fully executing the motion and vote to allow for the formal process to take place including a 45-day public notice.

**Commissioner Navarrete-Valera made a motion duly seconded by Commissioner McArdle to support the renaming process for Christopher Columbus Park to Danny Lopez Park. Motion was carried by 4-0. (There is no representation for Mayor and Ward 4)**

Executive Assistant, Diana Schroeder will email a copy of the renaming process to the board.

6. Santa Rita Park Project- Timeline

Deputy Director, Greg Jackson provided an update and reported that the design process will take approximately six or seven months which will take the project into December or January. Then there is a 60-day period for the bidding process. Construction will begin within 30 to 60 days after the contract is awarded for the bid which is sometime in March or April 2024. A map of the park with Phase I improvements was shared during the updates.

Commissioner Getsi asked how the homeless will be addressed.

Mr. Jackson explained that during the 60-day bidding process, the Housing and Community Development Department will start reaching out to park users as well as user groups to inform them that the park will be closed to start construction. People will be given 45–60-day notice.

Director, Hamwey added that the department will be working primarily with Brandi Champion Housing First Program Director as well as the Community Safety Health and Wellness Director, Sarah Lanius. The

groups started engagements in the park and leading up to the day that the park closes. In addition, there are care counselors that go to the park three to four times a week to talk about available assistance and provide opportunities for people to offer housing and other assistance. It is anticipated that TPD will help in the week leading up to the actual closure of the park. The Parks Department will assist with relocation of items if needed.

Commissioner Getsi asked if there is an opportunity for a commissioner to be involved or watch the process. Ms. Hamwey will share Ms. Getsi's interest with Amaris Vasquez, the Multi-Agency Resource Coordinator, and inquire about any volunteer opportunities and engagement. Ms. Vasquez leads the weekly homeless task force meetings. Director Hamwey mentioned that the Community Health and Safety Wellness group does periodically take people out with them to different locations that they are actively working in and try to encourage a housing option. Ms. Hamwey also spoke about the Wildcat Inn. The Wildcat Inn is a former hotel purchased by the City of Tucson and is open to homeless individuals. Ms. Hamwey will inquire about setting up a tour of the Wildcat facility involving the commission and department staff.

**No action was taken.**

#### 7. Reports / Announcements

##### a. Parks and Recreation Commissioners

Vice Chair, Quintero thanked the zoo for their big giant bug displays. All the bugs are animatronics and have life-like movements and sounds.

Commissioner McArdle shared inquiries on behalf of Ward 3 constituents. Constituents inquired about the shade structure in Mansfield Park and its funding. Constituents understood that Ward 3 was paying for the shade structures. Ms. Hamwey said that the department reinstalled a shade structure over the playground. All the wards are allocated a certain amount of discretionary funding. However, in the end, the funding did not come out of the Ward 3 budget. The department absorbed the cost. Ms. Hamwey continued to say that it was a project which was important for Ward 3 to see happen. It was not built into the budget for this particular year, and by default of them having the opportunity through that funding it was able to take place. There was also a separate constituent inquiry regarding diversity training and the kind of training staff receive. This inquiry is in recognition of new staff and something that was found offensive during a meeting. Ms. Hamwey said that she can check with the Chief Equity Officer regarding availability to participate in a meeting. Staff mentioned different training's that is offered to staff, and the focus currently is on mental health.

Commissioner McArdle requested that the subject is placed as an agenda item for the next meeting and the item to be named "Training and Shared Vision".

**No action was taken.**

##### b. Staff (distributed in meeting packet)

Deputy Director, Mike Hayes mentioned that the Tennis Contract has been finalized with the Tucson Tennis Management LLC. and effective on March 1. Tucson Tennis will manage the Refkin Tennis Center and Himmel Park Tennis Center. The Intelligence and Excellence Tennis organization will manage the Ft. Lowell Tennis Center effective February 1.

Ms. Moreno provided information on the March 25, Eggstravaganza event in Mansfield Park. The start time is 10:00 a.m. In addition, there is the virtual egg hunt which takes place March 10-20. Egg signs with QR codes are placed in different parks, and the public can scan the QR codes to enter to win a prize Ester basket.

**No action was taken.**

c. Director

The Director reported that there is the 2nd Anniversary celebration for the Ready, Set, Rec program at Himmel Park on Saturday, February 25 from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. In addition, the Ward 1 Office is hosting an open house on February 25 at the Fred Archer Center from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 pm. Staff from the Ward 1 Office will attend the meeting to share information about what projects that are happening in Ward 1 as well as the participatory budget initiative and to collect ideas. Ms. Hamwey will be participating in the activity as well.

Lifeguard recruitment is ongoing. The department will pay for swim tests and certifications. The Community Promotions and Marketing Manager, Sierra Boyer is working on a mailer which will be mailed to residents in a one-mile radius of those summer pools that struggle to get staffing. Ms. Hamwey reported that the department in conjunction with the Pima County Flood Control and Tucson Water Storm to Shade program to apply for an Arizona Forward Award. The awards are targeted on how municipalities are being mindful of climate action conservation. The award submittal is for the partnership of Seneca Park and Cherry Ave and merging GSI as a stormwater control within a park setting for the benefit of the community. The department has been invited to attend a dinner in April.

It was also mentioned that two senior positions, Aquatic Program Manager and Superintendent will be filled by March.

Chair, Steve Poe gave a shout out to Ready, Set, Rec. The team provided programming at an event in Mr. Poe's neighborhood in January. Mr. Poe said that they did a fabulous job.

**No action was taken.**

8. Commission Future Agenda Items and Next Meeting Date

a. Future Agenda Items:

Training and Shared Vision

**No action was taken.**

b. Next Meeting Date:

Wednesday, March 22, 2023, 3:30 p.m.

**No action was taken.**

c. Location:

Hybrid Format- In-person at the Tucson Parks & Recreation Administration Office, Mesquite Conference Room, 900 S. Randolph Way and Microsoft Teams Virtual

**No action was taken.**

9. Adjournment

**The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.**

**Motion was made by Vice Chair, Quintero, duly seconded by Commissioner McArdle to adjourn the meeting. Motion was carried by 4-0. (There is no representation for Mayor and Ward 4)**