

Parks, Recreation, and Forestry
Advisory Board
February 19, 2021 Minutes

Members in attendance were Chairperson Tom Rennick, Roman Jefferson, Kenneth Quigley (excused absence), Alan Klein, George Tripp, Lucia Story, Councilmember Arlina Yazzie, and Director of Parks and Recreation Dean Palmquist.

No guests were in attendance.

Chairperson Tom Rennick brought the meeting to order at 7:00 AM and welcomed everyone to the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Advisory Board Meeting.

Minutes from the September 18, 2020, and October 16, 2020, advisory board meetings were approved.

Old Business

A. Update on Urban Forestry Program – Dean shared that the 2021 parks maintenance budget has over \$7,000 that could go toward tree care and pest control. Roman Jefferson mentioned about the downtown maple trees needing some attention and some major pruning work to the larger trees at Centennial Park. It was discussed for Roman, Dean, and Mark Boblitt, park superintendent, to get together and assess tree priorities. Dean announced that Roman Jefferson has a new business venture called Legacy Tree Solutions and discussion ensued as to appropriate next steps in how the City can engage his tree services in a fair and ethical manner.

B. Update on South Neighborhood Park Project, including Status of City Financial Audits – Dean gave a brief update on the status of the South Neighborhood Park Project. Dean shared that he submitted a staff extension request to Great Outdoors Colorado to get the \$350,000 grant extended from a March 7, 2021, deadline to September 30, 2021. Dean mentioned as it gets closer to the September 30, 2021, deadline, he will submit a board extension request to Great Outdoors Colorado to get the deadline moved back to the end of 2022 or later, if needed. Dean said that he will also be submitting a project modification request to Great Outdoors Colorado, as the project team would like to accomplish other project goals for phase 1A than when the original grant application was submitted. Dean stated that the local housing authority changed their commitment from when the grant application was submitted and delayed any commitment from them until a later time. Due to that change, the Elm Street Extension and the east parking lot for the South Neighborhood Park was put on hold until a later phase in the project.

Dean stated that the City's 2016 financial audit has been completed and the work has been approved by the Council. He said that work has begun on the City's 2017 financial audit, and the City Finance Director is projecting that the City will get through

the 2019 financial audit by the end of 2021. Councilmember Arlina Yazzie verified what Dean shared with the advisory board members.

C. Other Old Business – None.

New Business

- A. Discuss Centennial Park Bandshell Project** – Dean gave a quick review of the site maps at Centennial Park for the bandshell project and how that would fit into the library expansion project. Dean shared that Veterans Park is also being considered as a site for the bandshell project. A majority of the advisory board members thought the bandshell project was a positive step forward for Cortez and appreciated that the Friends of the Bandshell group are going to provide the funding for the project. Due to the space limitations at Centennial Park and other amenity factors, Dean shared his preference of seeing the bandshell project at Veterans Park, but he also shared that he believes in process and letting that take its course to the outcome. Some concerns were shared by the advisory board members about having enough other capital projects needing the City’s attention to be completed, the bandshell providing a hangout for the homeless population, though Dean shared that the bandshell would have some type of security gate on the front of it, and having a meeting with the surrounding neighborhood residents to garner their input about the project being close to where they live. Dean requested for the advisory board members to consider other park locations for the bandshell project and send him an email with their suggestions.
- B. COVID Updates Relating to Facilities and Programs** – Dean shared that the parks and recreation outdoor facilities will be opening up with COVID protocols being encouraged but not enforced. He stated that the recreation center will remain in a limited capacity until we reach the Level Green on the Colorado COVID dial to ensure that our County will not revert back to a more restricted color. Dean gave a quick update regarding upcoming recreation programs being offered and the various sports leagues. Also, Dean discussed the Arbor Day Celebration with the advisory board members of not being able to hold a celebration at one location but at least trying to give out some promotional gifts to the fourth or fifth grade students recognizing Arbor Day.
- C. Montezuma Inspire Coalition Outdoor Rental Shed for Gear Lending Library** – Dean shared that the Southwest Youth Collaborative under the auspices of the Montezuma Inspire Coalition will be checking out outdoor equipment (camping gear, sports equipment, and lawn games) on the north side of the recreation center adjacent to the service lane once again this year when the weather gets decent outside.
- D. Other New Business** – Dean mentioned two other items of new business with the first one being a water management plan to obtain water shares at the start of the irrigation season for Denny Lake Park from the Bureau of Land Reclamation. Dean shared that he has requested 90 to 100 acre feet of water from the Bureau of Land Reclamation, if they have enough water allocation for their other jurisdictions. More will be known in

the coming months. The second item of new business was an update from Dean regarding assessed fees for landscaping maintenance services at Brandon's Gate and Rodeo subdivisions and an effort to get those services contracted out, where the park maintenance staff can be repurposed back into the park system and other community responsibilities.

The next regular meeting will be held on Friday, March 19, 2021, at 7:00 AM as a Zoom Meeting.

Adjournment—8:20 AM