

The Yuma County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission met in a regular session on October 9, 2019. The meeting was held at the Yuma County Public Works Training Room, 4343 S. Avenue 5 ½ E, Yuma, Arizona.

CALL TO ORDER: At 5:31 P.M., Commissioner Cavanaugh convened the Yuma County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission in open session.

Commissioner present were: Barbara Cavanaugh, Louie Galaviz, Tim Gilliland, Louie Gradias, Althea Evans and Judy Phillips, Gladys Anaya, and Rosalie Lines.

Commissioners Linda Elliot and Lorena Zendejas were absent.

Others present were: Improvement District Coordinator Rachel Stallworth and Community Planning Supervisor Nancy Ngai.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Cavanaugh led the Pledge of Allegiance.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

No. 1: Approval of meeting minutes for April 10, 2019.

MOTION (GALAVIZ/LINES) Approved as presented.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-0, with Commissioners Elliot and Zendejas excused.

No. 2: Elect New Vice-Chairperson for the Yuma County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission.

No legal action was taken. It was determined that Commissioner Galaviz will remain as Vice-Chairman. His only concern is the date for the meeting because it can often conflict with his need to attend City of San Luis Council Meetings.

No. 3: Discussion with Nancy Ngai on Grants availability for park usage.

Chairman Cavanaugh commented that this was one of the requests she had made for discussion, not only for the proposed new park, but also for the maintenance, upkeep and repair of the existing parks. Chairman Cavanaugh felt this would be a way to get money for these purposes – through grants.

Ms. Ngai stated that while she is not an expert in parks and rec grants, there are some available grants out there. The federal dollars are difficult to secure for existing parks, especially anything related to operations and maintenance of a park. Also there are matching requirements on the grants. The State grants require a 50% matching contribution - 10% cash investment and the remaining 40% can be “in kind” donations. Commissioner Lines questioned if that contribution would be coming from the County coffers or could it be matched from fund raisers? Ms. Ngai clarified that there is no stipulation in the grant as to where those funds come from, and, certainly, funds could come from fund raisers. Currently, there are no funds available for parks through the

County. The Commission could still go to the Board of Supervisors with a request for funding if they wanted to.

Commissioner Galaviz asked about the Heritage Fund that has recently been re-funded. Ms. Ngai commented it is not yet available and she was not sure of what the Arizona Heritage Fund's goals are going to be or what the criteria for securing those dollars will be. Commissioner Lines asked for clarification on the 10% donation – if the organization came up with 10%, would the grant fund the balance of 90%. Ms. Ngai explained that the grant would only fund 50% and the organization has to put up 10% in cash and 40% of in-kind donations. All the organization's hard contributions have to be made up-front. Volunteer laborers do not count.

Commissioner Galaviz commented on the Optimist Club and the playground equipment they were putting in. He referred to the \$17,000 to \$18,000 they were paying for the equipment installation and felt it would be good to be able to partner with them and expand what they were going to do as a project, but utilizing grant dollars to supplement it.

Chairman Cavanaugh asked about County's ability to apply for grants or does all the money have to come through a 501(C)3 non-profit? Ms. Ngai stated that would depend. With the Heritage Fund, the County could apply, it would be best to go through a non-profit. Ms. Ngai expressed the importance of starting out with a project and having your project laid out in detail, and not start with the funding first. Have a good idea of what it will take to develop the project and construction costs before asking for the grant dollars.

Chairman Cavanaugh commented that the big snag for getting organizations like Rotary involved, is the liability insurance. So, it appears to her that the only option they have is through a 501(C)3.

Commissioner Anaya asked if each project had to have its own insurance funding. Ms. Ngai explained that all the parks already have their own sponsors right now that provides overall liability insurance, so if you wanted to see something else added to the park i.e. a soccer field, you would need to talk with that park sponsor to get their buy-in.

Ms. Ngai explained about the Orange Grove/Rancho Mesa Verde Park is overseen by the Orange Grove School. They own the land, which was provided for the park development, but their priority is education, so maintenance oversight is not a big priority for them.

Commissioner Phillips asked if there were any service groups in the foothills and Chairman Cavanaugh responded that there are a few, such as Rotary.

Chairman Cavanaugh spoke about her discussions with the Foothills Library star-gazing group which is part of the Friends of the Library. They feel the area next to the library is really too small for a regular park that would include a dog park. It was commented that many feet there should be a separate area for a dog park in a separate location.

Commissioner Evans asked about the Rotary seeking grant funding. Is the County available to help them? Ms. Ngai said she is available to provide assistance. Commissioner Evans expressed that the process might be intimidating for some, and felt it might be nice to have some place they could go for help.

Commissioner Lines stated she felt the thing with the dog park is the liability and insurance, especially if you try to combine that with small children in the area.

A comment was made that the City's dog park has an age stipulation for children. The Commissioners voiced the desire to speak with other parks management and see how they feel about adding a dog park to their facilities and discuss all the hurdles they encounter on a daily basis. Commissioner Lines asked that we have someone come from the other parks to talk with them and have it added to the next meeting agenda.

Chairman Cavanaugh asked Ms. Ngai if she had heard of anyone getting a grant from the Sonoran Institute for urban development. She said she had not. Chairman Cavanaugh said she would check into that herself.

No legal action was taken.

No. 4: Discussion and possible action regarding the following items: a) the possible development of volunteer help at existing parks; and, b) the use of community contacts or processes to obtain funds for repairs and improvements at current park facilities.

Chairman Cavanaugh asked Commissioner Gradias about the Gadsen Park and whether he was able to utilize any volunteer help. Commissioner Gradias stated that he has used Adult Probation for help in the past but are not always available.

Commissioner Galaviz explained that they have used prison labor on many things, but there needs to be a contract. They will come out for special projects sometimes i.e. cleanups and such. You just need to request it through the board, and if approved, they will come out with 20-30 laborers for the day and do something big. They do not provide equipment of any kind, however. They are utilized by all the cities for additional labor assistance.

Questions came up about using Public Works staff for some of the work – was that possible? Ms. Stallworth explained that normally that is not done due to the restriction of how HURF dollars are utilized. HURF funding pays for the Public Works and Development Services staffing and processes in most areas.

Ms. Stallworth stated the Kiwanis Park in Tacna had some playground equipment issues, and they have established a “Go Fund Me” page to help them raise funds for the replacement of their slide. So, there are certain things you can do to help pay for park needs.

Commissioner Lines asked if individuals or companies with their own private insurance were able to volunteer their services for things like tree trimming, etc. and in exchange

for their services, receive a tax credit from the County or City. Ms. Stallworth explained that would need to be something that would have to be taken to the Board of Supervisors for consideration and that would take considerable discussion and legal advice. At this time there are no "tax credits" available from the County for these types of things.

Commissioner Gradias brought up the different groups that use the Gadsden Park. They have asked about using the lighting but who pays for that? How do you charge for that? Chairman Cavanaugh asked if they couldn't charge a fee to offset that? Commissioner Gradias explained that they do that already. It was discussed that any fee structure would have to be approved first of all by the Commission, then taken to the Board of Supervisors. Commissioner Gradias is working on the fee structure for consideration.

Commissioner Lines asked if they could have everyone sign a waiver to hold harmless. She asked if that wasn't something that could be done in their parks to offset liability issues. Commissioner Galaviz explained that the City of San Luis and probably the County in some cases does have signed waivers, but doesn't fully mitigate liability issue. He explained it is just up to the municipality how much risk they want to take. For that reason, they charge offsetting fees and restrictions on rentals. The Cities will often ask for a Certificate of Insurance naming the City as additional insured. Ms. Stallworth confirmed she would address this with legal to secure a better answer for them.

Commissioner Evans voiced her concern she was hearing nothing positive on the use of volunteer help, community contacts or ability to raise funds for repairs and improvements at the parks. She asked if there was anything they could say or recommend that they could look into? It seems we are saying all the negatives and all the things we can't do and not coming up with anything we can do.

Chairman Cavanaugh felt this would be a good discussion opportunity on the agenda to come up with something such as volunteer tree trimmers and such. Can we reach out to the community about needs within the parks? Commissioner Galaviz asked how would the County feel about the use of social media? He recommended everyone visit each of the parks, and talk with the caretakers and managers to determine what the real needs are. Then prioritize those needs to address in the future.

Commissioner Gradias commented the County had done a good job in getting quotes for repairs. They received some bids for tree trimming, the fence and the electrical. Electrical issues have been taken care of. But, where's the money to take care of the other things?

Commissioner Galaviz brought up the idea of sponsorships at the parks. Something that doesn't cost anything and might bring attention and revenue to the parks. Ms. Stallworth stated that had been utilized by the BMX organization in the past. The sponsorships are subject to County approval.

Ms. Stallworth asked that all the commissioners good ideas be written down to be reviewed at the next board meeting and they could decide which ones they would ask to present to the Board of Supervisors in the future, subject to legal review.

Ms. Stallworth recommended they ask a couple of the parks sponsors, such as Kiwanis and Optimist, to come in to talk with the commissioners about some of their challenges faced in overseeing their parks.

There was discussion between commissioners about a social media page for the Parks and Recreation Commissioner Phillips asked if Yuma County had a Facebook page that could be used by Parks and Rec. Ms. Ngai confirmed that Yuma County does have a Facebook page.

It was recommended the commissioners put together a list of all their projects and issues, prioritize them and rank them. Then they might think about choosing one or two only to work on and see it through instead of trying to do everything at once. Commissioner Galaviz agreed that they should do that.

No legal action was taken.

No. 5: Discussion and possible direction to staff on following items: a) Update on Proposed Foothills Park regarding location, amenities, oversight and management, strategy to expedite park request; and, b) Update on proposed dog park regarding location, oversight and management, and strategy to expedite park request.

Commissioners were questioning ownership of the land next to the Foothills Library. Ms. Ngai confirmed the land is owned by the County. She stated that anything that was developed there for a park needed to have a transportation component to it since the land was deeded from the Arizona Department of Transportation.

Chairman Cavanaugh felt the area does not seem to have enough room for a dog park, a walking path, and a green grassy area for a regular park with trees. Because the Foothills just does not have any trees, she felt it was important that a park have several trees. She also stated that it might be better to have a separate dog park and a separate regular park for the kids to use. She said there is currently a sign at the proposed location that says, "Future Yuma County Park".

Chairman Cavanaugh asked for everyone to put together their ideas for the foothills parks – a dog park or regular park. Commissioner Phillips stated she felt it was important that the agency be found that wants to maintain the park once it is built, otherwise it is dead in the water. Commissioner Galaviz supported Commissioner Phillips statement that if there is no agency to take this on for the future to pay the insurance and maintenance, then there is no sense in moving forward on this.

Commissioner Lines proposed partnership with various professions that cater to dogs, Commissioner Galaviz confirmed that during the winter there could a lot of support and

donation, but once it's done we still need the agency in place for insurance and on-going maintenance Ms. Stallworth spoke briefly about the possibility of separating the dog park from the regular family park, it may be easier legally and financially, to do that in order to get someone to take on the maintenance.

Commissioner Gradias spoke about the need to take care of the parks we already have. He stated he was not in favor of making more parks until we can take care of what we have, and considers that our big problem.

Ms. Ngai brought up the thought of the commission to think about not taking on projects, but concentrating on policy and social media support as a whole. Chairman Cavanaugh stated that one of the reasons the commission was reestablished was because of the need of a foothill park. Ms. Stallworth reminded the commission that support could come from other Rotary's and Kiwanis groups in Yuma, not just the foothills area and give all of them an opportunity to participate in a project like the foothills park. And, she confirmed it doesn't have to be a Rotary or Kiwanis, as it could be a private industry or business.

Chairman Cavanaugh asked if there was any more discussion on No. 5. Commissioner Lines asked if they could take a quick query to determine what time and day every one wanted for a meeting. Ms. Stallworth gave everyone the results of Bobby Lamberts survey from everyone. It resulted in a pretty even survey on the day, with five for Tuesday, five for Wednesday and five on Thursday, with two commissioners that had no reply. The request to review the dates and time will be added to the next agenda for possible change and decision.

Chairman Cavanaugh reminded everyone that there will be at least two individuals from two of the current parks, invited to speak to the commission about their specific purpose and needs.

Commissioners presented future agenda items for the next commission meeting.

No legal action was taken.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Approved and accepted this 13th day of November, 2019.

/s/ Barbara Cavanaugh

Barbara Cavanaugh - Chairman