

**REGULAR MEETING OF
THE COCONINO COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
PURSUANT TO A.R.S. § 38-431.02
May 6, 2021
4:00pm
Internet/Web Based Video Conference Call
Microsoft Teams**

Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm by Chair Steve Mongrain. Vice Chair Brian Blue and Commissioner Ellen Parish, Pam Foti, Howard Brown, Jean Marie Rieck, and Daniel Heil were present. Commissioner Mary Hendricks was excused. Staff in attendance was Cynthia Nemeth (Parks and Recreation Director), Mark Yarnall (Special Events Coordinator, and taking minutes Kayla Cooper (Administrative Specialist II).

2. Parks and Recreation Commission Purpose

The purpose in establishing the Coconino County Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC) is to provide a citizen body responsive to the communities and people of Coconino County and to recommend a policy regarding the development and operations of a well-balanced system of parks, programs, trails, and events.

3. Approval of the Minutes from Meeting March 4, 2021, April 1, 2021 & May 6, 2021

The March, April, and May minutes have been completed and are awaiting approval. The minutes will be approved in June.

4. Public Appearances/Introductions/Call to the Public

There were many members of the public present. They included the following members from Northern Arizona Healthcare; Chris Lininger- Director of Strategic Planning, Frank Adamo- Director of Communications, and Janniene Jones Verse- Chief of Strategy, Business Development & Marketing Officer. Other guests present included Julie Leid- Principle at Peak Engineering representing Coconino County, Kate Morley- Deputy General Manager for NAIPTA, Tiffany Antol- Planning Director with City of Flagstaff, Lucinda Andreani- Deputy County Manager- Coconino County, Tom Riggenbach- Executive Director of NavajoYES & Lena Fowler- Coconino County District 5 Supervisor.

New Business

1. Northern Arizona Health Inc. Presentation

Chris Lininger & Jannienne Jones Verse representing Northern Arizona Healthcare (NAH) presented a slideshow regarding the NAH Village project at Ft. Tuthill. The presentation began by explaining the reasons behind the new facility and the vision for this expansion. He explained that the current hospital is a 50-year-old facility located in highly trafficked area which has resulted in a lack of ambulatory services. This problem has created an urgency to have more access to healthcare and NAH has created an innovative plan to ensure affordable care for everyone. The NAH filed their rezoning application with the City of Flagstaff (COF) on April 30, 2021, which is still pending approval.

The new NAH Health Village vision contains three main concepts; creating a healthy lifestyle destination, creating a gathering place focused on wellness in a natural environment, and making the village accessible to all members of the community since 20% of current patients come from outside of the city limits. NAH emphasized that the new Health Village will be a wellness center and not just a place for the “sick”. The slideshow also outlined the layout of the Health Village with a map showing the high density and retail buildings towards the northside of the property thus to have a lower impact on the Ft. Tuthill Park. According to the map there will be a 30-acre nature preserve with trails and wildlife corridor to help ensure the Park stays protected as well as connected to the village. Chris ended his presentation outlining the timeline for this project; there will be high level timing, zoning, and planning in October/ November and then the City Council will meet on this in November/ December.

This presentation was then opened for a Q & A.

Commissioner Brown asked three questions: 1) Has there been discussion with the City of Flagstaff (COF) regarding De-Annexation? 2) What is NAH’s commitment to preserving the 30 acres outlined in the presentation? and 3) What is going to happen to the existing hospital downtown? Tiffany Antol explained that de-annexation can only occur between governmental agencies and is most often used to annex public parks. She also noted there would be no access to COF water and sewer because of de- annexation. Chris Lininger added that it is imperative to connect with the water and sewer from the City. As for the 30 acres of preserve, NAH is looking to have it zoned in a way that would require re-zoning for any type of development of that land. As for the current hospital, Lininger reiterated that the new replacement hospital will not be ready until 2026-2027 and that NAH does not intend to keep that old facility open as a second hospital at all. They plan to partner with the City of Flagstaff to plan the outcome and vision and how that facility will benefit the community.

Chair Mongrain asked if there will be access to the new health campus/village via Interstate-17? NAH stated they are working with the COF traffic department and it is no small feat. Lininger explained that they are still finalizing the impact, but that it is not a top priority at this time. With that, a full traffic impact analysis will be done summarizing both long- and short-term impacts. Chair Mongrain then asked if NAH could expand on what to expect regarding patients walking the ground at Ft. Tuthill. Lininger responded that the Emergency Department will be on the north end which will be the higher traffic end of the complex for all hours of the day. Patients will mostly use the north end preserve area and NAH has no intended use of Ft. Tuthill Park.

Chair Blue then asked two questions: Where will the helipad be located and what is the plan for the public transit to the new hospital complex? NAH responded that the helipad will be installed next to the Emergency Department, which will be located on the north side of the hospital building. The building has not been designed; therefore, it is unknown if the helipad will be on top of the building or on the ground. NAH has hired a consultant to study this aspect of design and development.

Chair Blue also requested that NAH not refer to their property or village as “Ft. Tuthill “. He also recommends that the hospital complex be both physically (ADA paths) and programmatically (health and wellness focused) integrated with the Parks and Recreation Department and Ft. Tuthill County Park offerings, and that NAH maintain the Parks and Recreation Committee be updated.

Tiffany Antol, the Planning Director with the City of Flagstaff then explained the concept of zoning and how it pertains to the NAH project, which is undergoing a change from rural-residential to a regional activity center. The process will involve the crafting of a specific plan which will allow the COF to create specific development standards for the new hospital. At a future meeting Tiffany will provide the Parks and Recreation Committee with an in-depth review of the COF Regional Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, and the changes NAH is requesting.

Director Nemeth then opened conversation with the Commission members regarding the NAH plan. The following concerns were listed; concerns with the road system, the 30 acres of preserve, and what challenges “snow play” will bring when the new health village is completed.

Due to technical difficulties with the next presentation from NavajoYES, Commissioner Brown requested we move on to Commissioner’s reports at 5:10PM while we wait for guest Tom Riggenbach- Executive Director of NavajoYES to call into the meeting.

2. Trails on the Navajo Nation

Tom Riggenbach representing NavajoYES presented information about the organization and the current projects happening within the organization. NavajoYES has been involved with trail restoration and promotion for over 10 years. The trail teams provide ongoing maintenance of the trails along with restoration work and trash abatement. Some areas that they have worked on include Rainbow Trail to Rainbow Bridge, Twill Falls,

and a plethora of other trails in Arizona and Utah. A specific project that the NavajoYES team is currently working on is the Rail-Trail Development between Black Mesa and the community of LeChee. Tom then explains that this project is in the planning and discussion stages and that this 80-mile-long corridor will bring benefits such as community wellness and tourism. This presentation was then opened for a Q & A.

Chair Mongrain asked if the area around coal Mine Canyon or the Hopi Reservation have any plans for trail development. Tom Riggerbach explained that both areas are being discussed by the organization.

Director Nemeth thanked Riggerbach for the presentation and invited him to meet our staff especially the trails and natural resources staff. She also congratulated him for the work he has put into the trail development thus far.

5. Upcoming Board of Supervisor Agenda Items*

May 25, 2021 at 3:00pm – Northern Arizona Healthcare parcel near Ft. Tuthill

June 2021 – Amphitheater Management Contract

Placeholder Agenda Items*

Pending Date/Time – Capital Funding, Priority Projects, and Future Funds

Pending Date/Time – Fort Tuthill North Entrance Access (work session)

Pending Date/Time – Fort Tuthill Winter Activity & Frontiere RFPs (discussion)

**Confirm agenda item dates and times before attending. Board agenda is subject to last minute changes.*

Reports (10 Minutes)

1. Director's Report

Director Nemeth's report included updates on two Parks and Recreation positions being filled including the Trades II, and Administrative Specialist II positions. She also explains that the Assistant Director position should be posted soon. With that she announced that event season is here. We also met with the Health Department regarding capacity at events and hosting them safely and will be meeting with the Board of Supervisors this week regarding our budget. We submitted five service improvement requests and we received three out of the five. Funds are being requested to repair a water leak as well as repairing the two large parking lots at Ft. Tuthill and installing sewer to the campground. Lastly the restroom project has been approved and construction should begin early June.

2. Commissioner's Report

There were no Commissioner's reports.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56pm.

Notice:

Next Friends of Coconino County Parks Meeting: May 13, 2021, Microsoft Teams

Next Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting: June 3, 2021, Microsoft Teams

**Coconino County
Parks & Recreation Commission**

**Coconino County
Parks & Recreation Department**

Steve Mongrain

Steve Mongrain, Chair

Kayla Cooper

Kayla Cooper
Secretary to the Commission