

**REGULAR MEETING OF
THE COCONINO COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
PURSUANT TO A.R.S. § 38-431.02
August 5, 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 Commissioners Ellen Parish, Howard Brown and Mary Hendricks were present. Commissioners Pam Foti, Daniel Heil and Jean Marie Rieck were excused. Staff in attendance was Cynthia Nemeth (Parks and Recreation Director) 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 June 3, 2021

June Minutes were approved with corrections.

4. Public Appearances/Introductions/Call to the Public

Liz Krug (Parks and Recreation Community Relations) and Ricky Conway (Parks and Recreation Fair Manager) were present.

New Business

5. County Fair Update (10 Minutes)

Fair Manager Ricky Conway gave an update on the 2021 Coconino County Fair. On June 2nd the decision to have an in-person Fair was made. Ricky explained that the Fair just finished selling online early bird tickets and that early bird sales are up this year compared to 2019. Ricky then stated that all the entertainment had been booked, scheduled and advertised and that all updates regarding entertainment can be found on the Fair website and Facebook

page. He then went over general information and where the COVID 19 protocols are located on the webpage and opened the topic for a Q & A.

Vice Chair Blue asked a few questions; First he asked if the amphitheater was being used during the Fair, in which Ricky answered that it will not be used. Vice Chair Blue then asked if there will be a bike corral. Ricky stated that yes, there will be a bike rack at the entrance gate only. Vice Chair Blue then asked if the campgrounds will be open during the Fair, and Ricky answered yes. Lastly, Vice Chair Blue asked whether masks will be required indoors or outdoors, and if masks will be available for attendees. Ricky responded that masks will be required indoors only and will be available for attendees at all the buildings and the info booth.

Director Nemeth then recognized Ricky and the Parks and Recreation team. Director Nemeth explained that this event brings over 40,000 people to Fort Tuthill Park and that it takes tremendous effort to implement.

Next, Chair Mongrain asked if COVID-19 could cause the Fair to be cancelled. Ricky stated that Parks and Recreation has not discussed that possibility with the Board of Supervisors and that they will meet with Health and Human Services in the following week on the topic.

Director Nemeth added that while it could happen, she believes that with the county vaccination numbers we are in a good position to keep the Fair in person this year and on schedule.

6. Community Parks and Recreation Assistance (30 minutes)

Director Nemeth explained how this topic ties into the County's Master Plan. One thing expressed in the master plan was that the Parks and Recreation department help other communities with their recreation needs. The department will specifically offer advice and technical expertise to these communities. Director Nemeth then went over two communities that we are assisting. We are currently engaged with Forest Lakes and Parks. Forest Lakes is looking for a small park with ramadas to be developed. As for Parks, we helped Parks create a survey for the community's desires regarding recreation activities and opportunities. Through the survey we found that specifically individuals with children were excited for the possible additions to the community. This potential project is still being discussed with the town of Parks, and our Parks and Recreation Department is still assisting through sending grant opportunities to help fund these future projects. Director Nemeth then asked the commissioners for their input regarding how to proceed with this.

Vice Chair Blue stated that he does not wish to close this effort yet; He would like to meet with the Principal Williams and see if there is any energy in the community for this.

Commissioner Parish seconded Vice Chair Blue's opinion. She then added that if the help is not backed by the community that we must respect that.

Director Nemeth added that she also would like to meet with the Principal Williams along with Vice Chair Blue. Vice Chair Blue will set up a meeting.

Next, Liz Krug from Parks and Recreation Community Relations updated the Commissioners on the department's engagement with Forest Lakes. At the end of February 2021, she started communication with the Forest Service Ranger in that district. Through communication she found that the community of Forest Lakes is very interested in developing a Small 4-acre segment of land for a park to include ramadas and pickle ball specifically. She found that the ranger was receptive to possibly creating a special use permit for these 4 acres. The County or the adjacent community could apply for this special use permit. Krug then explained that there were some concerns voiced throughout the communication but that the Forest Lakes ranger is interested in meeting with Parks and Recreation to see what to do next. The topic was then opened for a Q & A.

Director Nemeth asked Krug to explain the safety concerns mentioned in her update. Krug explained that the concerns mentioned included concerns from the Coconino County Sheriffs office. Their concern is that by making it a fuller recreational experience it would cause traffic issues and nuisance factors in that area.

Vice Chair Blue then asked how we can be discussing a special use permit if we do not have a specific vision yet. Krug explained that the permit was the recommendation from the Forest Service based on what the community is looking for.

Commissioner Parish then asked if she would explain the specific safety concern. She responded that the traffic issues were the concern and that was the main issue.

Commissioner Parish then added that all the people that were camping in the forest during fires season were being kicked out and needed places to go. City and County parks became parking lots, and she could see that being of concern in Forest Lakes.

7. Future PRC Meetings (10 Minutes)

Director Nemeth informed the Commission that future meetings will be held on Microsoft Teams. The commissioners agreed with that decision.

8. Ellen Parish (10 Minutes)

Commissioner Parish updated the Commissioners on Recreation ethics and events pertaining to that topic. The SUMMIT event is coming up that is put on by Diablo Trust. It is a 3-day event this year, and they have had a huge response. They have some great speakers and hopefully they will come up with some good ideas and increase the relationships it takes to make a difference.

Director Nemeth then asked Commissioner Parish to explain more about the Diablo Trust group. Commissioner Parish explained that Diablo Trust was formed by two ranches in the early 1990's. They work to involve the community in community-based land stewardship process in order to maintain that land as open space for everybody.

9. Louise Yellowman County Park (10 Minutes)

Director Nemeth explained that this park has been closed for the last year and a half. Parks and Recreation met with Health and Human Services who met with the Navajo Nation regarding how they felt about opening their parks. There has been no interest in opening the Louise Yellowman County Park in Tuba City this past year. When the other parks opened this year, there was initially interest from the Chapter House in July, but then as other Chapter members started speaking up, there was a greater number of individuals who were not in favor. Next, they decided to implement a Survey to be sent out to Tuba City residents regarding this park reopening but the COVID-19 Delta variant has caused the survey to be put on hold.

Chair Mongrain then asked if there has been any discussion at all on Tuba City of the Chapter taking ownership of the park. Director Nemeth stated that the community is very challenged with staffing of police officers for that area.

10. Upcoming Board of Supervisor Agenda Items*

Placeholder Agenda Items*
Pending Date/Time

**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 explained that Parks and Recreation currently has 3 Requests for Proposals that she is working on. One for Frontiere, one for Winter Attractions, and the last for building use at Fort Tuthill. We are going strong with special events at Fort Tuthill with big events happening weekly. The restroom project is taking place and walls are going up. As for staffing updates Director Nemeth explained that the Assistant Director position is still open, and they are currently accepting applications. They are also interviewing for the Recreation Coordinator position and that there are 3 trades worker vacancies. Director Nemeth then explained that Parks and recreation has started their cost recovery assessment and fee updates. Lastly, Director Nemeth shared that the Sawmill Park name change event will be held on October 2nd, 2021.

Vice Chair Blue then asked if anything is happening at the Campground and if there have been and updates or plans made. Director Nemeth explained that no not at this time.

2. Commissioner's Report

Vice Chair Blue asked the commissioners if they know who oversees restoring the informational panels at the view points up at Jacobs Lake. Director Nemeth stated that she could find out from the County Public Works Department.

Commissioner Hendricks wanted to give kudos and thanks to Parks and Recreation for helping ensure the 2021 horse events went over smoothly.

Chair Mongrain mentioned he will be attending a Rail to Trail forum regarding the railroad corridor that has been turned over to the Navajo Nation to discuss the next steps and potential trail system.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM.

Notice:

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

Next Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting: November 4, 2021, Microsoft Teams

**Coconino County
Parks & Recreation Commission**

Steve Mongrain

Steve Mongrain, Chair

**Coconino County
Parks & Recreation Department**

Kayla Cooper

Kayla Cooper
Secretary to the Commission