

**CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

MINUTES

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

6:30 p.m.

VIRTUAL MEETING

Join via Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82910769205>

Commissioners Present: Pat Cervera, Kathy Koniz, Nikki Larsen, John Route, Chris Schilling, and Karen Stanley

Commissioners Absent: Cambria Rollo

Guests: None

Staff Present: Karen O'Donnell, Parks & Recreation Director

Item 1 – Determination of Quorum & Call to Order

In the absence of Chairperson Rollo, Director O'Donnell called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Item 2 – Introductions – Members and Guests

Director O'Donnell welcomed everyone to the meeting. No guests were present.

Item 3 – Approval of Minutes

Director O'Donnell moved to approve the meeting minutes of January 9, 2022, as written. Commissioner Cervera approved the motion, Commissioner Larsen seconded it, all accepted and approved.

Item 4 – Unfinished Business

None.

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Item 5 – New Business

Upcoming City Council Meeting - Parks and Recreation Items

- ***February 28th – appointment of new board/commission members***

Director O'Donnell reported that one new commission member has recently been appointed, possibly two. They will be introduced at the March meeting. The director and Chair Rollo will be meeting to discuss how to improve the onboard process for new commission members.

Director O'Donnell stated this item was not on the agenda, but they recently received approval for a Jefferson County Open Space grant agreement. For Clear Creek Trail, they have received \$196,000 for improvements and that's a 50% match. They will do 25% if it's a local grant and if it has a regional impact, they'll do 50%. Some of the renovations would incorporate taking three segments of the trail that are currently asphalt and changing those over to concrete. This would also include adding some safety signage/elements for improving that area. In May 2021, we had a group from the Sustainable Wheat Ridge Transportation Subcommittee do a presentation and they discussed at that meeting having more signage regarding this program as well.

- ***Future unscheduled items: approval of contract for Open Space Management Plan & The Green at 38th***

Director O'Donnell discussed another item that just took place and not on the agenda was an Open Space Management Plan contract. They have received proposals from five different organizations that will be reviewed by the subcommittee. They will be meeting on Tuesday to go through the scores and move forward with whether they want to proceed with conducting interviews or if there's a clear winner regarding the submissions.

The Green at 38th is now in the hands of the school district. They stated that they will need to figure out what their funding and timeline commitments are before they can move forward. For example, the parking lot portion would have to happen in the summer, so that would be the summer of 2023 because there is not enough time to get through the design at this point. So, we are waiting for their final commitment from the school district before we can move forward with presenting ideas to City Council to create a final design. Updates will be provided when more information becomes available.

Parks, Forestry & Open Space Update (Zach Lovato, Manager of Parks, Forestry & Open Space)

Director O'Donnell reported that Zach Lovato was not able to join the meeting but hopefully will do so for the meeting next month to provide updates.

Prospect Park is 20% completed regarding the renovations. With weather delays, the plan to open on March 1 was not possible but will open in a month for athletics; will have to find other soccer practice fields but that should not be a problem. Also, with all the renovations taking place, it will be difficult moving baseball elsewhere, but that issue is being worked on.

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Prospect Park, Open Space Management Plan, Nature Play Area, Disc Golf, etc.

Director O'Donnell stated that Zach Lovato can provide an update next month on the Nature Play Area as there were questions about it at the last meeting.

Regarding Disc Golf, we are working through a contract with the city attorney right now to see if we can proceed accordingly with the individual that wants to make the donation. The city was trying to work through the contract where that individual would be responsible for the construction installation, repairs, and replacements over time. The attorney indicated the best solution would be if we took over that element of it because it is not feasible to have a private entity owning and operating something on public property. So, given this, it is best that we move forward in accepting the donation and the initial construction. Then we will manage it from there which is fine as it will be a small cost for repairs and replacement of those items as needed.

Item 6 – Staff Updates

- **Public Art Update**

Director O'Donnell discussed the Clear Creek Crossing art piece. The artist, Tiimo Mang, is now under contract and will be doing the art piece which is named Agrarian Calling. The artwork will be a tall piece that resembles a silo with steel pieces hanging down and will act as a wind chime. It will be located in a place where people can sit, reflect and will be interactive. For people that have a visual impairment, they can still enjoy that piece of art because it will have sound elements. There will be the visual elements if a person is hearing impaired and will also have the ability to make the piece accessible so anyone can enjoy it. Also, if there is any interest to be on a Public Art Selection Committee, to let her know. They just formed the committee for the Wadsworth Widening project.

In addition, there is a person that would like to donate a piece of art to the city. According to their Public Art Management Plan, this would have to go through a Public Art Acquisition Committee to review the proposal. Then they would have the Cultural Commission make a determination. The director stated that she is interested in taking on this venture and if anyone else is interested, to let her know. Commissioner Cervera volunteered, and they will obtain additional people from other groups in the community to select a committee.

- **Land Acknowledgement**

Director O'Donnell discussed this topic and would like to form a committee to work on a plan and will also be reaching out to organizations for any interest as well. Commissioners Larsen and Stanley volunteered to be on the committee.

- **Community Garden Visioning**

Director O'Donnell reported that as part of the city's Regenerate Wheat Ridge Program, City Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes
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Council Representative Amanda Weaver expressed her vision to have community gardening. So, there is a need to get some community members together to work on this. Especially after acquiring the Gray Street property, they are hoping to use that space for a community garden if that is what the community would like. For the overall vision for Wheat Ridge, it would make good use of that space and how we can incorporate the history of agriculture would be great from that perspective.

- **National Recreation & Park Association 30 Under 30**

Director O'Donnell stated that this association is a national organization and last year they nominated their staff person Brandon Altenburg for this as he does tremendous work for the community and the department. With that in mind, we are very pleased to announce that he was selected for this award. It is a great achievement, so please congratulate Brandon next time you see him. He will also provide some grant updates at our next meeting.

Item 7 – Future Agenda Items

- **School of Mines Project Summaries – March 2022**

Director O'Donnell stated that students from the School of Mines are working on some projects for the Parks and Recreation Department. They will be doing a presentation at next month's meeting for the commission.

- **Prospect Lake Water Quality**

No updates were provided.

Item 8 – Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Route: No comments.

Commissioner Larsen: No comments.

Commissioner Cervera: There were people working at Prospect Park, kind of surprised.

Commissioner Schilling: After talking to quite a few people, he stated with the dog park in mind at Fruitdale Park, there is a problem by the entrance, which is a big mud pit right now. Director O'Donnell will check on that issue. Also, can the city help facilitate the Neighborhood Watch Program by sending out notices to citizens to "clean up your yard." There are property owners with tons of trash in their yards and asked what can be done about getting all that cleaned up. Commissioner Larsen stated that Community Services can assist by contacting them.

Commissioner Stanley: Since I am volunteering for so many things, could you add me to the list for the community gardens since Happiness Gardens is right down the street from me. Also, if it is not too late, I would like to submit my comments for the strategic action plan.

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Commissioner Koniz: No comments.

Item 9 – Adjournment

With no further business, Director O'Donnell adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.