



**RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD  
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING  
Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Board Members in Attendance:**

**Chairman Bob Pierce, Vice-Chair Todd Dunnuck, Megan Archer, Helen Hyatt, Dean Pistor, Pat Dennehy, Sheneika Smith, City Council Liaison Keith Young.**

**Staff in Attendance: Roderick Simmons, Debbie Ivester, Lauren Sexton, Christy Bass, Sandra Travis, Allison Dains, Dee Black, Pete Wall, Al Kopf.**

Meeting called to order at 12:34pm.

**1. WELCOME NEW RAB MEMBERS**

Chair Bob Pierce welcomed new Board Members Sheneika Smith and Megan Archer. Sheneika introduced herself as born and raised in Asheville, believes in the connectivity and community parks. Megan has lived in Asheville for three years and is working on a master's degree in Parks and Recreation.

**2. RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING RAB MEMBERS**

The Chair recognized outgoing board members Forrest Merithew and Laura Carlson for their service. Their commemorative tiles will be mailed to them.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Bob asked for additions or corrections to the Minutes from April RAB meeting. Todd motioned to approve them as written, Dean seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**a. Visioning Work Session**

**Goals:** Bob called for a motion to approve the RAB goals which will be followed by a report by Council Liaison Keith Young on the City Council retreat. Helen Hyatt made the motion, Dean Pistor seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**City Council Retreat Report:** Council Liaison Keith Young distributed the City Council's 2036 Vision Plan. He relayed that Council changed how they normally run the retreat and developed the 2036 Vision Plan, with the top priority of creating a diverse community. Their goal is to make Asheville more inclusive and diverse. Parks and Recreation has always been a major part of the community. His goal is to separate Parks and Recreation to determine its current purview and what tools and resources are needed. Besides Asheville City Schools, Parks and Recreation caters to the most minorities in the community. City Council approved \$60,000 for a Parks and Recreation assessment. Next fiscal year Parks and Recreation will have a strategic work plan to help Council identify what

the Parks and Recreation Department needs moving forward and what Council wants Parks and Recreation to do. We want to make sure we are achieving racial equality. Council will hold work sessions to review and budget accordingly, with a zero budget moving forward. Pat asked how the decision will be made to move forward, will you take community input. Keith stated the number one goal is to create a racial equality tool kit where Council will look through all City policies and how they affect the City as a whole, and how that affects racial equality. Hopefully this will get underway when the next budget is approved.

**b. Fees & Charges Study Work Session.** Debbie reminded the board of the Fees and Charges Work Session with the Finance Committee on May 17, 12:30-2:30. Please RSVP if you plan to attend. Another follow up will occur prior to the work session. Keith stated it is the same day the City goes to court for the water dispute. The Finance Committee are asking to possibly move the work session meeting.

### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **a. RAB Officer Nomination and Appointments.**

Vice Chair: Bob stated that Todd is willing to serve as Vice Chair again, and that Dean and Helen are also willing to serve in the position. The Chair opened the floor for discussion. Dean and Helen agreed for Todd to accept the position. Dean motioned to elect Todd as Vice Chair. Helen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair: Bob stated he is willing to continue to serve as Chair if no one else wants the position. Pat motioned to elect Bob as Chair. Todd seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **b. RAB BYLAW REVIEW**

Debbie recommends the Board review its bylaws, which according to the bylaws, should be reviewed annually after officer appointment. A review has not occurred on a regular recurring basis and some sections are out of date. Todd suggested that he and Bob review as part of their regular planning meeting that occurs prior to each board meeting. Helen asked about the Board's orientation material. Roderick stated updated information will be made available. New board members receive information that is up to date. Bob asked the board to submit any updates to him and he will get them to Debbie.

### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **5. Director's Report**

Montford Center Complex: The Montford Neighborhood Association contacted a RAB member expressing concern how different groups that have an impact on the design of the Montford Center Complex. The Department is meeting with them next week and will give RAB an update at its next meeting.

Beaucatcher Greenway: The City is moving forward with construction documents for the Beaucatcher Greenway and will present to City Council at a meeting in November, with construction to begin by next March.

Fees and Charges: Roderick made a presentation on Equity and Fees to explain the equity of fees in preparation for the Fees and Charges Work Session on May 17.

Dean asked how decisions regarding equity have been made up to this point. Roderick explained the department tries to be efficient, but once something is offered it is hard to start or change it without the community feeling something away from them. In the past we've tried to keep equity the same but the value should be appropriate to the given situation. A resident based model is focused on needs verses a market driven model which is focused on ability to pay. Opinion based models are used by most cities that focuses on what the public wants and needs. In the professional judgement model staff judges what needs to be done based on professional opinion. Income based verses outcome base, there is no best choice. It is a community based thing, and what the community wants based on which model that is chosen. Parks and Recreation does not have a set policy on equality but we try to achieve that as professionals. We are trying to expose more people to services so that everyone has access, but policies will create consistency.

Sheneika stated she was happy to have the discussion on equity, and she feels this conversation will help cultivate change. Bob stated if you raise the money in other sources, does this just involve City funds or does it include other government funding. Roderick pointed out the issue is more than just funding, it is whether the City is being fair and equitable to the community. If we spend money on community input, we have to stick to our master plan and try to incorporate what the community as a whole is telling us, not just one group within that group. Dean asked if we should include the equality statements into the Recreation Advisory Board Bylaws, we could use verbiage like 'racial equity lens'. Roderick stated the department is changing its mission statement to create a fluid model to make sure it is serving current needs to the community. Keith stated Council and Mayor has made Parks and Recreation a priority to make sure things get allocated appropriately. Roderick reiterated that the work session on May 17 is very important and asked Board members to please make sure they attend. This is a change in how we set fees and services, and emphasis is needed in the department moving forward.

John B Lewis Soccer Complex and Carrier Park Roller Hockey: Dean asked for an update on the soccer field discussion by the Public Safety Committee, and on the roller hockey rink replacement. The Public Safety Committee approved going forward with crumb rubber turf product and moving forward to construction. The goal is to complete the project in time for the summer soccer schedule but must be done by November. The department will ask for community input for the turf at Memorial Stadium to consider an alternative turf material since it is not in the floodway. The Carrier Park multipurpose building contract was approved by City Council. The roller hockey resurface contract will be considered at the next Council meeting. Carrier Park is one of the highest traffic facilities and we need to move forward.

Dean brought the subject of AirBNB before the Board. There is an upcoming vote by City Council on AirBNB and asked if the Board can make a recommendation. Roderick stated mentioned he was concerned how this is related to the goals of Parks and Recreation. Dean replied there is a tie in, in that people from out of town coming and taking away from our parks. He asked for a discussion on zoning around parks so we can communicate the concerns to City Council. Helen stated she agrees regarding the zoning and it is a security concern for parks because they come into town on Fridays and the homes sit empty the rest of the time so there is no community watch on the parks. Transient housing is not good. Bob agreed it is detrimental to the community model Roderick described earlier about creating and getting investment from the community. Bob asked if the Board want to make a statement to the City Council. Keith stated personally he feels the Board should be cautious using its first entrance to City Council on the topic of the fabric of the neighborhoods, but stated the Board is free to do as it pleases. Todd agreed with Keith and stated he feels this is

inserting personal values into the Board. It is not being brought to the Board by the public. Dean countered it is relevant based on the equity presentation, because the less people there are in houses, the less people to invest in the parks. Todd replied he's not sure this is the best approach to bring the subject before City Council. Dean definitely wanted it noted there has been a decline in the use of parks as these types of rentals increase. Todd recommended reaching out via email as a citizen rather than using the board for a personal platform. Bob asked Keith his opinion on how or if the Board should approach this issue in an official stance. Keith recommended the proper way to address this is to present a position statement to City Council. Bob stated he felt it may be best to bring our opinion to the board individually as citizens. Dean asked if the request could be to ask City Council look at economic impact the rentals have on parks and the recreation facilities. Sheneika recommended making a position statement with a focus on the effect to the community. Bob added the Board should state how gentrification has effected community access to services. Dean phrased the position statement as follows: We recommend that Council consider the impact of short term rentals and gentrification on the use and economic impact on our parks facilities and programming and participation.

Pat asked what is happening on with this situation. Dean stated as a real-estate person he sees people from California buying homes sight unseen and turning them into Airbnb rentals. He stated it can be detrimental to the community. Dean made a motion to approve the position statement, Helen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

RAB bylaws review.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 1:51 p.m.