



**MINUTES**  
**Parks and Recreation Advisory Meeting**  
**Recreation Center**  
**November 12, 2015**

**Present**

Derek Benavides - Parks Chairperson	Anisa Gonzalez - Member
Tito Mata – Member	Myrta I. Garza - Member
Damaris McGlone – Parks Director	Carlos Velica – Parks Staff
Araceli Sandoval – Parks Staff	Rogelio Gonzalez - citizen

**Absent**

Jerry Hatley – Member	Dillon Vanderford - Member
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**1) Meeting called to order by Parks Chairperson Mr. Derek Benavides at 12:10 p.m.**

**2) Approval of minutes**

- Minutes of last meeting (October 01, 2015) approved on a motion by Mr. Tito Mata, seconded by Mrs. Myrta Garza, motion carried.

**3) Chairperson's Report**

- Commented on a couple of things he would like to discuss. Also wanted to take this time as a board member and speaking on behalf of the rest the Parks Advisory Board members to thank all the Veterans for their service.
- Had a question regarding Dean Porter Park splash pad and access to it. Notice that it is close more often than being open, can we find a way to have it open to the public. Parks Director commented that the splash pad area is only open during the summer, we are in the process of fixing the pump and Cory Vander Veen our Assistant Parks Director is working on the splash pad area to secure it and having that area open to the public.
- The second question the Parks Chairperson had was the availability of getting plats for the Brownsville Golf Center course. Parks Director ask him if he could send her an email to remind her and she would do her best to send him the information as soon as possible.
- Ask Board members that the next Parks board meeting is in 2 ½ weeks and wanted to know if they would like to have it on December 03 or wait until the following meeting in January. After a brief discussion among the Parks Board members, all were in agreement to have to it on December 03, 2015.

#### **4) Discussion Period (15 minutes)**

##### **A. Discussion and Action item for a revolving schedule of assigning Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members to attend City Commission meetings. (Derek Benavides)**

Parks Chairperson recommended to have the item tabled and review the schedule starting in January 2016 but suggested of focusing of having a Parks Board member attend City Commission meetings to discuss with City Commissioners items that have been approved by the Parks Advisory Committee at the Parks meeting.

##### **B. Action item to approve a group photo of the Parks Advisory Board members. (Tito Mata)**

Board member Mr. Mata suggested that it would be nice if they had a group photo taken of the Parks Advisory Board Committee, to let the community know that there is a Parks Advisory Committee for Parks. It was suggested of having the photo taken at Dean Porter Park at the next Parks Advisory meeting. After a brief discussion, a motion by Mr. Mata, seconded by Parks Chairperson Mr. Benavides, motion carried to have a group photo taken at the next Parks Advisory meeting in December.

##### **C. Discussion and Action item to have one Parks Advisory Board member attend an event or function to represent the Parks Advisory Committee (Tito Mata)**

Board member Mr. Mata commented that he has attended several events and it would be nice to have a board member attending any event representing the Parks Advisory Board Committee for support. Parks Chairperson Mr. Benavides commented that they will make every effort to attend a function and/or event. After a brief discussion, on a motion by Parks Chairperson Mr. Benavides, seconded by Mr. Mata, motion carried to have a Parks Advisory Board member attend an event or function.

##### **D. Consideration and Action to vote on an application to select a park for the 2016 Lone Star Legacy Park (Damaris McGlone)**

Parks Director Damaris commented that our Grants Writer, Sandra De Leon was going to do a presentation on the Lone Star Legacy Park but was unable to attend at the last minute. Basically the application is for a park that holds special prominence in the local community and the state of Texas. The purpose of the designation is to recognize what a parks means to a particular community. The Legacy Parks criteria must be at least 50 years old and be designated as a public park. What I need from the Parks Advisory Board is to vote on a park and we have select two parks that meets the criteria, one being Dean Porter Park and the other is Washington Park. Board member Mrs. Garza recommended Dean Porter Park being that it has a lot of Historical significant. Board Member Mrs. Gonzalez agreed with Mrs. Garza as selecting Dean Porter Park. Parks Chairperson wanted to know what is the city's recommendation, Parks Director commented that if you go distance wise and being the oldest, that would be Washington Park. After a brief discussion, on a unanimous vote, it was decided to select Dean Porter Park. On a motion by Mr.

Benavides, seconded by Mr. Mata, motion carried to have Dean Porter Park selected for the 2016 Lone Star Legacy application.

**E. Discussion on enforcement of rosters in softball (Derek Benavides)**

Parks Chairperson commented that there are some issues that we face with rosters in softball at the Brownsville Sports Park but by stating that, the Gentleman at the Sports park; Luis and his staff are doing a great job, the softball leagues are getting better every game but the issue we have is that we have a group of guys that are extremely good athletics that are going down on a league to play for a recreation division. That is creating Noncompetitive games among teams and am afraid that soon you will have a lot teams not wanting to play in the softball leagues. We need to reduce the amount of groups going to lower divisions but according to the softball rules as explain by Luis, any persons over forty years of age can play on any division. Would like to see further separation between regular Recreation and competitive Recreation leagues and put it on the Sports Park staff hands to create another recreation division resolve this issue.

Parks Director commented that we can take a look at all the policies and Procedures or even do a sub-committee and have them view it and see what needs to be addressed.

Board member Mrs. Gonzalez commented that how are we going to control them especially being that they are adults. Is having better teams than others going to discourage people from playing, sometimes but I've seen bad teams progress with time. It's hard to keep low performing teams and high performing teams together.

Parks Chairperson commented that its more of a safety issue especially when you have a good player playing for a recreational team instead. I just want an entry level teams playing other entry level teams. Suggested of putting together a sub-committee and working with Luis and his staff and then present it at the next Parks meeting.

**F. Discussion on West Rail hike/bike vs. Highway (Derek Benavides)**

Parks Chairperson commented that he would like to table this item for the next meeting due to not having the persons that have more information on it here to discuss it. Parks Director commented that there was recently a meeting to discuss the West Rail hike/bike trail and a link where you could go to vote for it. Board member Mrs. Gonzalez commented that a lot of people do use the trails but the only problem she sees is that the trails are not being kept clean and maintain. Parks Director said that the Parks Department oversees several trails and have been upgrading some bridges along the trails as well as trying to keep it clean and mowed when possible. Parks Chairperson suggested of maybe creating a sub-committee to oversee the trails and have updates from them. Would like to put it on the Parks agenda for discussion at the next Parks meeting.

**G. Consideration and Action to review the applicants and give their recommendation for (1) one vacancy for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Committee (Damaris McGlone)**

After a brief discussion Board members recommended of tabling the item in order to give other persons interested on being the Parks Advisory Committee a chance to apply for the vacancy. On a motion by Mr. Benavides, seconded by Mrs. Garza, motion carried to table the item for the next Parks Advisory meeting in December.

\*For the record Board member Mr. Mata had excused himself from the meeting at 1:08 p.m.

**H. KaBOOM built day participation by the Parks Advisory Board Committee (Damaris McGlone)**

Parks Director wanted to remind board members that this Saturday, November 14, is build a park day at Prax Orive Park and if they would like to participate with KaBOOM, to show up at the site with tools, wheelbarrows, rakes, hammer, etc. at 8:00 a.m. rain or shine.

**5) Director's Report (Damaris McGlone)**

- Discussed what top priorities the Parks Advisory Committee would like to have a role on the Parks Master Plan. Handed out a strategic implementation action plan draft for the Board members to review and get their recommendations for the Parks Master Plan.
- Gave a brief report on the Holiday Village opening to the public on November 23<sup>rd</sup> at Dean Porter Park. Will be attending a Rio Grande Valley tourism meeting today. Also reported that there will be a 5k run/Arbor Day event on Saturday, November 14, at the Brownsville Sports Park as well as reminding the board members that there will be the annual Christmas light up at Washington Park on December 02 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m...
- Reported of several projects going on at different parks and also that the Shelter Dome at the Sports Park should be ready by mid-January.
- Commented that the Parks Department has a new Parks Operations Manager and his first project is to work on the dog park and also implement a Disc Golf at Monte Bella Park.

**6) Public Comment Period** – no public comment.

**8) Adjournment** – meeting was adjourned at 1:27 p.m.