

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

MINUTES

**Wednesday, June 16, 2021
6:30 p.m.**

HYBRID MEETING

Wheat Ridge Recreation Center – Conference Room

Or: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82788409555>

Commissioners Present: Pat Cervera, Nikki Larsen, Guy Nahmiach,
John Route & Kathy Koniz

Commissioners Absent: Cambria Rollo, Chris Schilling & Karen Stanley

Guests: Bonnie Botham, Secretary, Wheat Ridge Historical Society

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

Item 1 – Determination of Quorum & Call to Order

Chairman Nahmiach called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Item 2 – Introductions – Members and Guests

Brief introductions were made by commissioners and guest.

Guest Bonnie Botham provided the following:

The Historical Society is very appreciative of the Parks and Recreation Commission and to the City of Wheat Ridge in its entirety for everyone's support. After going through the unforeseen COVID restrictions, they are now back to having live events. Part of the reason for her visit today was a former member of the Parks & Recreation Commission, Sally Banghart, was generous enough to be part of their Steering Committee for over a year. She is no longer on the committee but stated that if anyone would like to be part of the Steering Committee, please

Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes
June 16, 2021

contact Bonnie at 303-263-7277. They recently purchased a software program, Past Perfect, which will help to identify all of their artifacts and they will be able to make them available online with pictures and they will also store their membership lists. They are in the process of doing a 100 year look back at their properties and will be able to put their displays in an orderly fashion. They have gotten in disarray over the last 15 years when there was little activity and staff with the Historical Society but today they have 12 active members. She invited everyone's participation going forward and if possible to help out with the Steering Committee. For the Steering Committee, the commitment would be meeting quarterly in the afternoon at the Historical Park. They also hope to preserve the Blue House that is located on the Lutheran Hospital property. Chairman Nahmiach asked what they could do to provide support. She asked for continued support regarding their programs. She said they receive funding through donations and memberships; in the past, they have had available grants.

Item 3 – Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Cervera made a motion to accept the minutes from May 19, 2021, as amended. Commissioner Koniz seconded the motion, all accepted and approved.

Item 4 – New Business

Elections – Review Bylaws

According to the commission Bylaws, elections should be held every year as required by the Code of Law as noted for all city boards and commissions. In addition, a Vice Chair position needs to be filled. Commissioner Larsen suggested that Guy Nahmiach remain the Chair for the remainder of the year and hold elections next April since they are already pretty far into the year. The commission decided to discuss electing a Vice Chair at next month's meeting. It was suggested to nominate Commissioner Larsen as Vice Chair but with some members missing, it was decided to hold off until next meeting. Also, if anyone is interested, nominations can be submitted in advance to the Director.

Director O'Donnell shared and discussed the contents of the Bylaws. A motion was made to change the following regarding the Commission Bylaws: Section I, to be capitalized; Section II, meeting time changed from 7 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Section III, spelling correction; and Section V, change Secretary to Administrative Assistant. All were in agreement and motion passed.

Item 5 – Unfinished Business

Director O'Donnell will share some data related to questions that came up while reviewing the Future of Parks & Recreation paper

Director O'Donnell summarized the report as follows: Recreation Center attendance in 2019 was 148,683; this year to date it is at 47,281. For the second half of this year, it will probably be lower because some people are still being very cautious due to health concerns, and not comfortable in a public setting yet. Residents vs. nonresidents in 2019 averaged 46%; in 2021 it was 52%. There are resident membership rates, a Jefferson county rate, and a nonresident rate.

Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes
June 16, 2021

This topic will be discussed at a future meeting and will not be addressed today but Director O'Donnell stated that the Department will be recommending some fee increases at the Recreation Center. They did not increase any fees last year. They also completed a market comparison study regarding membership rates for organizations that are close by. Access is always important and what people can afford is very significant. Scholarship opportunities and discount programs are available to make it work so everyone can participate in their programs and services. The total program activities offered in 2019 was 432 and for this year it is 586, which is more offerings than last year. For online enrollees in 2019, they had 2,837; a total of 2,046 for online classes in 2020; and for 2021 that increased to 3,077. For the Active Adult Center, they had a lot of new enrollees for their online programs, so that was great work provided by the virtual Recreation Center staff.

Item 6 – Staff Updates

- **Grant Updates**

Director O'Donnell reported that the State Historical Fund Planning Grant application for the Richards Hart Estate has been approved and funded for \$15,000. Design and construction documents will be provided for the repairs specific to ADA improvements. They will have to apply for a construction grant but the letter of intent is due July 1 and the application is due August 1. With that, they may have to wait a year. Brandon Altenburg is also applying for a state historical fund grant for the sod house. There is some massive cracking that is appearing and needs to be repaired. A letter of support for this grant would need the commission's approval and signature today in an effort to preserve and improve the historic building.

The other grant update is for the National Association for Conservation Districts (NACD) that they received and was in collaboration with the Jefferson Conservation District. This involves providing free programs and most of them will take place at Happiness Gardens, one will be at Lewis Meadows where the goats will be, and a Harvest Festival in the fall. All of this information will be available on the city website or social media.

- **Open Carry Ordinance**

Director O'Donnell stated that they have a "No Weapons" sign displayed outside in front of the Recreation Center but there was never a city ordinance that would back up that specifically, and the Police Department couldn't really do anything to enforce it. They are excited that City Council recently passed an ordinance prohibiting deadly weapons on city property and that includes their facilities and parks. So permanent signage with the ordinance number of reference will be listed and installed.

- **Goat Parade – June 19th @ 10:30 a.m. (meet on the west side of Prospect Valley Elementary -at the end of Quail Street)**

This year it is open up to the public, so everyone is welcome to join. They will meet at Prospect Valley Elementary this Saturday at 10:30 a.m. and then will be walking over to Lewis Meadows with the goats.

Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes
June 16, 2021

- **Tree Challenge Update**

Director O'Donnell reported that the participation rate wasn't very high but it was their first time for the event. It was a great experience for everyone to participate and it provided exposure to the tree environment system. With the experience, improvements can be made in setting up the event better for next time.

- **2021 Resident Survey Results**

Director O'Donnell shared the results of the survey. It was a scientific survey with a random selection of 4,500 households; 1,068 responded with a 25% response rate. Regarding the survey, they continue to receive a high score with regard to quality of life in the city, and there's quite a few parks and recreation elements within that. The full report is 100 pages and stated that she will not go into all of it but provided a brief power point summary which entailed survey results regarding city resident opinions, measuring government performance, budget, land use, strategic planning decisions, and benchmark service ratings.

Item 7 – Future Agenda Items

- Prospect Lake Water Quality
- Vape Pen Exchange
- Alternate Use - Barn Building (between Kipling & Recreation Center)
- Land Acknowledgement

Item 8 – Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Route: No comments.

Commissioner Koniz: There is an area that needs attention, maybe some upgrading on 41st Avenue heading down to Clear Creek Trail, it is in terrible shape. Director O'Donnell will check into it.

Commissioner Cervera: Regarding Prospect Park, can you check the tennis court area?

Commissioner Larsen: All the parks are looking good. With all the rain that we have had at Founders Park, everything is growing beautifully.

Chairman Nahmiach: Was there any damage from the high water flow in the creeks? No problems per the Director.

Director O'Donnell also commented that at Anderson Park they have a youth summer camp, Avid for Adventure, and they are renting space from the city so you will see multiple sites with vehicles and kayaks. They are just storing their equipment.

All is good in Chairman's Nahmiach district.

Item 9 – Adjournment

Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes
June 16, 2021

With no further business, Chairman Nahmiach adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.