



**JOINT MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD  
and PARKS AND RECREATION FOUNDATION**

**January 15, 2019 6:00 p.m.**

**Cactus Yards, South Restaurant**

**4536 Elliot Road, Gilbert, Arizona 85234**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Les Presmyk, Chair  
Robert Ferron, Vice Chair  
Barbara Guy  
Gilbert Honeycutt  
Edward Madrid  
Christopher Wharton

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Jennifer Jones  
Mark LaPorte  
Matthew Roberts

**COUNCIL LIAISON PRESENT:**

Eddie Cook, Councilmember

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Robert Carmona, Parks and Recreation Director  
John Kennedy, Parks and Recreation Manager  
Rocky Brown, Parks and Recreation Business Manager  
Dan Wilson, Recreation Supervisor, Cactus Yards  
Denise Merdon, Special Events, Marketing & Sponsorships

**PARKS & RECREATION FOUNDATION PRESENT:**

William Scalzo  
Alan Mafara  
Gary Anderson  
Tim Barnard  
Andrea Marrujo

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Doralise Machado-Liddell

**STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Presmyk called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
- 2. ROLL CALL:** Denise Merdon called the roll and determined that a quorum of the Parks Board was present.
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 4. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS PRESENT:** Members of the public may address the Board on matters within the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Board, but not on the agenda. The Board's response is limited to responding to criticism, asking staff to review a matter commented upon, or asking that a matter be put on a future agenda.

Doralise Machado-Liddell is a Gilbert resident in the Heritage District, Lacey tract. She has gone to the Parks Department, the Police Department and Code Compliance regarding an issue that has been going on for several years of people feeding feral cats in her neighborhood and in the parks. She stated the Parks Department only enforced the ordinance once and the individual moved the feedings to the town sidewalks. Another ordinance has since passed stating that people cannot feed feral animals on town property. However, the animals continue to be fed in various locations in the neighborhood including the parks. Feral animals create a health and safety hazard for residents in the neighborhood and for park goers. She felt that the individuals were being coached on where and at what times of day to feed the cats. She has given the Police the times the feedings occur, between 4:00 and 5:15 a.m., and has asked Parks staff and Rangers to adjust their schedule and to enforce the ordinance. Ms. Machado-Liddell is a retired park ranger and understands that it is difficult to enforce an ordinance. She asked that the town place signage prohibiting the feeding of animals, install animal guards in the park culverts, remove or trim the oleanders, repair the parking lot light, and to trap and adopt out the animals, rather than returning them to the area. The Maricopa County fee is \$96 per cat. She asked the Foundation to help with funds to address the situation. People continue to drop animals off in the area because they know someone will feed them. Ms. Machado-Liddell provided a list of feeding times, examples of animal guards and signage, photos of the oleanders and how the cats are being fed. She asked the Parks Board for help in enforcing the ordinance.

Chair Presmyk asked that this matter be placed on the Parks Board agenda for the next meeting to have a staff report and update. Having lived through the feral cat issue in the Riparian Preserve, Chair Presmyk understood that it is a contentious issue.

## **CONSENT ITEMS**

### **5. NONE.**

## **PRESENTATIONS**

**6. GILBERT YOUTH SPORTS COALITION ANNUAL REPORT:** Brent Taysom oversees the Gilbert Youth Sports Coalition. Two years ago, a new application process was instituted for Coalition membership. For 2018, eight organizations were accepted into the Coalition, and two organizations that applied did not meet the minimum qualifications. Current members include the Arizona Soccer Club, Gilbert American Little League, Gilbert National Little League, Southeast Diamondbacks Little League, Gilbert Softball Little League, Gilbert Youth Football League (flag football), Gilbert Chandler Youth Football League, and Gilbert Youth Soccer Association. For 2018, there were 13,381 participants in the Gilbert Youth Sports Coalition. Those numbers are based on the registration for each league, and participants may have been double counted if they played in multiple seasons. There was a 1.5% decrease in participation from 2017. Tackle football and soccer saw the biggest drop. Tackle football numbers are declining across the state and the country.

### **2018 Accomplishments:**

- Arizona Soccer Club secured a tournament through the Arizona Youth Soccer Association in conjunction with Gilbert Days. It was called the Heritage Cup and included the Gilbert Water Tower logo. Over 215 teams participated. Crossroads and Discovery Parks were booked the entire weekend for the tournament as well as some parks in Mesa to accommodate the overflow.
- Gilbert Chandler Youth Football had three teams qualify for the state tournament, and the Broncos advanced to the Nationals and placed 4th. Their Cheer teams will participate in the national event in Las Vegas this spring.
- Gilbert American Little League was at maximum capacity for fall and spring of 2018 and had a waiting list. Their primary field use is at Crossroads Park. Brent noted that multi-purpose fields cannot be used for baseball.
- Gilbert Youth Football added more referees which allowed them to expand the number of fields. They hosted their first tournament and plan to hold their own tournament on February 9-10.

### **Organization Goals:**

- Arizona Soccer Club strives to maintain 80% or above Gilbert residency for Coalition status
- Southeast Diamondbacks Little League would like to complete their board to continue to run their league
- Gilbert Chandler Youth Football League is looking to grow their program and offer fun and safe experiences
- Gilbert American Little League would like to put up a new scoreboard at Crossroads Field 1. Brent advised that the organizations are responsible for the scoreboards at Crossroads and McQueen and no town funds are used.
- Gilbert Youth Football League is looking to rebrand and expand to teen and young adult leagues. They will advertise to increase participation.

All of the Coalition groups are excited about the additional fields coming on board next fall with the new parks. We will start allocating those fields this spring. Fields are allocated based off of the Coalition needs first and then fields are open to the general public. On November 1, the fields for January through July are made available to the public. At 5 p.m. on Halloween night, people started lining up at the door with lawn chairs to wait until the next morning. The town was able to accommodate three or four non-coalition groups with fields for their programs.

### **Questions/Comments:**

Bob Ferron asked what percentage of the 13,381 Coalition participants are Gilbert residents.

Brent has not run those numbers, although it would be at least 80% as that is the requirement. Denise Merdon stated there are a few organizations that are 100% Gilbert residents because they are boundary restricted based on their national guidelines. The Little Leagues run about 98% to 99% Gilbert residents.

- 7. PARKS UPDATE:** Robert Carmona will bring an update on Gilbert Regional Park with 3D designs at the next board meeting as Phase 1B will be closer to 100% design. Both Gilbert Regional and Desert Sky Parks are on track to open in September of 2019. There will initially be four multi-use fields at Desert Sky.

Questions/Comments:

Bob Ferron asked whether the four fields at Desert Sky will be full multi-purpose fields with lights and where they will be located within the Park.

Robert stated the fields will be in the center of the Park and will have LED lights which produce the least amount of light pollution for the surrounding neighborhoods. Meetings were held with the neighbors and the lighting was discussed. The neighbors are happy with the technology that will be used.

**STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

- 8. IAP UPDATE:** There was no update at this time.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

- 9. PARKS AND RECREATION FOUNDATION:** Bill Scalzo advised that the Gilbert Parks and Recreation Foundation was developed over three years ago to assist the Parks Department and to enhance what the Department does beyond town support. The Foundation's desire is to help where there is the greatest need. The Gilbert Assistance Program (GAP) helps many families that cannot afford to participate in activities. The Foundation's main goal every year is to raise a minimum of \$15,000 for the GAP program and the Foundation has donated that amount for the last two years. As a second objective, the Foundation also raised funds for swimming safety programs for families that cannot afford swimming lessons. The Foundation is also working on creating a handicapped water access at the Riparian Preserve for disabled veterans.

The Foundation Board consists of community members covering all age groups. Some are business people, some have a background in Parks and Recreation, and one is a doctor. There was previously a lawyer on the Foundation Board. The Foundation's main fundraising event is the annual Luau dinner held adjacent to Town Hall. Money is raised through ticket sales for the Luau, raffles, event sponsorships, and Foundation memberships. All Foundation Board members are required to contribute a minimum of \$100 a year. The Foundation Board is a very hardworking group and they do most of the work for the events with the support of town staff. Jennifer Lauria and Joanne McLaughlin have gone above and beyond to help the Foundation be successful. The Foundation is always looking for new members who are willing to volunteer to help engage the public at events such as the Youth Fishing Day, race events, and the Kapow Superhero Run.

Robert Carmona felt the Parks and Recreation Department was lucky to have not only the Parks Board, but the Foundation as well. He thanked everyone at the table for volunteering their time and for supporting Parks and Recreation. He noted the importance of the GAP and swimming programs and how many lives those programs have changed.

Chair Presmyk appreciated the update and thanked the Foundation on behalf of the Parks Board for all of the good work being done not only in raising money, but for the outreach and community engagement. This is another example of why the Town of Gilbert is considered one of the best places to live, recreate, and raise a family. It is not just about a nice house or a nice subdivision. Parks help define a community. It is truly a team effort and he thanked everyone for the time and effort put into Parks and Recreation. Chair Presmyk had a lot of blood, sweat, and tears in this facility, and it is gratifying to see that the current Council has the same vision and has supported it with the money and litigation necessary to get to this point. He appreciated the Parks staff for the professionalism and quality that they bring. He is looking forward to the second grand opening of this facility and encouraged everyone to attend.

- 10. CACTUS YARDS:** Dan Wilson, Recreation Supervisor for Cactus Yards, advised that the construction is now done and staff is working on the programming as well as recruiting additional staff. There were 23 full-time positions budgeted, and with part-time seasonal positions, we are looking to hire 30 staff in the next few months.

### **Cactus Yards Opening Day:**

Opening Day will be held on Saturday, February 9, 2019 from 4 to 8:30 p.m. The first 500 kids will receive a free Cactus Yards baseball. The Real Thing Band will hold a concert in Wrigley Field. Activities include inflatables, sports challenges, photo ops, kickball, wiffleball, and cornhole. Several Pro Sports Teams will be there. Primetime Grill will have their 75-foot BBQ semi-truck and the restaurant will be open. There will be a Ribbon Cutting at 5:30 and the Opening Ceremony will start at 6:00 p.m. at Diamondbacks Field. The National Anthem will be sung by a Parks and Recreation staff member followed by a flag presentation and speakers. The Mayor will throw the first pitch followed by fireworks sponsored by Haydon Building Corp, shooting off behind Wrigley Stadium. The public voted for The Sandlot as the Movie in the Yard. About 3,000 people are expected to attend the Opening Day event.

Dan is excited to engage the community and get people out to Cactus Yards. A lot of people remember the previous Big League Dreams facility, and Cactus Yards will be a place with a community atmosphere for all ages to use and enjoy.

Robert Carmona stated the goal and vision for opening day was not to be just about Cactus Yards, but a celebration of the town of Gilbert Parks and Recreation as a whole. There will be presence from other town departments including Fire, Police, Economic Development, Water Resources, and Digital Government. This is a town celebration to add an amenity for the entire community. He gave special kudos to his staff for their ability to plan the opening of this facility with limited staff. Every division has pitched in from Special Events, Parks and Recreation, to the Business Team. Town Council's vision was to reopen Cactus Yards as a community facility rather than a specialized facility.

### **Cactus Yards Programming:**

Programming will include three main components: Sport Leagues, Tournaments, and Special Events. When the previous facility was shut down, those participants were lost. Now, we have to win them back and show that this facility is now reopened. We are currently advertising for leagues and the season will start on February 11, 2019, the Monday after Opening Day. Adult Softball, Adult Soccer, and Adult Kickball Leagues are starting to fill up. There will also be Youth Sportball classes (2-5 years old), Indoor Soccer (5-12 years), and Youth Baseball (7-12 years). The facility is booked for Tournaments for all but four weekends in 2019. We anticipate huge numbers on the weekends, with some of the larger-scale tournaments bringing in up to 3,000 people. This will have a great economic impact for the community. The Master Schedule was provided to the group. We purposely did not program every night with every activity possible due to the limited staff until hiring is complete. The business strategy is to establish a core of people and expand from there.

### **Questions/Comments:**

Barbara Guy loved the fact that it will be a community facility and not just baseball. She asked if the Digital Marketing Team is going full speed ahead to promote the facility. She suggested gathering feedback from the community on their favorite food at the field, etc.

Dan Wilson stated Cactus Yards has social media pages on Facebook and Instagram.

John Kennedy stated online public voting was held for the Movie in the Yard and The Sandlot won by 92%. Voting through social media channels also helped to determine some of the activities such as kickball and wiffleball.

Robert stated a press release for the Grand Opening went out two days ago for social media and will go out to print next week. It is currently out on Facebook and Councilmember Cook has shared it.

Dan stated the Digital team has been great and they have everything set up to post at certain times. The community interaction to help make some of the decisions for Opening Day has been great. The Digital Media staff will train the Cactus Yards staff to take over the social media channels. Staff is also working with Craft Culinary to promote their menus and activities. When the menu was posted, it generated a lot of buzz on social media.

- 11. ARIZONA COYOTES FOLLOW UP:** Rocky Brown reported at the last Board meeting on an opportunity with the Arizona Coyotes to put in a floor hockey arena. The Coyotes zeroed in on Gilbert because of the existing partnership with AZ Ice. A neighborhood meeting was held last night at Morrison Ranch with a presentation on the Coyotes hockey arena. The community was very receptive and felt it would be a good amenity. There were concerns on parking as people used to park in the neighborhood when the prior facility was open. The concern was not that this amenity would create a parking problem. We advised the neighborhood that people using the hockey amenity would

be encouraged to use the facility parking lot. There are no plans for additional parking for this amenity, as it would only bring about 12 participants at a time. The neighborhood suggested putting some type of fence there to discourage people from parking in the neighborhood.

Rocky advised that Denise Merdon works with the Shun the Sun Half Marathon, which raises money for shade structures. She reached out to them and asked to be placed on their list for shade structures. It would be easy to install LED lights under a shade structure to create a nice amenity.

Questions/Comments:

Chair Presmyk asked if there was a schedule for implementation at this point.

Robert Carmona stated staff is working on getting some firm pricing and options for the town's contribution of the concrete pad (75 by 150 feet). The Coyotes would bring in the rest of the rink at a cost of about \$150,000. This opportunity would bring in another pro partnership to the town. We currently have partnerships with the Diamondbacks and the Cardinals. It will also add to the amenities and capabilities of the Cactus Yards facility.

Rocky explained to the Foundation members that the location being considered for the hockey rink is the grass area in back of the Cactus Yards facility. That area was designated as a corporate area by the previous entity, although it was never used. It is outside of the gates of the complex and adjacent to the neighborhood. This is an option to activate that area and potentially generate revenue.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

**12. MINUTES - Consider Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 11, 2018:**

**MOTION:** Barbara Guy moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 11, 2018; seconded by Gil Honeycutt. The Motion passed 6-0.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**13. REPORT FROM CHAIR:** Chair Presmyk reported that over the Holidays, the Mormon Church had four giving stations downtown. There were three locations in the United States and one was here in Gilbert. There was often a line of people at the stations giving to a number of charitable organizations. During the first weekend, well over \$100,000 was donated. Denise Merdon stated that after the first two weeks, \$250,000 had been donated. Chair Presmyk was pleased that the Mormon Church selected Gilbert as a location and felt that Gilbert residents stepped up. This is one more way to give back to our community.

The Annual Tucson Gem and Mineral Show will be held February 14-17, 2019. Chair Presmyk has a vested interest and this will be his 56th straight year at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. He has served on the show committee for 33 years. It is the largest show of its kind in the world. In addition to the main show, there will be close to 50 other venues that will open up starting January 26 through February 17th.

Chair Presmyk's niece, Amanda Presmyk, is a movie producer with a company out of Dallas. Her first movie with producer's credit will premiere at the AMC Theater at the Arizona Center on Friday, January 18, 2019 and will be showing for a week. The movie is called The Stand-off at Sparrow Creek.

**14. REPORT FROM BOARD AND FOUNDATION MEMBERS:** Vice Chair Bob Ferron worked with Sharing Down Syndrome and Denise Merdon to light the Water Tower in blue and yellow on March 23-25, 2019 to support Down Syndrome awareness. He thanked the town for honoring that request.

Bob Scalzo, Parks and Recreation Foundation, asked how the charities were selected for the Mormon giving stations at Water Tower Park and why the Foundation was not involved.

Denise explained that the agreement was made through the Town Manager's office. The machines benefitted four local and two international charities. Vice Mayor Cook stated the Mayor was involved in the project working with the Town Manager. There were a number of local charities that saw the machines and approached him as to why they were not involved. It is something the Mormon Church does globally and Gilbert was selected as one of five locations. Denise stated that the organizations were some that the town had already been supporting over the last few

years. The town was looking to cut back on the support coming from taxpayers and this was a fundraising opportunity to offset what the town is subsidizing to these organizations.

Chair Presmyk asked Vice Mayor Cook to take the question back to the Town Council. He also asked for a report from staff at a future board meeting on the organizations that benefitted from those giving machines and options to get the Foundation on that list.

**15. REPORT FROM COUNCIL LIAISON:** Vice Mayor Cook reported that a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be held on January 25, 2019, 10 a.m. for Deloitte, located at the Rivulon campus at the northeast corner of 202 and Gilbert Road. Deloitte selected Gilbert to set up shop in the Valley with the potential for 2,500 jobs in the \$100,000 salary range. This is a major win for Gilbert, the region, and the state.

The downtown parking garage is almost completed and should be up and running in February. The Yard will open in February as well. Hale Theater has broken ground for their expansion on the west side of their site.

There is a public survey on the town's website and social media channels regarding mobility options in Gilbert. There will be a Council Study Session on January 22, 2019 on the topic.

**16. REPORT FROM STAFF LIAISONS:** Rocky Brown reported that an extension of the agreement with Gilbert Youth Soccer Association (GYSA) will go before Council at their meeting next Tuesday, January 22, 2019. GYSA has been operating the Gilbert Youth Soccer Complex for the last 15 years and are looking to extend their agreement for five years with five 5-year options. The Soccer Complex is located on the buffer land outside of the wastewater treatment facility that the town subleases from Mesa.

John Kennedy advised that there will be a Membership Drive event at Freestone Recreation Center on Saturday, January 26, 2019, at 10 a.m. There will be various activities including a pickleball demonstration and tournament. A new tween center called Eleven41 will be unveiled. A multipurpose room was repurposed into the tween center designed for 9-13-year-olds with different activities and a traverse wall. This will round out the opportunities at Freestone for the entire family.

**17. UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** Denise Merdon reported on upcoming events in Gilbert, all of which have volunteer opportunities.

- February 1-3, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Chocolate A'Fair at the Civic Center, free event featuring art and chocolate
- February 9, 2019, 4-8:30 p.m., Cactus Yards Opening Day
- February 13, 2019, 1-6 p.m., Sweets Festival at the Civic Center. About 6,000 people are expected
- February 23, 2019, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Annual Outdoor Expo at the Riparian Preserve

## **CONCLUSION**

**18. MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Vice Chair Robert Ferron moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Barbara Guy. Motion passed 6-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 pm.

**ATTEST:**

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Les Presmyk, Chair

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Denise Merdon, Staff Liaison