



# CITY OF LAS CRUCES

## Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

April 18, 2024

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board held a meeting on April 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, Room 2007B, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM.

### Members Present:

Fred Raish – At large member  
Laura Haas - District 6  
Alana Bradley - District 4  
Kenneth Coppedge – District 2  
Aracely Tellez – District 3

### Members Absent:

VACANT - District 1  
VACANT - District 5

### Others Present:

Franco Granillo, Parks Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation  
Phillip Catanach, Recreation Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation  
Steven Bingham, Director, Parks & Recreation  
Christine Abeyta-Corella, Project Manager, Parks & Recreation  
Catherine Mathews, Landscape Architect, Parks & Recreation  
Hazel Nevarez, Senior Office Manager, Parks & Recreation  
Greg Shervanick, Public  
Reed Elliott, Public  
Hilary Dutcher, Visit Las Cruces  
Becky Baum, Recording Secretary, RC Creations, LLC

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting of April 18, 2024, at City Hall Council Chambers, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM was brought to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. by Chair Raish and recognized the meeting as having a legal quorum.

### 1. Introductions:

Board Members introduced themselves and stated the district they represent. Attending staff introduced themselves.

### 2. Conflict of Interest:

There was no conflict of interest.

1  
2 **3. Approval of the Agenda:**  
3

4 Vice-Chair Haas moved to approve the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board  
5 Meeting Agenda for February 15, 2024, seconded by Board Member Tellez. Motion  
6 passed.  
7

8 **4. Approval of the Minutes February 15, 2024:**  
9

10 Vice-Chair Haas moved to approve the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board  
11 Meeting Minutes February 15, 2024, seconded by Board Member Tellez. Motion  
12 passed.  
13

14 **5. Public Participation:**  
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16 Member of the Public spoke in support of the Grindline skateboard project and is  
17 eager to give comment on that topic.  
18

19 **6. Action Items:**  
20

21 None.  
22

23 **7. Discussion Items:**  
24

25 **7.1 New Skate Park Final Design - Catherine Mathews, Landscape Architect,**  
26 **Parks and Recreation:**  
27

28 Cathy Mathews introduced the near-final design for the new skate park at the  
29 East Mesa Sports Complex. The design firm is Grindline. Matt Fluegge and  
30 Brett Johnson presented. The design was based on public input requests.  
31 Public meetings started in January. Mr. Fluegge shared his screen and  
32 discussed the features that have been included in the design. If this design is  
33 approved, construction documents can be created and construction can begin  
34 soon. Members of the public are excited about this design. Storm drainage  
35 is included in the design. There will be amenities for spectators.  
36

37 **7.2 Way Finding Signage - Catherine Mathews, Landscape Architect, Parks**  
38 **and Recreation:**  
39

40 Cathy Mathews introduced the Project Manager, Christina Abeyta-Corella.  
41 Ms. Corella provided handouts to the Board. The Police Department and  
42 Parks & Rec have been working together to choose which signage is most  
43 needed and which parks to start with. She presented the preliminary designs  
44 for several signs. The new signs will be very uniform, color coded, and easy  
45 to understand. The new signs will probably not be installed until 2025 because  
46 there are parts that City Council has to approve. There is a ten-year plan to

1 complete the signage for the entire City, ten parks at a time. Ms. Corella will  
2 provide the list of ten parks that will be done next year.  
3

### 4 **7.3 Budget Presentation - Parks and Recreation Director & Deputy Directors:**

5  
6 Steven Bingham discussed the budget request. The budget retreat was held  
7 February 16, 2025. There were four priorities for this request: Renovate  
8 existing parks and playground replacement, expanding the park construction  
9 team, improve safety at City parks, and expand KLCB (Keep Las Cruces  
10 Beautiful). For the safety part, the request was to bring back park rangers  
11 using Police Aides to monitor the skate park and higher-crime areas as well  
12 as the Rec Centers and Aquatic Centers. The rangers will hopefully  
13 discourage drug trafficking, violence, and provide information and a sense of  
14 safety to park attendees. Mr. Bingham discussed that he has noticed  
15 incomplete construction and maintenance issues in several parks. Franco  
16 Granillo discussed that the Master Plan calls for renovating these older parks:  
17 Apodaca, Pioneer Women's Park, Young Park, and several others. He and  
18 Cathy Mathews discussed specific improvements and repairs needed in these  
19 parks and some of the costs involved. Mr. Bingham commented that the  
20 reason they are focusing on Apodaca and Pioneer Women's Park is that there  
21 are already some funds available for those two. The combined request for  
22 these two parks is \$2.55 million. Some of the playground equipment is  
23 boarded up due to lack of replacement parts. Half of the playgrounds in Las  
24 Cruces are 20 years old or more. The request for the playgrounds is \$1.5  
25 million a year in order to replace five playgrounds each year. Maintenance  
26 costs are also built into the budget. The construction team is tiny and it is  
27 difficult for them to keep up with repairs. The budget request is for \$300,000  
28 for materials and \$100,000 for contract work such as seasonal contract staff  
29 to help out the construction crew. There is also a request for two full-time  
30 positions for maintenance workers. The park system continues to grow but  
31 Parks & Rec's budget does not, so the maintenance continues to fall behind.  
32 Parks & Rec plans to change the restrooms in the parks to single-use  
33 restrooms to provide better safety. The requested park ranger positions are  
34 for the higher-crime parks. They will monitor and give citations. The pool at  
35 the Regional Aquatic Center needs to be replastered for \$125,000. There is a  
36 request for \$92,000 to get e-gaming into Frank O'Brien Papen Center. E-  
37 gaming is a huge activity and Parks & Rec hopes to start leagues and teams  
38 for the public. The Keep Las Cruces Beautiful program is grant-funded and  
39 there is a graffiti team, they hold dumpster days, and various other activities to  
40 educate the public and try to keep the City looking good. There is more  
41 competition now for the grant so there is a budget request this year to try to  
42 continue and expand the program, with two additional maintenance contract  
43 workers and supplies and services costing \$116,000. Parks & Rec also serves  
44 some of the public schools and they want to expand the program to two  
45 additional sites costing \$187,000. Even more schools have requested Parks  
46 & Rec to attend. The City plans to evaluate various departments in the next

1 year to see if the status quo of funding is acceptable. There have been efforts  
2 to create a 501(c)(3) group of Friends of Parks & Rec to help get funds for the  
3 parks.  
4

5 **8. Staff Member Comments:**  
6

7 Cathy Mathews reported that the swimming pool at Apodaca Park is being  
8 demolished and replaced with a splash pad. The skate park at Hadley and Walnut  
9 has been demolished and is now being graded. Construction is underway at  
10 Veterans Memorial Park parking lot. Gallagher Park has some new furnishing and  
11 playground equipment. Safe Haven has new playground equipment as well. Las  
12 Cruces won \$500,000 from the Trails Plus Grant to support some of the trails. Grant  
13 monies are expected to be available this summer. The trail along El Paseo is  
14 federally funded and there are many obstacles for contractors to work on federal  
15 projects, so this is coming along slowly.  
16

17 Robert Nunez announced that for Earth Day on Friday there will be a recycled art  
18 show at the plaza and on April 27, 2024 is the Great American Cleanup. There will  
19 be 11 locations for dumping into the roll-offs. The City and Walmart have partnered  
20 to allow participants to get lunch at any of the Super Walmarts from 12:00 to 2:00.  
21 Parks & Rec is preparing for summer programs. There have been many inquiries  
22 and the news releases will be sent next week. Programs have been expanded to  
23 Hatch, Chaparral, and Anthony as well as Las Cruces.  
24

25 Franco Granillo mentioned that the growing season is here and the wind has been  
26 causing difficulty maintaining things, but he is proud of his crew's work. He hopes  
27 to turn the Dog Park Rules into ordinances to give Animal Control more power to  
28 solve problems. He plans to put out surveys within a one- to three-mile radius of  
29 each dog park. He will bring a draft before the Board. There will be a posting next  
30 week for a Sports Field Administrator position.  
31

32 Phil Catanach reported that the hiking program starts on May 6, 2024. The  
33 schedule will be out soon. The father-daughter dance is popular and sells out every  
34 year. The public is asking about a mother-son dance, so there will be one on May  
35 10, 2024. The new homeschool PE class has been selling out. The painting and  
36 tea class has been selling out every week. The Senior Olympic cornhole  
37 competition was this past weekend. The Mobile Recreation Unit will be at Earth  
38 Day on Friday and Mira Las Cruces later in April, as well as visiting schools. Youth  
39 cheer, youth basketball, and adult sand volleyball are in full swing. Coach pitch and  
40 tee ball starts in May. There will be a cornhole session opening and possibly a  
41 tournament. The Regional Aquatic Center has passed inspection. There are  
42 inspections set for Laabs and East Mesa. The splash pads will be open as soon  
43 as the weather is better and the pools will open on May 25, 2024. There will be a  
44 Mother's Day Concert and a Jazz Fest in May. The entertainment and parade  
45 theme for the Fourth of July will be announced soon. Registration for outdoor youth

1 soccer starts April 25th. Adult basketball league and youth indoor volleyball league  
2 registrations open in early May.  
3

4 Steve Bingham announced that five more projects have been given to Cathy  
5 Mathews. A new posting for a Park Planning and Construction Administrator is up  
6 and first review of applications starts in about three weeks.  
7

8 **9. Board Member Comments:**  
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10 Board Member Coppedge thanked staff for the thorough presentations. He thanked  
11 them for paying close attention to details. He announced that there will be a bike  
12 fiesta hosted at Lynn Middle School on April 27, 2024. He commented that Ashleigh  
13 Curry had contacted the Department to see if they need to avoid someone else  
14 using the park and received the answer that she had to have a permit. Cathy  
15 Mathews mentioned that this was probably a simple misunderstanding. Hazel  
16 Nevarez mentioned that staff has a weekly event report that could be published.  
17


18 Chair Raish thanked everyone for coming and the presentations and budget.  
19

20 Alana Bradley mentioned that she is new and was pleased to find out about more  
21 parks than she realized were there.  
22

23 Vice-Chair Haas complimented Parks & Rec on working so well with the public and  
24 contractors. She also mentioned that she has been to the East Mesa Complex and  
25 heard from members of the public that they are very pleased about the reclaimed  
26 water plans there. Franco Granillo mentioned that the same system is used at  
27 Veterans Memorial Park, Sagecrest, and Wetlands.  
28

29 **10. Adjournment:**  
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31 Board Member Coppedge moved to adjourn, seconded by Vice-Chair Haas. Motion  
32 passed.  
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38   
Chairperson