



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
WORK STUDY/RETREAT MEETING - MINUTES**

Wednesday, August 20, 2025
Eldorado Community Center
2311 N. Miller Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85257

PRESENT: Chair Eric Maschhaupt, Vice-Chair Michael Vreeland, Commissioners Jamie Alford, Amy Arnold, Sandy Kull, Susan McGarry, and Teresa Kim Quale

STAFF: Senior Director Nick Molinari; Deputy Director Kevin McKee; Parks and Recreation Managers Kyu-Bin Hyun, Chris Walsh, Valerie Budnick, Stephanie Tippett, Hezekiah Allen; Management Analyst Marci Sanders

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Maschhaupt called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present as listed above.

PUBLIC COMMENT

WORK STUDY AGENDA

1. WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Nick Molinari, Senior Director, Parks and Recreation and Preserve, provided opening remarks and an overview of the Parks and Recreation and Preserve Departments. He said that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan elements are based on City Council priorities and the City's mission statement "Simply Better Service for a World-Class Community". He discussed the following City Council priorities as they relate to Parks and Recreation:

- Create competitive recruitment and retention strategies and programs. The department has made progress in staffing recruitments.

- Enhance project management through ongoing analysis and estimating best practices. This goal will impact the parks and recreation department as they look at capital projects and projects that are funded through the parks and preserve sales tax.
- Improve transportation networks and policy. Parks and recreation is responsible for maintaining multiuse paths, which are funded through the transportation sales tax.
- Expand community engagement through cross-departmental outreach. Parks and recreation has opportunities for engagement with police park rangers, the transportation department, and the infrastructure team.
- Modernize policies and services.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions related to City Council priorities. Mr. Molinari said that there are opportunities for the department to improve project management cost estimating. Staff is working to identify best practices, including technology and private sector resources, to determine the most effective way to account for cost estimating over time. He said that policies are changing rapidly, and the parks and recreation department not only wants to have a mechanism for best practices for communication, it is also embracing smarter technology systems.

Mr. Molinari reviewed the new structure of the City Manager's office. He explained the changes that have been made to the City's structure, including shifting Community Services from multiple divisions to two departments which report directly to the City Manager's office. He announced that the City Council has lifted the policy restricting Commissioners and City Council members from using personal electronic devices during meetings.

2. COMMISSION BEST PRACTICES

Kevin McKee, Deputy Parks and Recreation Director, provided a refresher on Robert's Rules of Order, guidelines, and best practices. His presentation included an overview of the Parks and Recreation Commission's roles and responsibilities as representatives of the community, their new role as Citizens Oversight Committee, and their role as an advisory board to the City Council. He talked about the purpose of the Open Meeting Law, the process of holding an executive session, and ethical standards. Mr. McKee highlighted the Robert's Rules of Order process for making motions and meeting best practices.

Steve Sutton was given an opportunity to make a public comment. He opined that members of the public should be given an opportunity to make comments following presentations and before any action of the Commission, rather than before presentations.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DIVISION

Kevin McKee, Deputy Parks and Recreation Director, provided an overview of the Parks and Recreation Division's organizational structure, budget and funding sources, and major areas of service. He noted that Scottsdale has been a nationally accredited parks and recreation agency for the past 30 years, holding the position longer than any other agency in the state of Arizona, and it ranks in the top five longest in the nation. Scottsdale is being recognized at the state conference for its push to celebrate the Month of May as Indian Bend Wash month.

As part of his presentation, Mr. McKee described the Parks and Recreation and Preserve Department structure, as well as the responsibilities and reporting structure of each area. The presentation included a review of the citywide recreation outlook, parks and recreation opportunities, major service areas, the community needs outlined in the master plan, and major service areas.

Commissioners asked questions throughout the presentation. Topics that were discussed included pickleball courts, dog parks, paths and trails management, tree inventory management strategy, equestrian arenas and trails, and disc golf.

Mr. McKee reviewed the new division structure and the effects of many long-time employees reaching retirement eligibility. He gave a high-level overview of the operating budget and funding sources and presented a list of the capital projects scheduled for this fiscal year.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Molinari said that consideration is being given to adding a desert disc golf course in the northern area of the city. He gave an overview of the ongoing project timelines. He noted that the Commission will spend time discussing both Pima Park and Cactus Pool when they review the fiscal year capital and Prop 490 budgets. He explained that Pima Park renovations and Pima Park pickleball courts are being done in alignment with a large regional stormwater project being funded through Maricopa County Flood District, which could affect the timing of the pickleball court instillation.

Mr. Molinari noted the Thompson Peak Dog Park design has not been finalized and that there are challenges because it is located under all three of the power companies' lines. The project is waiting to go to the Development Review Board for approval. A feasibility study reviewing the viability of moving the Cactus Pool facility to Mountain View Park is underway.

Mr. McKee suggested that further discussion regarding capital projects and project funding be agendaized for the September meeting.

4. COMMISSION SCHEDULE AND TOPIC PLANNING

Kevin McKee, Deputy Parks and Recreation Director, provided an overview of tentative future Parks and Recreation Commission agenda items, opportunities for Commissioner engagement, the current Parks and Recreation Commission meeting format, and review of tentative future agenda items. It was noted that the National Recreation and Parks conference falls the week of the next scheduled Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. Commissioners agreed to move the September meeting to the 10th.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Molinari explained that the Arizona Department of Water Resources issues water allotments based on areas of turf, and the City irrigates accordingly. He noted that the City will have to react to the Colorado River water shortage and how it will affect the drought plan. Discussion about the water shortage ensued, and it was determined that irrigation and water allotments can be agendaized for a future meeting. Mr. Molinari confirmed that the City participates in sustainable landscape management practices.

5. PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT GOALS AND VISION

Kevin McKee, Deputy Parks and Recreation Director, provided short-term department objectives for the current 2025/26 fiscal year, as well as long-range visionary goals for the future. His presentation included a review of the division guiding documents, including the 2024 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the 2023 Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan, the division's vision and mission statements, FY 2025/26 Division priorities, and long-range visionary goals.

Visionary goals included the following projects:

- Eldorado and Vista del Camino Master Plan improvements
- Cactus Aquatic and Fitness Center replacement
- Indian School Park Master Plan

Mr. Molinari said that one of the primary justifications for exploring the viability of moving the aquatic center is foundational issues that exist at Cactus Park. In the event that the aquatic center is moved to Mountain View Park, consideration could be given to the functionality of Cactus Park as more of a sports complex.

Mr. Molinari noted that the Parks and Preserve sales tax budget discussions will begin in October.

Recess was taken from 12:01 p.m. to 12:15 p.m.

6. PARK AND PRESERVE SALES TAX UPDATE

Chris Walsh, Deputy Parks and Recreation Director, provided an overview of capital and maintenance investments, staffing additions, branding and communication strategy, and upcoming Commission involvement in the FY 2026/27 budget and five-year spending plan process for the Parks and Preserve sales tax. As part of his presentation, he gave an overview of the Prop 490 Tax, noting that the budget authority for this year became available on July 1, 2025. Of the 0.15 percent of Prop 490 tax that is collected, Mr. Molinari noted, 51 percent is designated to a bucket called parks improvements and 14 percent is allocated for parks maintenance.

Mr. Walsh reviewed completed and upcoming projects including:

- Turf restoration projects
- Tree pruning and planting
- Playground planning
- Sport court resurfacing and improvements

Mr. McKee gave an overview of the department's branding and communication. He said that staff has been working with the City's Office of Communications to develop new branding and standard language. With reference to the Prop 490 tax, the standard language will be "Parks and Preserve sales tax, approved by voters in 2024 as Prop 490." Efforts are also being made to get messaging out to the public through a Prop 490 website page, a newsletter, and social media presence.

7. LUNCH AND PARKS HISTORICAL PRESENTATION

Due to time constraints, the presentation celebrating 65 years of history of Scottsdale's Parks and Recreation Division and the Parks and Recreation Commission was continued.

8. ADJOURNMENT

COMMISSIONER QUALE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER KULL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0) BY ROLL CALL VOTE. CHAIR MASCHHAUPT, VICE-CHAIR VREELAND, COMMISSIONERS ALFORD, ARNOLD, KULL, MCGARRY, AND QUALE VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 12:39 p.m.