

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE
PHOENIX SONORAN PRESERVES AND MOUNTAIN
PARKS/PRESERVES COMMITTEE
February 23, 2026 6:00 p.m.
In person and via Webex**

<u>Committee Members:</u>	<u>City of Phoenix Staff:</u>	<u>Others Present:</u>
John Furniss	Jarod Rogers	
Tice Supplee	Josh Parnell	
Trevor Harwood	Mike Faustich	
Bill Fallon	Claire Miller	
Tamera Zivic (virtual)	Isaac Pina	
	Joy Custer	
	Donald Domann	
	Justin Olson	
	Will Wright	

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chairperson John Furniss called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Approval November 18, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Committee Chairperson Furniss called for an approval of the November 18, 2024, meeting minutes. Committee Chairperson Tice Supplee requested fixing typos of her last name on pages 2 and 3 and updating page 5 to say "Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center". Committee Chairperson John Furniss made a motion to approve. Committee Member Tice Supplee seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 5-0. All Committee members eligible to vote and present approved: Furniss, Zivic, Harwood, Supplee, and Fallon.

3. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Committee Chairperson Furniss called for public comment.

4. South Mountain Speedway Update at South Mountain Park and Preserve (Information and Discussion)

Deputy Director Jarod Rogers provided updates on South Mountain Speedway which had racing cars from approximately 1960-2023. Deputy Director Rogers provided a history of the racetrack, the site facilities (bleachers, press box, concession stand, and restrooms), pictures of the infrastructure, operating

agreements, facility condition assessment and electrical site assessment, and associated activities.

From 1974-2023, the City had operating agreements with the Phoenix Quarter and Half-Midget Racing Organization and the Valley of the Sun Quarter Midget Association. In 1989, the South Mountain Master Plan approved the track to be removed. The PSPMPPC supported removal of the track.

The operators of the track, Valley of the Sun Quarter Midget Association, ceased all track operations once the results of the facility condition assessment results were finalized and determined that the facility has imminently unsafe and hazardous conditions, primarily due to electrical safety issues. Salt River Pima-Maricopa and Gila River Indian Communities both submitted letters in support of removing the raceway.

The Parks and Recreation Committee reviewed the options presented at the August 2024 Parks Board meeting. Deputy Director Rogers stated that since there is no suitable location identified for the raceway to be relocated, the next steps are proceeding with cultural resources survey, removing infrastructure, and adding native species.

Committee Member Trevor Harwood asked if the raceway or Preserve came first. Deputy Director Jarod Rogers clarified that South Mountain Park came first, but the raceway precedes the Preserve designation.

Committee Member Trevor Harwood followed up asking if there is any significance to the track being there originally that would make it worth putting some signage with a little bit of history, or is it preferred to remove all evidence. Committee Member Harwood also asked if there will be any public input for the removal and restoration of the site. The City has discussed putting signage at the site, but Deputy Director Jarod Rogers suggested that the Visitor Center would be a more ideal alternative since the actual site will not be a big draw for visitors once the track is removed. There will be signage to signify its existence at the original site, and Deputy Director Rogers desires that artifacts will be displayed at the Visitor Center to pay homage. Committee Member Trevor Harwood supported taking artifacts from the site and displaying them in the Visitor Center.

Committee Member Trevor Harwood also asked if the restrooms, electricity, etc. can be repurposed for a trailhead. Deputy Director Jarod Rogers clarified that the restroom is too far from the City's sewage, and the restroom was full of tires the last time he walked through the site. There may be trails that may run through but not a trailhead. Deputy Director Rogers would like to use milkweed and other pollinators in the area.

Committee Member Tamera Zivic said she is glad the City is moving forward with removing the track.

Committee Chairperson Furniss asked the panel for additional questions. There were none.

5. Hackamore Master Plan Effort Update (Information and Discussion)

Committee Chairperson John Furniss requested for Parks Supervisor Claire Miller to speak on the Hackamore Master Plan.

Parks Supervisor Claire Miller presented on the Hackamore and Stetson Hills Loop undeveloped site near the Deem Hills Recreation Area. The undeveloped 9.9 acres is adjacent to Sandra Day O' Connor High School and commercial property. The east trailhead parking lot has 14 parking spaces, a small ramada, chilled drinking fountain, and access to trails. The shared parking at Deem Hills Park has a restroom, access to trails, shared services of the dog park, pickleball, soccer, playground, basketball, and tennis court.

The City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation department purchased 158 acres from Arizona State Land Development for \$11.9 million which allows for trail connection from Hackamore to Deem Hills. This allows the potential for up to 128 parking spaces which can be utilized by students during the school year with ~25 designated solely for trail use.

Parks Supervisor Miller shared next steps for the master plan public outreach effort. These include three public meetings and one public survey in March/April. The Master Plan will be presented to PSPMPPC in May/August and then to the Parks Board in September. Construction documents will be finalized in late 2026 to mid-2027 with late 2027 construction. Parks Supervisor Miller emphasized that community members want more park amenities in the area. Currently, the undeveloped site is experiencing vandalism, and the park rangers have had to take down crosses from the top of the hill.

Committee Member Bill Fallon asked how the public survey will be published and managed and if people in the area will feel like they had their suggestions heard. Deputy Director Rogers replied that the Steering Committee will review the survey before it is shared with the community. The first meeting will be brainstorming from the community, and the second will be voting on the ideas from the first meeting.

Committee Member Trevor Harwood brought up edge protection and reducing dirt bike/electric bike issue. Additionally, he asked if it would be beneficial to reach out to HOAs in the area to get more public input or visibility into what the City is doing. Deputy Director Rogers said the City will work with the HOAs, and there will also be signage on the site during planning and construction with a QR code to the public survey. Committee Member Harwood followed up to ask if

there any archaeological artifacts on the site. Deputy Director Rogers confirmed that the City will do everything necessary to protect the cultural resources.

6. Chairpersons' Report - Comments by the Chair on issues related to the Committee (Information only)

Committee Chairperson John Furniss commended City staff member Isaac Pina on his short notetaking tenure, the NRD staff for presenting, and fellow Committee members for attending.

Committee Chairperson John Furniss discussed three components to funding: City budget, impact fees from new development, and 3 PI (\$40-50 million in contributions to various projects and support for the Parks and Preserves). Part of the process is an annual review and attestation that is done. Committee Chairperson John Furniss was appointed by the City of Phoenix Mayor and approved by Phoenix City Council to chair the 3 PI Board.

Committee Chairperson John Furniss suggested that it would be helpful for the Parks and Recreation Committee to hear the process the 3 PI Board has for how projects are identified, how it works, and how it relates to the work the Parks and Recreation Board is doing. There will be Phoenix City Council meetings in March, April, May, June, and July for various phases of budget process.

7. Committee Comments/Requests/Future Agenda Items – The Chairperson will entertain Committee member comments or requests related to the Committee without Committee discussion. (Information Only)

Committee Member Tice Supplee made a visit out to the Verdin Development Office on Sonoran Parkway and spoke to one of the companies selling homes there. They confirmed that all the vegetation used for landscaping is entirely native plants. Their parcel that is furthest south is currently being developed, and it never had a stipulation for having edge. The developers are working with the County to get the trail system in place to connect to the community with public access. Committee Member Tice Supplee noted that the developers seem to be complying with all stipulations.

Committee Member Tamera Zivic commented that this was a great meeting, and she especially loved the photos in the PowerPoint presentations given by City staff. She would like to find out more about the Code of Conduct now that it has been in place for a while and how it works in the preserves.

Committee Member Bill Fallon is interested in hearing more about trail safety issues and related policy, especially as we are heading into hotter months.

Committee Member Trevor Harwood requested a rundown of the proposed trail closures before the next meeting, as well as an update on how the Park Steward

program is doing. He also noted that he has been capturing wildlife statistics in the Preserve area and reporting on it to support edge protection, but he is happy to share with the Parks and Recreation Board data on how much wildlife there is, where they are coming from, and where they are going.

8. Deputy Director's Briefing – (Information Only)

Deputy Director Jarod Rogers provided an update on the North Mountain Park renovation which is on schedule and expected to start construction later this year with an estimated completion date of late 2027. QR codes will be added to signage in the park to update visitors on the expected changes.

Deputy Director Jarod Rogers mentioned the recent TSMC land purchase of 900 acres adjacent to its current North Phoenix semiconductor facility. Parks Department will oversee 120 acres.

The 30th Annual National Trail Trek occurred last weekend. Deputy Director Jarod Rogers mentioned that it was the first time this has taken place in February instead of January, and it was well attended with 350 hikers. He noted that this is an important event to help the Trails Fund.

Deputy Director Jarod Rogers provided an update on the South Mountain Activity Complex which will host its grand opening on 4/2/26.

Following up from a previous meeting, Deputy Director Jarod Rogers said that the precarious boulder at Echo Canyon Boulders has been successfully removed due to safety concerns.

Deputy Director Jarod Rogers commended City staff member Donald Domann for his work at 2333 W. Sunrise Dr. to restore the land with a native desert hydroseed mix after the home was removed.

Deputy Director Jarod Rogers introduced Joy Custer as the new Management Assistant I.

9. Adjournment

Committee Chairperson Furniss adjourned the meeting at 6:44 p.m.