

**SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES**  
**PHOENIX PARKS AND PRESERVE INITIATIVE (PPPI) OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
**January 19, 2024**

Phoenix Council Chambers, 200 W. Jefferson St., Phoenix AZ 85003  
and Virtual on WebEx

**Committee Members:**

Patricia Duarte, Chair  
Ira Feldman  
John Furniss  
Sarah Porter  
Gary Kaasa

**Absent:**

None

**COP Staff:**

Cynthia Aguilar  
Martin Whitfield  
Tracee Hall  
Theresa Faulk  
Todd Shackelford  
Seidy Dominguez  
Mary Alejandro  
Tannia Ruiz  
Robin Kelley  
Paul Li  
Selina Demmert  
Ray Ficcaglia  
Ken Haack  
Wendy Jankunas  
Jackie Jacquez  
Sylvia Hockey  
Jarod Rogers  
Scott Coughlin  
Joe Diaz

**Others Present**

Rachel Ormsby  
Jerry Van Gasse

**1. Call to Order**

Chairperson Patricia Duarte called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

- a. Phoenix Parks and Preserve Initiative Oversight Committee Summary Minutes – January 19, 2022**
- b. Phoenix Parks and Preserve Initiative Oversight Committee Summary Minutes – January 30, 2023.**

Committee Member Furniss made a motion to approve the minutes with the following corrections:

Item 2a – January 19, 2022 minutes: Remove one of the two times Theresa Faull is listed under COP Staff.

Item 2b – January 30, 2023 minutes: Replace the “C” in Cember with a “M” at the top of page 3, under Item 3.

Committee Member Kaasa seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

### **3. Approval of the 2023 Independent Accountant’s Report on Examination of an Assertion**

PRD Management Services Deputy Director Theresa Faull introduced Rachel Ormsby with FORVIS to share her findings.

Ms. Ormsby reviewed the 2023 Independent Certified Accountant’s Report. She confirmed the Parks and Recreation Department (PRD)’s compliance with the usage requirements of PPPI funds as established in Proposition 101 amended by Proposition A on July 1, 2008. She stated the examination was completed in accordance with attestation standards required by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Ms. Ormsby explained testing was performed on randomly selected samples of transactions. She believed 30 samples were tested and all were found to have no violations, issues or findings.

She stated the City also receives an Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) audit in accordance with government auditing standards and that the PPPI activity is included in the report under the Parks and Preserves Capital Projects Fund and is subject to annual audit procedures. A copy of the full report has been provided to all committee members in advance.

Ms. Ormsby drew attention to page 4 of the examination which displayed a summary of expenditures and encumbrances. The total of \$40,236,000 also tied to the ACFR exhibit. She explained how the two reports with same total shows that results are a match which is also part of the audit.

Chairperson Duarte thanked Ms. Ormsby and invited Committee members to share their questions or comments.

Member Furniss stated that based on Ms. Ormsby’s overview, FORVIS examined approximately 25 percent of the projects. He asked if she knew the total value of the projects that were examined.

Ms. Ormsby replied that though she did not have that information readily available, she could get the information back to the Committee members. She added that

every project is subject to a random sample and reiterated that they looked at 30 projects and during the exam they drilled into the makeup of each project as part of the review. She stated that FORVIS will add this information to future reports as well.

Committee Member Furniss stated that in the report some of the projects have sufficient detail in their scope descriptions while others are broader. He asked Ms. Ormsby if she felt this was sufficient description considering the large amounts of funds for the projects.

Ms. Ormsby replied that the information for each project is based on how City staff set up each project. She added that the descriptions could be more detailed.

Deputy Director Faull stated that when a project is set up, the tool used for capturing this information limits the number of characters that can be entered into each field. However, within the system there is more detail provided for each project.

Committee Member Furniss suggested that for future reports he would like to see more information and description for each project.

Deputy Director Faull stated staff would keep this in mind for next year's report.

Committee Member Kaasa asked Ms. Ormsby if she could share what type of items within the examination might raise a red flag to FORVIS and asked for an example.

Ms. Ormsby shared that it comes down to reviewing the details and looking for items or things that are obvious or do not make sense. She stated that if there are items that do not go hand-in-hand with the task this would raise a flag. She shared an example: projects for fire or police that are not connected to Parks in their description could raise a red flag. She concluded that during the exam FORVIS did not observe these types of items.

Chairperson Duarte inquired why there were two entries for Parks Development and PPPI.

Deputy Director Faull responded that funds are separated into two categories: flatland and preserves which is why it appeared as two entries.

With the conclusion of this discussion, Committee Member John Furniss made a motion to approve the report. Committee Member Gary Kaasa seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

#### **4. Review of FY 2022-2023 PPPI Projects and Overview of Planned Projects for FY 2023-24**

Director Aguilar provided PRD's inventory data which included flatland parks, preserve acreage, trails, facilities, pools, play structures, athletic fields and lighting data. Additionally she presented the list and overview of PPPI completed projects. Completed projects in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 included the following:

- Cesar Chavez Community Center
- Dreamy Draw
- Gila Valley Lookout
- Little Canyon Park
- Sandpiper Pickleball Courts & Tennis Court Resurfacing
- Solano Park Skate Park
- Splash Pads – El Oso Park & Mariposa Park

Committee Member Furniss commented he had a chance to visit the new Cesar Chavez Community Center and found it to be beautiful.

Committee Member Feldman asked if there is a fee for use of exercise.

Director Aguilar responded that there are class fees and annual fees.

Committee Member Feldman shared that he recently went hiking and appreciated that the trail site had accessibility for those with disabilities.

Director Aguilar introduced Deputy Director Todd Shackelford to continue the presentation with current projects underway in FY 2023-24.

Deputy Director Shackelford highlighted the following projects and provided an overview of each:

- Eastlake Pool Renovation
- Highline Park (formerly Circle K Park)
- Roadrunner Park
- North Mountain Park
- South Mountain Activity Center
- La Pradera Park
- Paradise Valley Park

Committee Member Kaasa shared that he and his wife visited Lookout Mountain on Monday. He commented that the park was filled with people and that is what we need to remember, that these parks are about people and they are so important for the community.

Chairperson Duarte concurred with Committee Member Kaasa and thanked staff for their work.

Committee Member Furniss added that making sure what is being spent is what is wanted by constituents is an important part and tremendous credit is given to staff.

## **5. Committee Chairperson's Report**

Chairperson Duarte shared that Committee Member Furniss has been selected to serve on another City committee: Impact Fee Ad Hoc Committee.

## **6. Committee Comments/Requests**

Committee Member Feldman stated that he lives near Reach 11 Park and would like to see improvements to the park such as shelter and rest areas. He commented that crossing Tatum Road to the park is difficult and unsafe.

## **7. Call to the Public**

Public Speaker Jerry Van Gasse commented on his concerns with the audit/examination and the Committee's role, the lack of transparency and accountability and his desire to request the Committee be dissolved. He also voiced concern over the timing of the meeting notification.

Chairperson Duarte stated the agenda was posted per City Open Meeting Law rules.

## **8. Adjournment**

Chairperson Duarte adjourned the meeting at 9:54 a.m.