FOOTHILLS PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:
March 10, 2015

The regular meeting of the Foothills Park & Recreation District was held at Peak Community and Wellness Center, 6612 South Ward Street, Littleton, Colorado 80127.

I. CALL TO ORDER: Director Bradley called the regular meeting to order at 6:07pm.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Director Bradley led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

III. ROLL CALL: Director Maulik: Present
Director Bielkiewicz: Present
Director James: Present
Director Sutton: Present
Director Bradley: Present

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Ronald Hopp, Executive Director; Paul Rufien, District Counsel; Derek Eberhardt, Manager of Recreation Facilities; Patricia Parkin, Director of Administrative Services; Colin Insley, Director of Parks Planning and Construction; Tom Woodard, Director of Golf; Barb Butler, Manager of Recreation Programs; Richelle Riley, Recording Secretary; other Foothills staff and members of the public.

Potential conflicts of interest were disclosed pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 18-8-308(2), 24-18-109(3)(a), 24-18-110, and 32-1-902(3).

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: Director Maulik moved that the Foothills Board of Directors approve the March 10, 2015 agenda as submitted. Director Sutton seconded the motion. Poll of the Board: Director Maulik, aye; Director Bielkiewicz, aye; Director James, aye; Director Sutton, aye; Director Bradley, aye. The motion was approved.

V. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 24, 2015 MINUTES:

MOTION: Director Maulik moved that the Foothills Board of Directors approve the minutes of the February 24, 2015 board meeting as submitted. Director James seconded the motion. Poll of the Board: Director Maulik, aye; Director Bielkiewicz, aye; Director James, aye; Director Sutton, aye; Director Bradley, aye. The motion was approved.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS:

A. NRPA Midwest Regional Parks & Recreation Conference

As the NRPA citizen representative for the Midwest Counsel, Lori Hoffner shared information with the Board about the upcoming 2015 Midwest Region National Conference. This year the conference is going to be held in Grand Junction, with education sessions held April 26 – 28. Ms. Hoffner distributed information and pointed out a session on the Power of Citizen Advocacy and said the Counsel is really trying to push emerging leaders and support them in their roll in parks and recreation. This year there is the opportunity to sponsor a student, Ms. Hoffner explained. The Board discussed and approved up to $350 for student sponsorship to the conference.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Clement Park Irrigation Design Services

Referring to information in the packet, Colin Insley pointed out a contract with Stanley Consultants who were hired to do the redevelopment project at Clement Park. As Phase I of the redevelopment we are doing the irrigation system, and have funding in place from Jefferson County Open Space. Due to the amount of the contract, staff wanted to bring it to the Board for review and approval. Mr. Insley reiterated the contract, principally, is for irrigation and irrigation design. He provided a brief timeline of the project, indicating we would like to have it finished by spring of 2016.
Observing there have been some recent closures at Clement Park because of safety issues, Director Maulik asked if those would be addressed. Mr. Insley answered this will be separate.

Recently we closed the restroom concession building at the ballfield complex; staff are getting information on the best way to proceed with repair or rebuild of that building.

**MOTION:** Director Maulik moved that the Foothills Board of Directors approve the Independent Contractor Agreement with Stanely Consultants, Inc. in the amount of $107,770 for irrigation design services at Robert F. Clement Park as discussed, and further, give the Executive Director permission to execute all documents. Director James seconded the motion. Poll of the Board: Director Maulik, aye; Director Bielkiewicz, aye; Director James, aye; Director Sutton, aye; Director Bradley, aye. The motion was approved.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Tribute Bench**

Mr. Insley discussed there is a park patron who would like to place a tribute bench in Clement Park. Referring to information in the packet, Mr. Insley pointed out a small plaque, letter, location and picture of what we have done in the past that would meet current standards and specifications. The individual will pay for the cost of the bench, staff will install the bench.

**MOTION:** Director Bradley moved that the Foothills Board of Directors approve the request to add a park bench along the lake trail at Robert F. Clement Park, to include a plaque with wording as stated in this March 10, 2015 board memorandum. Director Sutton seconded the motion. Poll of the Board: Director Maulik, aye; Director Bielkiewicz, aye; Director James, aye; Director Sutton, aye; Director Bradley, aye. The motion was approved.

**IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

Adding to the report provided in the packet, Mr. Hopp said we have a staff member, Alec Hines, who has been coaching the Dakota Ridge High School hockey team for the last four years. This past year, they went to the Frozen Four.

Mr. Hopp indicated staff are talking with the Mesa View HOA about some opportunities to have better utilization of the Sixth Avenue West pool. The HOA stepped forward to find out what they could do to incent individuals from their neighborhood to utilize the pool, and we are in conversations on how to do that, Mr. Hopp explained.

Mr. Hopp pointed out South Jeffco Sports Association’s (SJSA) request to consider working together in regard to potentially building a field house on property that we manage at Fehringer Ranch. Mr. Hopp said there is a Master Plan which calls for a variety of recreation related facilities and one of those is a field house that could include indoor basketball and volleyball type courts. Mr. Hopp suggested SJSA is in the exploratory stage of trying to determine if we could have some sort of partnership, and wanted to gage some receptivity of whether we want to continue to dialog with them about that. There was discussion, and consensus to continue to have conversation with SJSA and keep the Board updated.

Concerning a contract to provide paddle boats at Johnson Reservoir in Clement Park, Director James said he would like that to go to an open bid process to other people that might be interested. Director Bradley mentioned he was approached by an individual who has the same idea about providing a service, and had passed that information to Mr. Hopp. We have been contacted by several individuals, Mr. Hopp said, and have informed them that we don’t have the capital to build any type of infrastructure to be able to build a boathouse, docks, etc. If people are willing to invest in that type of infrastructure in exchange for some sort of contract to allow paddleboards, or whatever, we would be happy to entertain that. Mr. Hopp reiterated there would probably be some significant capital investment on their part. There was discussion about the water quality.

Director Bielkiewicz informed the Board that the Foothills Theatre Company had a successful opening weekend for their play, Awesome America. He talked about how much work goes on behind the scenes and formally thanked Kelly Rodriguez and Denise Panis for their help, as well as staff members who went to the show.
X. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. BMX Discussion

Mr. Hopp recalled that at the February 24th board meeting, the Board asked staff to prepare additional information related to the BMX track project at Schaefer Athletic Complex, and asked Paul Rufien, our legal counsel, to provide some information. Mr. Hopp indicated that people had concerns or thoughts about specific things. Staff met with members of the BMX board to discuss the public’s concerns and determine some mitigation factors that we could utilize and develop some information to address those concerns. Mr. Hopp went through those things as outlined in the memo provided which included parking and traffic, grandstands, dust, lights, noise, views, fencing, disc golf course. Specific to Fehringer Ranch, Mr. Hopp indicated there was a request to see if it would be a possibility for a potential relocation site for the BMX track. He informed it is not part of the Fehringer Ranch Master Plan, not part of the site development plan that was approved by Jefferson County, and outlined the processes that would need to take place to allow that type of use – similar to what was done in 2005 to allow this use at the Schaefer Athletic Complex. To have the same infrastructure, Mr. Hopp explained, the overall cost for this type of track to be successful would be about $240,000. Mr. Hopp said staff looked at other sites when the due diligence was done initially, and did not come up with any other sites with infrastructure in place that we think could accommodate a BMX track on any of our properties.

Director James expressed concern about the parking with events that are going to be going on, would there be any way to add more parking if this gets bigger than what our existing capacity is. Mr. Hopp described what those opportunities could be.

Director Sutton questioned if the non track areas are maintained. Bill Turner, with Mile High BMX, said the areas outside the track will have a gravel loop road for pedestrian traffic and occasional vehicular traffic. The areas not part of the track and not part of that loop will be a combination of native grasses and some pocketed areas of more formal landscape. He confirmed that it is maintained.

Concerning the agreement, Paul Rufien discussed there is a license agreement that is in place between the District and the BMX group. He explained a license agreement is a right to use the property, no ownership gets transferred. The agreement was entered into in 2012, the term of that license agreement runs through December 31, 2016. Mr. Rufien explained there are optional (by both parties) renewal periods after that time. Between now and 2016, termination of the license can only come in an instance of default by the BMX group. Mr. Rufien pointed out that virtually every aspect of the use is subject to approvals, everything has to flow through the District. Mr. Rufien offered that he is unaware of any instance of default at this time; the BMX group is in compliance with their obligations which have mostly to this point been planning and going through the necessary county approvals. In regard to lighting, Mr. Rufien reiterated lighting would be an improvement to the property itself and the District would have to approve.

Director Maulik expressed she was one of the board members who originally approved this lease agreement three years ago, still supports the BMX track, and explained why. She cautioned against muddling through the next two years just to kick them out in 2016. Director Maulik observed these people are spending a lot of energy and money on this project.

Director James expressed he attended the community meeting Thursday night a month ago and using an example from his Belleview Farms neighborhood, said he understands the resident’s concerns. Comparing this example with the BMX track, Director James pointed out this is not a rezoning, these properties are near a regional park. The BMX track is part of the recreation, park, and sports spectrum; it is not outside of it. Director James reiterated his concern is mainly the parking, and that is something he will monitor. Recalling the community meeting that was held and the comments that were directed to our employees, specifically Colin Insley and county employees, Director James said were very inappropriate and it was very disappointing that we as a community can’t come together and agree to disagree on a professional, respectful level. Director James suggested that in the future, those frustrations be directed towards the Board; we will talk about it and handle it at a level of mutual respect. Director James expressed support for the BMX track and thinks they have shown themselves to be a very respectful organization.
Director Bielkiewicz discussed property values and shared information he had received from a realtor, and discussed noise concerns. He expressed respect for the concerns and thinks at this point our hands are tied with the contract.

Director Sutton had voted for this and said he envisioned it as a good thing. He encouraged the homeowners to have some representation, get a group and start dealing with the BMX folks to see exactly what it is they are planning and how the operation runs, get involved with it and understand it. He acknowledged change is something we tend to fear and don’t like, but the reality is sometimes change may work out positive.

Director Bradley indicated this is a democratic process and board members can differ in terms of their opinions. He told the group that nothing is written in stone; this contract is for another two years. Things change depending on circumstances. Director Bradley opened the floor for public comment.

Brooke Martin, who lives near the proposed project, apologized on behalf of some of the neighborhood. She acknowledged it is a park and as stewards of the park, it is Foothills’ responsibility to use the property in a responsible way for the community who wants to recreate, and also for the community that is the neighborhood that is affected by any use as a result of a project. She said the homeowner’s main concerns are going to be lack of notice of any changes from the existing agreement, the dust, the parking. Ms. Martin asked if they can make grass, if they can keep the sound down, and if they can involve the homeowners in some of the process.

Earl Watkins, who lives across the street from the park, suggested the BMX track could be moved to Fehringere Ranch. He said that area is invading a little bit more each year toward the houses in that area.

Kevin Nielson, operator of the track that is proposed, said he is completely transparent to the neighborhood. If they have an issue, Mr. Nielson said he is more than willing to see what he can do to maintain the track better and make sure it is working for what the neighborhood wants. He said he would like more neighborhood approval and more people to come and check it out, and discussed how he will keep the track maintained.

Jim Herdener said the track will have some sort of an impact on property values, and that needs to be taken into consideration. He questioned why the response at the eleventh hour; the homeowners weren’t notified in a thorough way. He indicated the BMX track said they had about $12,000 invested so far, and suggested the neighborhood could reimburse them for that if they want to look at another place.

Mary Watkins said Donna and Earl Watkins have lived in their house for 60 years, and they see the foothills from their picture window. She asked the Board how they would feel if someone wanted to put a picket fence, a parking lot, a BMX track in their front yard. She expressed concern about property values. Ms. Watkins suggested it is a money making proposition and that’s all people care about.

Rhonda Swanson asked about the distance between the homes and the project and it was discussed.

Joan Casey asked if concessions will be permanent buildings or temporary buildings, and what kind of restroom facilities will be provided for the track. She asked who to call if there is a violation of people using the track after hours. Mr. Hopp answered the concessions would not be a permanent building, restrooms would be san-o-lets unless a relationship can be worked out with Rocky Mountain Roller Hockey for utilization of restrooms in that facility, as well as concessions in that building. Mr. Hopp said people could call either Foothills or the sheriff in terms of enforcement of non-granted activity.

Bill Turner, member of board of directors for Mile High BMX, said he has been part of the planning process over the last two to two and a half years. He proposed if Mile High BMX is asked to go elsewhere, the project would be dead; it’s not financially viable for them to go elsewhere. Mr. Turner pledged to the neighbors that it is their strong intent to be good neighbors. He proposed the dust problem is one that their facility being there will make it better than what it is. The lights are a far off in the distant thing that would have to be approved at that time. Many of the other issues that have been raised are current issues such
as traffic, noise, and parking. Those are current problems and through scheduling and through what they are bringing to the District as an amenity are things they are going to work their hardest to steer around and not make worse.

Gina Writz said in November she successfully relocated two colonies of prairie dogs that were located on the northwest and northeast corners of Coal Mine and Wadsworth. She expressed her concern is the wildlife in the area. Ms. Writz said she is working with Kevin to look at possibly doing a passive relocation.

Chris Holodny talked about the allegations of insulting people at the community meeting, and asked the Board if they have questioned any of the residents that supposedly had conflicts or thought they were being deceived. He asked that the Board pay closer attention to what’s going on and keep an eye on people. Mr. Holodny said he would be happy to work with Bill and talk about vegetation and trees, etc., and expressed appreciation to the Board.

Director Bradley proposed the BMX people and the homeowners need to have some type of ad hoc committee, and emphasized we are legally committed for another two years. Director Bradley thanked the people who have been here.

Ms. Writz elaborated on the process of a passive relocation in regard to the prairie dogs. She explained you irritate their burrows and disperse the prairie dogs out of the way. She said there are ways to do natural barriers so they don’t go into homeowner’s backyards, such as high grasses where prairie dogs don’t want to go into. Ms. Writz suggested getting higher trees or bushes backed up against the fences and the homes and create natural barriers. She said she would like to work with community members and look at creating vegetation and leave the prairie dogs. There was discussion. Director Bradley mentioned the District has a policy on prairie dogs for future use, and if Ms. Writz is interested in talking to the homeowner’s association, that is up to her.

Jamie Weirach commented in regard to improving upon the process of notifying all the neighbors.

Katherine O’Sullivan pointed out that the nature of BMX races is that they are short, and said the track wants to control the dust as well as the neighbors, it’s the same goal.

B. 2015 Capital Projects

Mr. Hopp discussed that as part of the 2015 budget we have just over $1.5 million budgeted for capital equipment and improvements. Typically, we try to address safety issues, issues related to inefficiency, and protect or enhance revenues. He pointed out that has been a successful model as we have increased our earned income over the last six years by about $1.7 million per year. Mr. Hopp indicated we used $600,000 from cash reserves, we did carry over $185,000 from the previous year from projects that haven’t been completed, we are expecting a reimbursement from Jefferson County for the Ward Street replacement of about $125,000, there is $246,000 in the Golf Development and Improvement Fund, and we had about $382,000 that we budgeted from our general mill levy and revenue streams.

The list of things we plan to accomplish in 2015 does not include the $1million that we have earmarked from land sales and $1 million from Jefferson County Open Space towards the irrigation in Clement Park and the children’s play area. Mr. Hopp highlighted the replacement of cardio equipment at Peak and Ridge, a protection of a revenue source and potentially a revenue enhancement. Beyond that, Mr. Hopp said it is equipment, replacement of mowers, IT equipment, etc.

Director Bielkiewicz asked if the money for golf cart replacement includes the carts that were vandalized. Mr. Hopp answered no; those will probably come out of the golf operations budget. He explained the hope is that for a $1,000 reward we might be able to generate restitution and we and the insurance company will go after that.

In answer to Director Maulik, Patricia Parkin said we have been stretching out IT equipment and computer replacement as much as eight years, and are getting to four or five years now, and elaborated. For the most part, we are on a slower than industry average replacement.
Director James expressed he would like this information to be advertised or marketed because these are the costs we have to spend to keep Foothills going, and the public needs to know how much it really costs to keep things up. He suggested a press release or putting it on the website. Mr. Hopp clarified that only 30 percent of our revenue is tax money.

Per Director Bradley’s question, Derek Eberhardt discussed gel coat slides, capital improvement project to address safety at Deer Creek and Weaver Hollow pools.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

The regular meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm. The next regular board meeting will be held at 6pm on Tuesday, April 28, 2015, at Peak Community and Wellness Center, 6612 South Ward Street, Littleton.

Submitted by:

Richelle Riley, Recording Secretary