



**PARKS & RECREATION BOARD  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, August 13, 2024 6:00 P.M.**

Freestone Recreation Center  
1141 E. Guadalupe Rd., Gilbert, AZ

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ben Kalkman, Chair  
Brian Cannon, Vice Chair  
Desa Rae Hoffman  
Michael Clark  
Holly Pritulsky  
Florence Daniels  
Rick Kettner  
Jennifer Yang  
John Dale

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Robert Carmona, Parks and Recreation Director  
Rocky Brown, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director  
Katie DeVenuto, Business Manager  
Lane Gram, Recreation Manager  
Kylie Sorensen, Parks Manager  
Dan Wilson, Recreation Supervisor  
JP LaCroix, Recreation Coordinator  
Bryan Bouk, Recreation Coordinator

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**PUBLIC PRESENT:**

None

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Kalkman called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.
2. OATH OF NEW MEMBERS: Jennifer Yang took her Oath of Office for New Members.
3. ROLL CALL: Roll call was taken, and it was determined that a quorum was present.
4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
5. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS PRESENT: Members of the audience may address the Board on any item, not on the agenda that is within the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Board. The Board's response is limited to responding to criticism, asking staff to review a matter commented upon, or asking that a matter be put on a future agenda.  
  
No members of the public requested to speak.
6. NEW EMPLOYEE INTRO: Robert Carmona introduced Katie DeVenuto, the new Business Manager for the Town of Gilbert. Rocky Brown, the previous Business Manager, is now the Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation.
7. DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES AND PROJECT OVERVIEW:  
Robert Carmona shared a list of one-time projects within Fiscal Year 2025. Capital Improvement Projects include town-wide projects that are within the master plans or are a priority within Fiscal Year 2025, such as Urban Lakes Renovation, Playground Replacements, Water Tower Plaza, Parks Facility Fiber Connection, Trail System Repairs, Marathon trails, SERL parking lot connection, Riparian Education Center, Community Center Kitchen Remodel, and Electric Charging Stations conversions. Water Tower Plaza is currently under construction. This project is projected to be completed by the end of 2024. Gilbert Regional Park is currently in the design phase, with 50 acres currently built, and over 100 acres being planned for expansion. Desert Sky Park is in pre-design for Phase 2, and the team is brainstorming options of expanding the park around the completed Phase 1. As a promotion to receive feedback, starting in September there will be a daily treasure hunt, in partnership with a local artist, where patrons will visit the park and find the art piece, while also having

access to a way to provide feedback on the park development. In regards to the Facility Master Plan and space needs, Rocky Brown gave a brief overview of the facility assessment needs of Municipal Center II, for both the exterior and interior of the building, but also the placement of departments within Muni II. This is currently in the drafting process. The Town of Gilbert is due for the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) reaccreditation in January 2025, which requires an annual report is done once every year for five years. There are 10 different chapters, which include 36 fundamental standards, 118 non-fundamental standards, required by CAPRA to be completed to receive this accreditation. There are only 206 certified agencies in the country and only 10 in the state of Arizona. Riparian Education Center has a comprehensive plan for the development, design, and construction that includes parking lot connectivity and expansion. Five primary components include education displays and exhibit area, classrooms, office space, restrooms, and flex area. The Town of Gilbert is also due for a Certified Autism Center renewal, which takes place every two years. This is important due to the impact it provides such as inclusion reports, sensory bags, partnerships with NAU and UofA, sensory-friendly events and spaces, and thoughtful park design. The goal is to achieve training in 80% of the department by the end of September 2024. The renewal will include additional training levels, unlimited training spots, and more sensory guides.

8. FREESTONE REC CENTER REPORT: JP LaCroix and Bryan Bouk presented the Freestone Recreation Center update, including facility improvement projects, Kidz Kamp programs, facility memberships, and future endeavors. For facility improvement projects, the goal was to have a functional fitness room that was a multipurpose area and is now developed to give a “crossfit” feel and open space to workout without the cost of other gyms. Cardio equipment was updated, where they focus on spacing, inclusivity, and new innovative equipment. In Spring 2024, they also updated the strength equipment layout and equipment where they created more space, more inclusivity, and all LED lighting. The Kiddy Korner playground was renovated in July 2024, where they also installed a communication board to provide inclusivity for individuals with developmental or non-verbal needs. Bryan Bouk provided a brief overview of stats on the Kids Kamp programs – such as 25 sessions since 2023, 1500 hours of training, and 695 participants since 2023. Programming includes guest speakers such as Gilbert Police and Fire, as well as different themes like Harry Potter, the Olympics, and Space is the Place. Freestone Recreation Center \ Dan Wilson presented the Freestone Annual Report covering FY 2021-2023. Average memberships have increased by 33%, with a total increase of 115% since 2021. Facility Attendance has increased by 5% since 2022, 52% since 2021. Program attendance has increased by 2% since 2022, and 170% since 2021. Group exercise class attendance increased by 30% since 2022, 331% since 2021. Group exercise classes offered increased by 10% since 2022, and 210% since 2021. Survey responses from programs and classes increased by 46% since 2021. In 2023, 86% would recommend their instructor and 93% are satisfied with the facility.

9. DEPARTMENT UPDATES:

There are no Administration updates at this time. Katie DeVenuto shared for Business & Upcoming Events, with the Last Splash at Mesquite Aquatics Center on August 17th, Gilbert Family Triathlon in October 2024, and a Soundbytes concert in October 2024. For Facilities, the team is working along with the Arizona heat and maintaining any facilities maintenance needed. Kylie Sorensen shared an update on Parks and mentioned the team is working on multiple projects at this time. The team is also currently prepping the fields for the heavy sports season to begin. Lane Gram shared updates for Recreation, which is currently in the fall session, and starting to plan for winter session events and programming. Cactus Yards is opening applications for tournaments soon.

10. MEETING MINUTES: A motion was made by Member Cannon to approve the May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Member Clark. Motion carried 6-0.

11. REPORT FROM CHAIR & BOARD MEMBERS: No updates or reports were provided by the Chair.

12. REPORT FROM COUNCIL LIASION: No updates or reports were provided by the Chair.

13. ADJOURNMENT: The Regular meeting was adjourned at 7:46PM.

ATTEST:

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Ben Kalkman, Chair

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Kylie Sorensen, Staff Liaison

