

**CITY OF PHOENIX  
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD SUMMARY  
MINUTES  
March 26, 2026**

Virtual meeting hosted on Webex.

<b><u>Board Members Present</u></b>	<b><u>Staff Present</u></b>	<b><u>Community Members</u></b>
Tony Moya, Chair Aubrey Barnwell (virtual) Jessica Fotinos Rick Naimark Sarah Porter (virtual) Leon Thomas Emma Viera (virtual)	Cynthia Aguilar Dustin Cammack Martin Whitfield Brandie I. Barrett Todd Shackelford Maxwell Wilson Danielle Poveromo Tannia Ruiz Cindy Peiz Jana Krcek Dalia Adams Seidy Dominguez Ray Ficcaglia	Daniel Penton Jerry Van Gasse

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Moya called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. with Board members Barnwell, Fotinos, Naimark, Porter, Thomas and Viera in attendance.

**2. INFORMATION ONLY**

No formal presentation on these items. Information only.

**2a. American Indian Veteran’s Memorial Update**

**3. CONSENT ITEMS**

No formal presentation on these items. Consent and request for approval only.

**3a. Parks and Recreation Board Summary Minutes – February 26, 2026**

**3b. Request Authorization to Issue Papago Archery Range Request for Proposals**

**3c. Request to Vend at City Parks**

Board member Viera moved to approve consent items 3a through 3c, with Board member Naimark seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

**4. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Information and discussion items will be presented verbally to the Parks Board and are for

discussion only. No action will take place on these items at this meeting.

#### **4a. Phoenix Water Supply**

Water Resources Management Advisor, Maxwell Wilson presented on the water challenges facing Phoenix, explaining that the city relies on three main water sources: the Salt and Verde Rivers, the Colorado River, and groundwater. He noted that although Phoenix's population has grown significantly since 1990, overall water use has remained stable because per capita consumption has declined. He emphasized that current challenges are driven by reduced supply caused by rising temperatures rather than increased demand. Mr. Wilson also reviewed reservoir conditions and the potential risk of reaching "dead pool," while noting the Bureau of Reclamation's commitment to preventing this outcome and its view that major water use cuts primarily affect the Central Arizona Project. He outlined the timeline for the federal NEPA process, which will result in new water use reductions beginning in January 2027, and summarized Phoenix's four stage drought management plan, noting the city has been in a Stage 1 Water Alert since June 2022. The extent and duration of federal cuts will guide how the city adjusts its drought response moving forward.

Board member Naimark commented on the water production graph, observing that if residential consumption is declining while overall production remains steady, industrial and commercial use must be increasing. He also asked about the Parks Department's efforts to develop a system that would connect the Salt River Project and Colorado River supplies to support water distribution throughout the City of Phoenix.

Mr. Wilson responded that a drought pipeline project was installed in the Dreamy Draw Recreation Area, which serves as critical infrastructure to face water decline challenges and allows water restrictions to be equally applied across geographic areas of the city. The project is now complete.

Board member Porter noted that the Parks Department has examined water efficacy in parks in the past. She mentioned as residents consider desert landscaping in place of grass to limit water use, the importance of parks as communal green spaces for the community and the need to ensure parks have adequate water supply also increase.

Mr. Wilson agreed about the importance of parks as green spaces related to residents' quality of life. This will be considered as we move through the drought management plan, which is designed to allow flexibility in response and includes community input.

Board member Naimark referenced the urban heat island effect and asked about balancing the need to reduce water use with the cooling effect of parks and trees.

Mr. Wilson responded that working closely with the Office of Heat Response and Mitigation, the team has released landscape watering guidelines to encourage efficient watering and focused on planting trees in locations that maximize cooling benefits.

Board member Fotinos inquired about the impact of federal and state-level water allocation litigation on the City of Phoenix's drought management plan.

Mr. Wilson explained that the response would depend on how the litigation moved forward and the individual results of each lawsuit.

Chairman Moya questioned if the City has a plan to identify critical times for water supply issues and if internal departments have plans to address cutbacks.

Mr. Wilson responded that Phoenix maintains significant back-up supplies and an active drought management plan for this purpose. He noted there is an interdepartmental Drought and Shortage Response Team, and each department has created their own drought response plan, which are expected to be in placed by summer 2026.

Board member Vierra asked about the coordination with the Department of Planning and Development to update building codes to allow the use of rainwater in residences.

Mr. Wilson explained that the City of Phoenix just updated building codes and is working with the Office of Environmental Programs to develop a guide for rainwater harvesting for residential landscaping.

Board member Porter pointed out Phoenix currently reuses all water put into wastewater treatment plants and that residential grey water recycling would reduce the overall water supplies currently being recycled.

#### **4b. 2026 Parks and Recreation PHXPlays Summer Camps**

Deputy Director Danielle Poveromo presented an overview of the 2026 PhxPlays Summer Camp, which operates at 26 sites across Phoenix for children ages six to twelve, including an adaptive option at South Mountain Community Center. She reported strong early registration since opening on March 19, with many sites filling quickly but spots still available. She credited improved outreach through a new website, social media, and community-focused marketing, and noted that Phoenix remains the most affordable option with weekly costs ranging from free to \$80, including all meals. She outlined the program's activities, family orientation, and weekly newsletters, and shared that feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with families valuing affordability and convenient locations most.

Chairman Moya asked about changes in registration from last year and waiting lists.

Deputy Director Poveromo explained the addition of weekly registration and drop-in rates, based on feedback for previous surveys. She explained once a location is filled, prospective participants will be placed on a waiting list that is reviewed by staff.

Chairman Moya thanked staff and praised the program, especially for feeding participants throughout the summer.

### **5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

Discussion and possible action items are for information, discussion, and possible action.

#### **5a. Park and Facility Renaming Request**

Director Whitfield reviewed action taken at the Formal City Council meeting on March 25, 2026, which included a directive to rename all City of Phoenix property named after Cesar

Chavez. He noted the authority to rename parks and park facilities lies with the Parks and Recreation Board and reviewed the associated renaming standards and processes. He concluded with a request for the Board's approval to begin the renaming process for Cesar Chavez Park and Cesar Chavez Community Center.

Jerry Van Gasse suggested that the park and community center be renamed after Jesse Owens, who lived his last nine years of his life in Phoenix and he was highly engaged with the community.

Daniel Penton advocated to restore the park to its original name, Gilbert Alvord Park, in honor of the man who donated the land to the Parks and Recreation Department in 1975.

Board member Naimark commented on the swift action of the City Council and expressed his support to begin the process of renaming the park. He requested information on the history of the renaming of Alvord Park. He asked about the balance between speed and public outreach in the renaming process and whether artwork is under the authority of the Board.

Director Whitfield responded that staff have begun communication and planning a timeline for the renaming. He noted that artwork falls under the authority of the Arts and Culture Department, and they have already covered the Cesar Chavez monument in the park.

Board member Naimark requested the final disposition of the monument.

Chairman Moya requested if the process is approved to begin today, staff should begin a thorough process and return to the Board in May 2026 with an update. He also encouraged staff to consider names not representing individuals.

Board member Fotinos moved to approve item 5a, with Board member Naimark seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Director Whitfield clarified that the item will be brought back to the Board in April.

## **6. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no public speakers.

## **7. BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Chairman Moya announced two upcoming family friendly events, the Desert West Eggsperience and the 5th Annual Pecos Park Kids Triathlon.

## **8. BOARD COMMENTS/REQUEST**

No Board member comments or requests.

## **9. DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING**

Assistant Director Shackelford highlighted the early opening of splash pads in City parks in response to higher-than-average temperatures this month. He described the 24th Annual PHX AM amateur skateboarding contest held at Desert West Park last weekend. He concluded with

the announcement of the mobilization of Lone Mountain Park on March 24 and described the amenities that will be constructed in the park.

Assistant Director Barrett gave an update on the Heat Safety Program trail restrictions and noted installation of upgraded electronic gates and signage at select trailheads. She announced that the Piestewa Peak trailhead renovation project was recognized with the Arizona Forward Environmental Excellence Award, highlighting accessibility upgrades and sensitivity to the environment and natural preserves.

Director Whitfield recognized former Director of the Parks and Recreation Department Dale Larson in the audience. He highlighted upcoming events to celebrate the 2026 NCAA Women's Final Four basketball competition taking place in Phoenix the first week in April, and described upgrades to facilities at Washington Park. He concluded by welcoming the Department's two newest Deputy Directors, Lance Gray and Greg Leicht.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Moya adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.