

**CITY OF PHOENIX  
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD  
SUMMARY MINUTES  
October 23, 2025**

Virtual meeting hosted on Webex.

<b><u>Board Members Present</u></b> Kelly Dalton, Chair Aubrey Barnwell (virtual) Dorina Bustamante Tony Moya Sarah Porter Leon Thomas Emma Viera  <b><u>Board Members Absent</u></b>	<b><u>Staff Present</u></b> Cynthia Aguilar Martin Whitfield Brandie I. Barrett Dustin Cammack Jarod Rogers Joe Diaz Ray Ficcaglia Tannia Ruiz Cynthia Peiz	<b><u>Community Members</u></b> Jeff Spellman (virtual) Julia Taggart
--	--	---

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Dalton called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. with Board Members Bustamante, Moya, Porter, Thomas, and Viera in attendance.

**2. INFORMATION ONLY**

No formal presentation on these items. Information only.

**2a. Arizona Public Service Utility Pole Replacement Project**

**2a. Annual Update on Phoenix Trails and Heat Safety Program**

**3. CONSENT ITEMS**

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

**3a. Parks and Recreation Board Summary Minutes – September 25, 2025**

**3b. Phoenix Sonoran Preserve Committee Reappointment**

**3c. Event and Vending Requests in City Parks**

Board Member Moya made the motion to approve consent items 3a through 3c. Board Member Viera seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

**4. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Information and Discussion items are presented for informational purposes only,**

**and no action will be taken.**

#### **4a. 24/7 Code of Conduct Answering Service Update**

Deputy Director Rogers presented on the Code of Conduct Answering Service. He explained that the Department has offered a dedicated Code of Conduct phone line for approximately one year in response to public requests to report code of conduct violations on park property. In September 2024, the Department contracted with a call service provider to provide intake and distribute information to Park Rangers on duty.

Deputy Director Rogers stated callers are advised to contact 911 to report crime and emergencies taking place in a park. For code of conduct violations, the public can call the 24/7 line. Park Rangers, who are on duty 24 hours a day, review and prioritize reports and visit parks as needed, although their presence may not always be observed by the public.

He also noted that while the current service was something that could be done timely and, in a cost, efficient way, the intent was always to pilot the service and identify opportunities for improvement. Potential improvements include the ability to inform residents of the outcome of their call, development of a searchable database and the ability to generate reports on the types and frequency of calls received. The Department plans to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP), to seek a qualified vendor who can provide these services.

Board member Barnwell joined the meeting virtually at 5:05 p.m.

Chairperson Dalton inquired about the existing system's capabilities, specifically whether the public receives any type of notification when a Park Ranger responds to a call and whether the system allows for analysis of call themes or topics.

Deputy Director Rogers explained that the public does not currently receive any notification when a Park Ranger has responded to a call. While an automated response feature may be possible in a future system, additional resources may be needed to provide specific updates. He also noted that the existing system does not have the capability to analyze call topics.

Director Aguilar acknowledged that while other City systems provide responses to residents, those programs may have dedicated staff or additional resources to manage inquiries. The Department will explore options for an automated response feature as part of the RFP.

Board Member Bustamante emphasized the importance of ensuring any new system includes analytical capabilities and noted that the public may sometimes report perceived violations of the Code of Conduct rather than actual infractions.

Board Member Porter expressed concern about individuals using motorized bikes in parks in ways that disturb other patrons or create unsafe conditions. She inquired whether the Code of Conduct phone number is displayed on Code of Conduct signage or other signs within the parks.

Deputy Director Rogers stated that the phone number is included on park signage

Board Member Porter also asked how calls are handled when Park Rangers are off duty or when situations require involvement from the Phoenix Police Department.

Director Aguilar reminded the Board that Park Rangers now operate 24 hours a day, allowing them to respond to calls and coordinate with the Police outside of park hours. She noted that as part of the phone line campaign, the Department is educating the public about the code of conduct phone line and when residents should call this number versus the police department.

Board Member Moya requested that any future system includes the ability to track or report on response times.

Board Member Viera expressed concern about ensuring that individuals in need within the parks are offered appropriate assistance and resources.

Director Aguilar explained that Park Rangers are equipped with contact information and work closely with the City's PHX C.A.R.E.S. Team and the Office of Homeless Solutions to offer or connect individuals with available services.

Board Member Bustamante expressed interest in including an automated response feature as part of the new system.

Chairperson Dalton inquired about the anticipated timing for releasing the Request for Proposals (RFP).

Director Aguilar stated that the Department hopes to release the RFP in December or January. Once a vendor is selected and approved by City Council, an update will be provided to the Board. She added that as part of the RFP process, the Department is reviewing other City systems to potentially model an automated response component.

There was one virtual speaker for this item.

Mr. Spellman expressed the importance of having a system that updates in real time. He noted that when reporting crimes to Crime Stop, he receives an immediate text confirming the report and a follow-up message once the issue has been addressed.

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

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

5a. Approval of Park Master Plan and Naming of an Undeveloped Park Site at 99th Avenue and Lower Buckeye Road

Deputy Director Joe Diaz presented on the master plan and naming of the undeveloped park site located at 99th Avenue and Lower Buckeye Road. He outlined the site's history,

location, and planned development. He explained that the property was purchased in 2002 with funding from multiple City departments and that \$8.27 million from the 2023 GO Bond program has been allocated for the park's master plan design and limited construction. The site currently includes the Estrella Precinct Police Substation, built in 2009, and a fire station added in 2024. The site includes 111 acres for park development.

Deputy Director Diaz reported that community input was gathered through two public meetings and an online survey available in English and Spanish, which received 901 responses. Residents prioritized amenities such as restrooms, a playground, a splash pad, shaded areas and sports fields, and selected Sierra Estrella Park as the official name. Based on this feedback, a master plan was drafted and approved by 92 percent of respondents. Renderings and concept plans were presented, with construction planned in multiple phases due to the park's size and funding requirements. The first two phases will complete the master plan and develop the east side of the park in coordination with the new library, while later phases, which are currently unfunded, would include the remaining park areas and a community center. Phase one is anticipated for completion between 2027 and 2028.

Board Member Moya asked about the inclusion and location of a splash pad within the Sierra Estrella Park master plan.

Deputy Director Diaz explained that the master plan includes a misting station located on the west side of the park, which is planned for completion in future phases.

Director Aguilar explained that the current GO Bond funding covers only the design and development of about one-third of the park. She noted that residents have identified a lack of sports fields as a key concern and that the City's long-term plan is to return to voters every five years to seek additional bond funding for future phases, including development of the east side of the park and the splash pad.

Board Member Moya asked about the proximity of the nearest splash pad and the type of community center planned for the park.

Director Aguilar stated that the nearest splash pad is located at Trailside Point Park and that the planned community center would be similar in design and function to the Cesar Chavez Community Center.

Board Member Porter observed the lack of public comment at the meeting and asked if the Department had any insights into why community members were not present for the discussion.

Director Aguilar stated that the community appears to be well aligned in their vision for the park and likely felt their input had been adequately heard and incorporated during the master plan outreach process.

Board Member Bustamante commended staff for achieving a high level of community approval for the master plan and expressed appreciation for the Department's efforts to minimize the impact of sports lighting.

Board Member Moya asked if the Department was aware of how the Public Works Department planned to use its portion of the property and emphasized the importance of incorporating shade and appropriate building materials into the design.

Director Aguilar explained that while the Public Works Department had not provided any specific plans, the site would likely include space for storage and maintenance of fleet vehicles. She added that shade is always a core consideration in park design and is most effectively incorporated early in the planning process.

Board Member Viera asked whether specific components of the park could change as future phases are developed and inquired why certain priorities identified in the public survey were not included in phase one.

Deputy Director Diaz responded that the Department intends to follow the approved master plan as closely as possible, though some spacing and layout adjustments may occur during construction.

Director Aguilar added that full completion of the parks design will reflect the community's priorities, however the park will be designed in a way that enhances cost efficiencies so all amenities can be built.

Director Aguilar also noted that while the identified GO Bond funding will fund design and construction of a portion of the park, but not 1/3 as originally estimated due to design and construction costs. The park will need to be constructed in multiple phases.

Board Member Moya moved to approve the master plan and the park name, Sierra Estrella Park. Board Member Bustamante seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously, 7–0.

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

Julia Taggart thanked staff for their support of a recent festival at the North Mountain Visitor Center and encouraged the Board and members of the public to visit the center, noting that it is operated by dedicated volunteers.

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

No report.

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

No comments.

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

Assistant Director Barrett highlighted the Butterfly Release Event held at Rio Salado on September 27, where volunteers helped clean the park and remove invasive species before and during the release. Attendees were able to experience butterflies landing on

them or gently holding one on their finger, creating a memorable and engaging community event.

Assistant Director Whitfield recapped several Halloween-themed events, including the Festival of Frights at South Mountain Park and Preserve and Scaryvale at Maryvale Park and Community Center. He also noted the success of the Phoenix Pride Festival and Parade at Steele Indian School Park, which featured food vendors, art displays, youth and VIP areas, and community showcases that celebrated and promoted visibility for the Phoenix LGBTQ+ community.

Director Aguilar provided updates on the Department's Master Plan efforts, announcing eight upcoming community meetings to reach areas with lower participation and ensure citywide representation. She also shared information about the upcoming ribbon-cutting ceremony for Eastlake Park Pool, the first inner-city pool to include a heater. This feature will allow extended aquatics programming and open swim through November, serving as a pilot to assess community interest in fall and winter aquatics services.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Dalton adjourned the meeting at 6:01 p.m.