

DRAFT Minutes
Neighborhood Advisory Commission
February 1, 2023



Draft minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023, hybrid meeting with in-person attendance option and a virtual component using Microsoft Teams platform

(MEMBERS) Present: Hannah Moulton Belec, Lane Carraway, Martha Carter, Annette Fields, Jana Lynn Granillo, Gabe Hagen, John Kozel, Kriste Melcher, Stacy Novis, Nancy Puffer, Joel Stern, Suri Wall

(MEMBERS) Absent: Brandon Abrahams, Nicholas Weller

City Staff: Alex Jovanovic, Deputy Community Services Director – Parks and Recreation; Maegan Pardue, Public Information Officer - Communication and Marketing Office; Laura Kajfez, Neighborhood Services Specialist; Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist

Guests: Dominick Flores, on behalf of Pete O. family

Agenda Item 1 - Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Chair Stern

Agenda Item 2 - Attendance Roll Call

(MEMBERS) Present: Hannah Moulton Belec, Lane Carraway, Martha Carter, Annette Fields, Jana Lynn Granillo, Gabe Hagen, John Kozel, Kriste Melcher, Stacy Novis, Nancy Puffer, Joel Stern, Suri Wall

(MEMBERS) Absent: Brandon Abrahams, Nicholas Weller

Agenda Item 3 - Public Comment

Dominick Flores explained that he was attending the meeting on behalf of the Pedro “Pete” Obregon family. He and family members are excited to learn more about the Tempe Streets Renaming Committee’s recommendations for parks and streets renaming. Dominick thought this topic was going to be further considered and discussed during this NAC meeting. Commissioner Moulton Belec, NAC’s representative on the Streets Renaming Committee, shared that the final meeting of the Committee was held in December 2022 and all the new naming recommendations are next going to be considered by Mayor/Council at their February 9 Work Study Session. Meeting details (and agenda when available) will be on www.tempe.gov/calendar Commissioner Moulton Belec and some fellow Committee members plan to attend to lend support and speak to their recommendations.

Agenda Item 4 - Review and approval of meeting minutes: January 4, 2023 NAC Meeting

Motion: Vice Chair Hagen made a motion to approve the Jan. 4 minutes as presented.

Second: Commissioner Carter seconded the motion

Result: Minutes were approved unanimously by a vote of 12 - 0

Commission Member Ayes: Hannah Moulton Belec, Lane Carraway, Martha Carter, Annette Fields, Jana Lynn Granillo, Gabe Hagen, John Kozel, Kriste Melcher, Stacy Novis, Nancy Puffer, Joel Stern, Suri Wall
Absent: Brandon Abrahams, Nicholas Weller

Agenda Item 5 - Welcome and Introduction of New Members

Commissioners Lane Carraway (85281) and Stacy Novis (85284) are the two latest member additions to the Neighborhood Advisory Commission with this February 1 meeting marking the first meeting for both. Commissioners welcomed the newest members to the group. Staff added that when the newest 85283 appointee joins NAC members at the March 1 NAC meeting, of the fifteen commission members total, seven will be new members. This is unprecedented.

Agenda Item 6 – New Park Rules Overview, Alexander Jovanovic, Deputy Community Services Director – Parks and Recreation

Tempe City Code specifies the Community Services Director may administratively establish additional prohibited activities at specified parks. After a pilot program in September, the city updated its parks ordinance to implement the new rules at all 52 parks beginning in December 2022. Rule changes that apply on a broader level to all parks, require a City code change, approved by Tempe City Council. The rules are designed to address negative behaviors and ensure that amenities like ramadas and playground equipment can be enjoyed by all and that parks continue to be safe, welcoming spaces. The updated park ordinance, approved by the Tempe City Council on Nov. 3, can be found [here](#) and members were provided the new rules in their meeting packets.

The new rules were designed to enhance the community experience in parks and prohibit:

- Use of ramadas for more than four (4) hours per day (unless otherwise reserved)
- Obstructing access to or preventing others from using any park amenity, sidewalk or ramada, and/or causing any damage to landscaping
- Use or possession with intent to use illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia

The new rules are designed to enhance the community experience in parks. Read the city's news release [here](#).

Commission member comments and questions included:

?: Why wasn't language regarding shopping carts included? Alex agreed to follow up. *Staff note: Follow up subsequent to meeting response – Language regarding shopping carts and other wagon type equipment was initially discussed. Ultimately, the language was not included for reasons such as: enforceability of such language, legality of the language, targeting, etc.*

?: Who did you get input from before making these rules changes? Neighborhood parks are located in neighborhoods and are part of the neighborhoods. Why wasn't the Neighborhood Advisory Commission included in providing feedback on the proposed rules before they were approved and implemented? Can you include us next time?

A: This fell under the scope of both the Parks, Recreation Golf and Double Butte Cemetery Advisory Board and the Desert Conservation Commission and both groups provided input. It could be that timing for decision making and implementation due to safety and other concerns did not allow for additional boards and commission review. I am new to my position (3 weeks) but I will share this feedback and find out.

Staff note: Follow up subsequent to meeting response – Timing, mainly the need to implement the code changes was the significant factor. As an ordinance, there were two public Council meetings provided for the public to make comments.

?: How will the new rules regarding ramadas work? Who will be monitoring or enforcing?

A: The code change regarding ramadas only applies when a ramada has not been reserved the Parks & Recreation permit process. Not sure of long-term plans or how this will apply to newer ramada locations such as Meyer Park. Reports from community

members will be a part of it if undue duration of use or concern re: behaviors happening in the ramada area.

?: Can you please communicate to Meyer Park area residents regarding how the ramada is going to function and how the new rules may be applied? This messaging could be included as part of the Feb. 28 park celebration event.

A: That's a good suggestion that I will pass along.

?: Are the penalties going to be financial? Do people call Police or Code Compliance to report issues and concerns? What does enforcement look like?

A: It will likely depend on what type of violation is being reported and who responds to it. Most likely a warning would be issued and a requirement to vacate the area. Could result in a trespass warning from Police Department. No camping is listed under Criminal Penalty Section so I'm assuming that could be a criminal offense which could also result in a fine or charge imposed. There will be some officer discretion, the Police Department is likely better suited to answer these types of inquiries. **Staff note: Follow up subsequent to meeting response** - Community members are encouraged to call the Tempe Police non-emergency number. In the event of an emergency, they should call 9-1-1. If the ramada is reserved, an additional contact number is provided on the ramada permit. This would not result in a code compliance response from Community Development.

NAC Member Comment: The intent of this ordinance is to eliminate setting up a base camp and making it difficult and uncomfortable for other users of the park to use it. I have seen everything ranging from drug sales, use of drugs and drug paraphernalia, sex, fighting and camping in my neighborhood park area.

?: Regarding blocking access or restricting portion of the new rules, how is this going to be addressed? It seems subjective. How do we ensure that unhoused people are not harassed if all they are doing is sitting or hanging out?

A: Agreed that it will definitely be challenging. Different people respond and identify differently which behaviors make them feel unsafe. Officers will have some discretion and will need to use it. **Staff note: Follow up subsequent to meeting response** - Tempe Police Department and Tempe in general is very compassionate and does not harass the unsheltered population. Additionally, Tempe PD works very closely with the Tempe HOPE team to provide resources when they contact people that are unsheltered.

?: What is meant by the word enjoyment? Any conversation regarding which calls will be going to Care 7 or Hope rather than an armed police officer with the possibility of escalation? I think there needs to be some additional dialogue, workshopping and greater detail provided about how these calls will be routed and addressed.

A: Rules are not meant to target any group of people, rather the behaviors. Rules are meant to connect folks to appropriate staff and appropriate available resources. *Thank you for your suggestions, I will share them.* **Staff note: Follow up subsequent to meeting response** - Each individual's feeling of safety or feeling of illegal activity occurring will drive their decision to report an issue.

NAC Member Comment: I think we all know that the noted behaviors are far more likely to involve and concern unhoused individuals and the new rules will far more often be applied to them.

NAC Member Comment: I share some of the noted concerns about enforcement and the potential for unintended consequences.

?: Does the prohibition for illegal drug use include marijuana? It's common to notice it being used in parks I visit.

A: Yes, I believe so. Though it is now legal in Arizona, it is not legal to use in public spaces. *Staff note: Follow up subsequent to meeting response - This is a legal question that I would need to defer to Tempe PD or the City Attorney's Office.*

Chair Stern and Vice Chair Hagen requested a May or June check in and report out of any Police Department calls, arrests and fines since program implementation. Alex agreed to follow up. *Staff note: Follow up subsequent to meeting response - Alex reaffirmed he will connect with the appropriate police commander on the possibility of the Police Department providing follow up on impacts of the new rules.*

Agenda Item 7 -New Public Information Officer Introduction, Maegan Pardue

Maegan noted that she joined the City of Tempe Communications Team about one month ago and has her B.S. in Strategic Communication and her Masters in Public Administration. Self-described as a passionate public servant with both city and state level experience in Arizona and prior to that in Oklahoma, Maegan is the newest Public Information Officer who will be working with the Neighborhoods Office on multiple different events and public outreach efforts. These include but are not limited to: Neighborhood Day at the State Capitol, Neighborhood Award Nominations, Neighborhood Celebration, Getting Arizona Involved In Neighborhoods (G.A.I.N.), HOA Classes and more.

Maegan has been provided the link to NAC's "the hub" site where member shared documents are stored including the Editorial Calendar created by former Commissioner Harris.

In addition to her Neighborhood Services related work, Maegan will also be assisting the Municipal Utilities Division with their communication, processes and public outreach initiatives and spearheading a number of other communication efforts such as those for monsoon season and City water breaks.

Agenda Item 8 Neighborhood Award Nominations Rating Process

Elizabeth provided a brief overview of the rating process established and refined over the years by Neighborhood Advisory Commission members. Members were provided a sample rating form for each of NAC's six categories in their meeting packets. Chair Stern encouraged everyone to make time to review their March packets promptly once emailed out and to read over and rate all nominations for each category prior to the March 1 meeting. Member's individual ratings for each nominee are then shared at the meeting and from there an average for each nominee is calculated and recorded. This exercise is intended as a starting point for member discussion and dialogue. Honorees for the Neighborhood Award categories will be selected at NAC's March 1 meeting and notifications will then take place via email shortly thereafter for all nominees and nominators.

Agenda Item 9 Review of Commission's 2023 Goals and Discussion of Strategies

Chair Stern expressed his desire to continue to build upon the effort, work and visioning of former Chairs Hannah Moulton Belec and before her, Doreen Garlid, now a Councilmember. Their collective efforts helped to increase understanding of who and what our neighborhoods are and helped to transform the Neighborhood Advisory Commission from more of a listening group to a service-oriented group. These changes have made NAC service for all members more meaningful and impactful.

Members need to further discuss and determine -
What do we want to accomplish this year?
What are our goals and priorities?
What methods will we use?
What actions will we take?
What interests do individual members have?
What capacity to participate do individual members have?

Do we want or need to hold and host separate working groups outside the regular, monthly NAC meetings?
And/or Do we want to set aside time during meetings to better address goals and priorities?

Time for much additional, deeper discussion was limited due to meeting time constraints. Members expressed interest in adding *with attention to equity* to already agreed upon goals. Additional areas of focus mentioned may include lower economic status neighborhoods and helping them to find some champions to help build community, inactive associations and areas with non-existent associations and neighborhoods that have never applied for a grant or have not applied in recent years. Staff emphasized that as noted in the meeting packet memo, some prior presentations may need to be repeated to ensure all members (new and established) have the same baseline understanding of existing processes and practices before proceeding.

Agenda Item 10 - 2023 Neighborhood Celebration Event Updates

Members were again encouraged to continue to help share news about the nominations being open and to consider potential nominees they can submit or contacts to reach out to encourage them to self-nominate or to submit for a person or place or activity. The deadline is February 15 and all categories being open is being heavily promoted through social media, Tempe Today (water bill newsletter), Neighborhoods email list serve and advertisements.

Staff shared that City Clerk's office is undergoing some staffing and schedule changes and is no longer able to host a Boards and Commission table at the April 1 Neighborhood Celebration event. A static, self-serve table can be set up with a variety of topical materials of neighborhood interest and bags can be provided. Rather than individual commission tables, Boards and Commission members will be encouraged to wear conversation starter type buttons at the event and to mingle and share information about their respective commission meeting dates, priorities, upcoming events, wishes to collaborate with others and more.

Staff will need to be placing a name tag order soon for all the new NAC members. Any veteran member who has lost or misplaced their name tag was asked to reach out to staff so they can be included in the next order.

A site visit is being planned soon for Planning Committee members to visit the Fiesta Ramadas site at Kiwanis Park and discuss onsite location placement options for various activities.

Agenda Item 11 - Parks and Streets Renaming Committee Update

The brief update information was covered under Agenda Item 3 - Public Comment.

Agenda Item 12 - Tempe Tomorrow General Plan 2050 Update

The outreach process has been very robust with a number of Arts in the Parks tabling activities and most recently at the Unity Walk. Survey is open at www.tempe.gov/form and members are encouraged to complete it.

Agenda Item 13 - Proposed Future Agenda Items

New addition - May or June check in and report out of any Police Department calls, arrests and fines since New Park Rules program implementation.

Agenda Item 14 - Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas
Reviewed by: Shauna Warner