

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD (MPRAB)  
**February 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

**Location:** In person at the Parks and Recreation Dept office: 1801 N 4th St NW, and Zoom

**Members Present:** ***At-Large*** - Valerie Martinez (Chair); ***District 2:*** Julie Radoslovich; (Vice Chair) ***District 5*** - John Ajie; ***District 7*** - Cynthia Serna; ***District 9*** - Fredrica "Rickie" Bergquist

**Members Absent:** ***At-Large*** - Tony Johnson; ***District 1*** - Vacant; ***District 3*** - Vacant; ***District 4*** - Vacant; ***District 6*** - Vacant; ***District 8*** - Vacant

**City Staff Present:** Deputy Director David Flores; Deputy Director Dennis Vasquez; CIP Program Manager, Cheryl Somerfeldt

**Guests Present:** District 8 Policy Analyst Elaine Romero; Wilderness Society, Representing 10 Coalitions, Hally Bert

**1. Call to Order:**

- a) Chair Valerie Martinez called the meeting to order at 12:35 pm.
- b) Board members were introduced.
- c) Guests were introduced.

**2. Business Meeting:**

- a) Agenda for this February 4, 2025 meeting was approved unanimously.

**3. Public Comment #1**

- a) Elaine Romero, Policy Analyst for City Councilor District 8 Dan Champine, introduced a new request to rename High Desert Park to Dorothy Jensen Blanchard Park, and it will be heard at the following meeting on March 4, 2025. Chair Martinez explained the steps in the MPRAB Park Naming Policy, which allows for community transparency.

Hally Bert, Urban to Wild Albuquerque Program Manager for The Wilderness Society, commended the board on the recent name change request meeting; and working with Together for Brothers on the International District Library Park project. They are looking for ways to collaborate at the City and County level on issues facing the community; and promote transparency about parks projects and programs. They would like more transparency regarding how and why projects are funded and in what order, and hopes to have continued collaboration on these topics. The Wilderness Society wants to champion parks, and encourage equitable investment. They urge regular updates via webpages, emails, and NA notices to promote trust.

John Ajie asked to define transparency in this case. Hally Bert describes it as discussion about the framework and process to determine investments in parks. Using the International District Library (IDL) Park as an example, the past community engagement from 2019-2020 is not available to view on the project webpage even though it did occur. The Wilderness Society would like the webpages to reflect that community engagement is standard practice and affects allocation of resources for ongoing park development.

Deputy Director Flores stated that many people were engaged in the process of design for International District Park. Right now, the project is in the analysis and funding stage. The public process is important and will be added to the webpage.

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Vice Chair Radoslovich encouraged the Wilderness Society members to join the MPRAB as it is a valuable way parks information is shared and received.

Chair Martinez states that the IDL Park project has been in process since 2014, and these projects can go on and on. There is a lot of activity and then it is quiet, so the public can feel like they do not know what is happening, and want to be up to date on changes. The board will work to provide updates to their constituents to keep the public better informed.

**4. Old Business**

- a) Request for Park Activation Funds: City Councilor Baca will sponsor a request to include \$80,000 appropriation in FY 2026-2027 city budget for park activation

The City budget is currently in-process. Vice Chair Radoslovich reached out to Councilor Baca. Cynthia Serna reached out to Councilor Fiebelkorn, and John Ajie sent an email to Councilor Baca and Councilor Lewis to advocate for Park Activation Funds.

Elaine Romero said that she will talk with Councilor Champine regarding supporting this request.

- b) Update: appointments to the board

Annie Montes has submitted an application to be the District 7 representative, and Councilor Fiebelkorn will put the appointment on the Council agenda asap.

City councilors and the mayor may be waiting for a second application for other vacancies, so it is unclear how to advocate for an appointment. The mayor could appoint a candidate if there is only one application.

Vice Chair Radoslovich mentioned that Councilor Baca offered to review all names to see if some have not been forwarded to City Council yet.

- c) Update: request for opioid settlement funds

Vice Chair Radoslovich is working on moving this forward.

**5. New Business**

- a) Notification: two council bills were recently enacted: F/S O-24-56 (to “preserve the environmental features of the City, allow more efficient park refuse collection, more effective and unhampered custodial care of the premises, and protect the health and welfare of the citizens of the City”) and O-54-28 (public camping).

Deputy Director Flores has not heard yet how this ordinance will affect the Parks Department.

Chair Martinez asked if the impetus for the ordinance was the community and/or councilors, and would like more notice on ordinances that affect parks so the board members can advocate or disseminate information.

Elaine Romero stated that City Council agendas should be reviewed for related items. There is a letter of introduction for all bills assigned to committee, so it is typically at least a 2-4 meeting process to discuss new ordinances. Some bills are held over or given to immediate action. Board members can also reach out to her with specific questions.

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b) Action Item: board officer annual elections - Chair and Vice-Chair

John Ajie states that the MPRAB bylaws should be changed so that the chair and vice chair serve 2 years instead of the current 1-year term.

Parks staff will research the MPRAB bylaws.

Cynthia Serna suggested that the current chair and vice chair stay in their current roles.

John Ajie nominated Valerie Martinez as Chair and Julie Radoslovich as Vice Chair for second terms. Cynthia Serna second.

The board voted unanimously to appoint Valerie Martinez as Chair and Julie Radoslovich as Vice Chair for the 2025 term.

c) Discussion: suggested revisions to the MPRAB park renaming policy requiring threshold of support prior to board action.

Chair Martinez suggested editing the MPRAB Park Naming Policy to add a requirement for the applicant to seek community support prior to applying since the community will show up overwhelmingly in opposition to a park name change if support does not exist. Perhaps the policy should require the applicant to engage with the neighborhood association prior to submitting an application.

John Ajie suggests a petition prior to the application.

Deputy Director Flores stated that past name changes had little opposition likely because they started with City Council support.

Chair Martinez wants to encourage engagement with the public. Does not want to discourage requests for a name change, but wants to advise the applicant to get full support from the community first.

This item is tabled for a future meeting.

d) Presentation: "Leadership Guide for Boards and Commissions" presented at a recent staff meeting of the CABQ Boards & Commissions - Dennis and Cheryl

The board is asked to review:

- The Boards and Commissions webpage: : [Boards & Commissions — City of Albuquerque](#). Watch Training Resources videos and send certificate to staff.
- The Leadership Guide pdf: [leadership-guide-boards-and-commissions\\_final-09-19.pdf](#)

Staff responsibilities include document preparation, leadership, meeting coordination, training compliance, and stakeholder communication.

City Clerk's responsibilities includes maintaining the board's roster, and the City Attorney's responsibilities include helping with Open Meetings Act questions and issues.

All communications with the board are subject to IPRA (Inspection of Public Records Request). A rolling quorum can occur with emails, so it is important that no voting items are discussed in group emails.

Meetings should be noticed to the public, so meeting dates should be posted for the year in advance on the MPRAB webpage. Due to a staff time conflict, it is requested to move the meeting time to one hour earlier to be at **11:30am the first Tuesday of the month.**

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The board voted unanimously to approve the new time, and the MPRAB webpage will be adjusted going forward, and posted on the webpage here: [Metropolitan Parks & Recreation Advisory Board — City of Albuquerque](#)

**6. Reports**

a) Parks and Recreation Department, Directors

Deputy Director Vasquez reported: Per the mayor's Albuquerque Stories of Us campaign, park features such as a playground, or court, can be renamed via an administrative decision; and a number of features have been named recently for notable people from Albuquerque.

Deputy Director Flores reported: The Parks and Recreation Department (PRD) recognized Chuck Malagodi who was an important retired PRD team member that started the Eperanza Bicycle Safety Education Center, and was recently a victim of a hit-and-run on his bicycle.

European Starlings are causing problems at Veterans Park and will be helped by the Environmental Health Department. Domestic ducks are accommodated at the Mariposa Basin. Last year, PRD only had one playground renovation, and this year, nine playground renovations are scheduled. The PRD new Associate Director is Kenny Ortiz.

b) Board Members Roundtable

Chair Martinez mentioned that Scott Habermehl, an expert bicyclist, was also a recent victim of a hit-and-run.

John Ajie would like to move from District 5 to District 1 representation on the board. He sent the request to Councilor Lewis but has not heard back. He would like to get more information on the percentage of Capital Outlay funding dedicated to Parks projects.

Chair Martinez would like more information about the City budget and what is being proposed for the Parks Department, so that the board can lobby City Council and mayor's office.

**7. Action Items**

- Board members will review the MPRAB Park Naming Policy for how to add community involvement earlier in the process. Possibly adding a question into the application.
- Board members will review training materials and send certificate to staff.
- Board members will consider field trip sites.
- Staff will add post community engagement information to the International District Library Park project webpage.
- Staff will distribute State Capital Outlay funding results as soon as available.
- Staff will research the MPRAB bylaws and report at a future meeting.

Adjourned at 2:43pm