

Leisure Services Advisory Committee Minutes
Wednesday, January 27, 2021 – 12:00 p.m.

The Leisure Services Advisory Committee held a meeting on Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber, 10 North Main Street, Cedar City, Utah.

Members Present: Leisure Services Advisory Committee Chair Dana Miller; Committee Members Heather Johnson, Christy Hugh, Dave Holmes, Ron Adams, Christy Florence

Absent: Committee Members Bonnie Jones, Craig Andersen

Staff Present: Leisure Services Director Ken Nielson; Cross Hollow Arena Manager Larry Olds; Sports and Recreation Manager Jennifer Weaver; Cedar Ridge Golf Course Manager and Golf Pro Jared Barnes; Aquatics Manager Chris Hudson; Parks and Outdoor Facilities Wade Orme; Leisure Services Executive Assistant Ruth Sessions

Visitors: None

Dana – The January 27th meeting of the Leisure Services Advisory Committee will come to order. I can't believe it was February that we last met and I trust that all of you have had as much fun as I have had in the last eleven months. Just quickly, I appreciate the agenda being done Ken and Ruth. Are there any amendments to the agenda that we need to add or change? If not, then the first thing we need to do is approve the minutes of February 19, 2020.

1. **Approval of Minutes from Wednesday, February 19, 2020:** Christy Florence made a motion to approve the minutes from Wednesday, February 19, 2020. Heather Johnson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

So, Division Heads, we appreciate you being here. I'm sure it's been a trial for you this past year, but we appreciate your hard work. It looks like you have still been able to accomplish a lot of great things so, we're really anxious to hear your reports today.

2. **Division Reports:**

Larry Olds, Manager, Cross Hollow Arenas – The virus affected us like it did everyone else. We shut down in March and pretty much still let day-use riders during the week and they were asked to maintain social distancing. We did not have any events during March and April and Summer Games was gone. We lost the PRCA Rodeo, which is one of our bigger events and the people who do the horse shows during summer games started their events around the middle of June. The City had a protocol to follow and those running the event had to present us with their plan on how they would keep people apart and wear masks. It actually worked out pretty good so, we started our events back. We were able to do the barrel races and pretty much everything as normal the rest of the year, with everyone following the proper protocol of course. So, we're going to meet our budget goals for the year and probably exceed them as we were able to pick up some extra events in the fall. Right now, we're scheduling things for next year and it's looking good. We're picking up some new events and it looks like we're going to have a couple of sortings from Northern Utah come down. Everything that we have done in years past are scheduled so it's looking pretty good.

We had \$50,000 from the Restaurant Tax last year and we were able to get 50 new stalls. If any of you have driven by and seen the new stalls, they are very nice. We also put in 15 new power pedestals for trailers. We got another \$50,000 this year so, we're going to extend the power pedestals to the south and up along the south end going west. We were able to have the Stock Show, College Rodeo, and the Heritage Festival. All the big events that are in the fall we went ahead with and I think they went pretty good with the masks and all. Dana – It's been nice to watch those stalls go up. Are they 8'x8's? Larry – No, they're 10' x 10' and when they pulled the ice rink out, they left ¾" rubber that we used to line every stall with, so they all have padding in them. They are really nice stalls. Dana – Thanks Larry!

Jennifer Weaver, Manager, Sports & Recreation – Things are still going in the sports world in Utah which is great but also hard. We are blessed than many communities that are not up and running with sports. The effects that we have seen this year (good and bad) are, having to cancel a volleyball league last Spring because we couldn't get the gyms anymore during the lock-down, so we had to refund half a season's worth of money. We were able to stall starting our Adult Softball League and Youth Machine Pitch and T-ball until we got the go-ahead to play outside if we implemented the standards that we had to put into place. A positive thing that came out of the lockdown was that Cedar City became a hot spot for tournaments in the summer. We wanted to follow the protocols that the Iron County School District had in place to play sports, but the restrictions for people to wear masks was hard for some and we had to shut down a few games and ask people to leave but eventually people respected the rules. We did have our Youth Volleyball and Youth Basketball programs in their entirety. We were not able to use the elementary schools at all this year, so it was much harder to get practice time. The school restrictions are that the gym cannot be filled more than 25% of capacity, so we made the rule that children and siblings could not come. We've made it this far and I think people are appreciating the recreational opportunities that we are still providing. We just finished registering for Adult Volleyball and it has grown a ton, so now I am trying to get more gym space. We went from two courts to four courts last year and this year I have to go from four courts to six courts so I'm trying to find another school that will let us come in part of the time. Christy Hugh – Do you think that some of the tournaments that came last year will return? Jen – I think a lot of people have looked at Cedar City now as a place on the map to bring things. One group that comes in a lot has been doing double because they are getting more and more teams. We are scheduled to the max. Ken – We are maxed out from mid-April to mid-September. So, they all came back (18 tournaments) and the only weekends that we are taking off are the holiday ones. Jen – If we had more fields for soccer and baseball, they would be filled. Dana – Have they tracked any transmission of Covid back to sports participation or say at the pool that you are aware of? Jen – Not that I'm aware of. We have had pretty low numbers. I think more people started showing symptoms when it got hot but that happened everywhere. Ken – We required events to come up with their own plan like the kids couldn't do high 5's or share sunflower seeds and I think they wanted to play so much that they were willing to do whatever. Christy Hugh – I just want to thank the City and your efforts because there is such a need and especially now after a year of being closed down. People just really need recreation, indoor and outdoor, so we really appreciate it. I think it is a big issue for all of us – our children, our grandparents and for us. Gyms are busy and at an all-time high. From what I saw, the rate of transmission that was expected to go up due to the graduation parade and all those things around May and June, didn't happen. The numbers stayed consistent. Jen – I appreciate you supporting me so, thank you. Dana – Very good – thank you.

Jared Barnes, Director, Cedar Ridge Golf Course – It's been quite a year! A lot of industries were hit really hard with Covid, but the golf industry had our best year since 1994. One other thing that was very labor intensive for us was during March, April, and May, was single rider carts only and we were running out of carts because we were so busy. We also had more employees because we were cleaning and disinfecting between every single round of golf. So, currently, if someone asks to ride on their own cart, we allow it still today. Obviously, the downside, is that we did require more part-time labor this year to clean carts, etc. and we have never worked harder. The upside is that our little golf course was up 40% which equates to \$250,000. It was a crazy, good, busy year. I would say, similar to what Jen was talking about, that a lot of days you could walk our parking lot and California and Nevada license plates were on half the cars. People found Cedar City and I think they are going to keep coming back. Once it got hot, people realized that we are really the first city out of the heat coming from Nevada, California, and St. George. Publicly, I want to thank my staff. They worked their butts off and in the twenty-four years that I've been in this business, I have the best staff I have ever had. Our maintenance crew, Steve, Austin, and JJ are phenomenal and my assistant, Elliott Owens and we have two other key employees, Tiger Riggs and Topher Mason that just worked super hard this year. On another note, we finished our irrigation renovation this year. That was four phases over six years and it is fantastic, so thanks to all of you for your support and helping us get that pushed through. Dana – So, your pond is working as advertised? Jared – The pond is fantastic, and the new pump house is great as well. If any of you have driven out there, they are starting to develop another multi-family unit for over 55-community and they are putting a road through #12 and it will become a Par 4 which has been in the master plan forever, regardless of what was built there. Thankfully, they are doing it, but we will have some costs moving some irrigation and building some new tee boxes. The dirt road near the clubhouse will be paved and go up and come across and connect with that first development that was done a couple of years ago. It will go behind #11 Green and take out our two back tee boxes, which has been in the master plan forever. Nobody knew who would own the land or what they would build there but it was always intended to have a road cut through there. Most golf courses are Par 72 or 73 so it will just put a back to how most golf courses are. Just a busy year and people are forecasting that the 2021 season is going to be just as big. People are excited and realized early on that golf was safe. Christy Florence – So, the for the additional employees, did you get CARES Act funding or how did you get so many part-time employees with your budget? Jared – No, they are hourly employees, and so the net to my budget isn't that big and actually, for better or worse, people like to work at the golf course, so we don't have to pay as high, like Wade at the Parks Division. It was a lot of extra hours, but it didn't equate to a ton of extra money, maybe \$15K in extra part-time labor. I'm just hoping that with the \$250,000 in extra revenue, they won't yell at me too hard. Thanks. Dana – Thank you.

Wade Orme, Division Head, Parks & Outdoor Facilities – Covid-19 was good for us. I was fully staffed with seasonal help by the end of March/first of April. As people have alluded to earlier, we had a number of tournaments last summer. There was no Little League, which was good because we had a new staff member taking over the ball fields and he wasn't thrown into the fire all at once and he could concentrate on tournaments. We are expecting Little League to start this year and then we will have our tournaments going as well. Like Ken said, there are 18 tournaments that are scheduled every weekend, so it will be another busy summer for Parks. Because there was no Little League, we were able to focus on a few other things, like doing maintenance work on warning tracks and infield lines were edged and put back to their normal distances where the grass had crept into the dirt. We completely renovated the Bicentennial Park irrigation system. It was on a potable water connection and

we have changed it to secondary water. That will save roughly 5-acre feet of potable drinking water a year. Not to mention, it is an updated new technology system, so the water that we will use will be much more efficient. Christy Hughes – A quick question, did you change the sprinkler heads as well or is it just the system? Wade – No, we changed from main line to sprinkler heads to controllers. This was at the park where we have the new playground, not at the soccer fields. The reason we redid the irrigation system was because we enlarged the playground footprint and that impeded on the old sprinkler system. We redid the entrance to the Bicentennial softball park on the Skate Park side. Speaking of trees, we planted roughly 140 trees last year between the trees that went in at the Fields at the Hills, around Cove Drive and a few other parks. Trees were also planted at the Aquatic Center. We have roughly 25-30 trees to be planted this spring as the temperatures get warmer. There are a number of trees, that need to be replaced in the Memorial Grove, as well as some others that did not take. In the Cemetery, we did some landscaping renovations. If you are familiar with the Cemetery, the long, skinny section that is along the storage units on the north end is Section H and there wasn't a lot of landscaping between the grass and that building so we went through and put a drip system and planted some shrubs that will get 10-12 feet tall that should pretty much hide the storage units. Last year the City reclaimed 493 abandoned plots. An abandoned plot means that there has been no activity with the original purchase in the last sixty years. Out of those reclaimed plots, we have sold 62 of them already. There are 64 that remain to sell and a number of them, we won't sell because they are in the Pioneer sections where it is so old that there are a lot of unknowns there. The sexton is always a little worried when he gets asked to do a burial in those sections because there might be someone buried there that was never on the records. It also gives us the opportunity of to replace trees. A number of the trees, along the Cemetery roads, need to come out because they are too big. We won't replace them in that exact same spot, but we will replace them out in a section of the turf that will have plenty of root material to grow. They will be a lot healthier and hopefully not cause us any problems. We put a new roof on the Little League snack shack. We finished that about this time last year after a big windstorm, from the previous year, took it off. The platform that the Christmas presents sit on at Mayor Square was constructed by my staff. Some other projects that are coming up will be installing new shade structures and bleachers at the Little League Complex. We got a grant from the Iron County Restaurant Tax that will help us pay for shade structures on Fields 6, 7, 8 and 9 and with the bleachers, we will meet national safety standards. We have had some personnel turnover. We hired one new person as a Parks Maintenance Worker I and then he just got promoted to a Parks Maintenance Worker II. Now we have his original full-time position that we need to hire for. We have seasonal employees that have stuck around and I'm excited that I only have to train maybe 70% for a new staff instead of 100%. I have about eight kids coming back this year that I won't have to train which will be really helpful. Dana – Have you seen an uptick in maintenance caused by increased vandalism or increased use? Wade – Yes. Dana - Because I've been out, adjacent to the City, and all the fields I've ever been on, I've never seen the fields so torn up as they are now because people just have more time and kids have been out of school. Wade – Yes, there has been an uptick in graffiti this year. We had one or two individuals going around spraying the exact same symbol everywhere. I believe they were caught so it did subside but being out plowing on the trails the other day, I noticed that there were a number of trail signs that had been bent. I've alerted my staff as well. I know our janitorial budget was gone a while ago. With all the tournaments that came through and everything like that, the bathrooms were being used more so we're anticipating that trend this year, as well. There were more people in the park this year for sure even though we weren't taking any reservations. Dana – Thank you Wade.

Chris Hudson, Manager, Aquatic Center – It's been a year, of course, like everyone else but ours started off a little bit differently. About this time last year, we were just closing to do some maintenance on our pool. Right when we were going to reopen it, we were closed for Covid, but we did manage to get the pool liner completely replaced in the Leisure Pool and it looks great. Once we closed, Ken and I decided we were just going to gut that place and do some touch-up and paint. We refinished floors by painting and sanding them to make them more grippy and also get it clean. Then we added palm trees and structures and colorful chairs so if you haven't had a chance to go to the Aquatic Center, I recommend it. Our water capacities are already designed to be stricter than the Covid guidelines, so it is one person for about every ten feet, as opposed to one person for every six feet. Our water capacities are good, but our deck capacities are where we struggle. We do reach capacity a little more frequently and have to make people wait, mainly because the deck fills up with people. Recently, we've just been able to start re-opening our party rooms and letting people into those, following the guidelines. We haven't seen a lot of pushback on following Covid. Everyone just seems to be happy that the pools are open. We get weird fluctuations with our numbers. In an effort to continue our services, many of you may know that SUU opened and closed twice and the Little Sharks Swim Academy at SUU was kicked out twice. I worked with the McCoy's and we have outsourced our swimming lessons to them. That has been a very beneficial partnership as they are now able to continue their business, but it also provides us a way to provide these programs to people. Of course, it doesn't hit our budget, so our labor budget is doing really well. Then, of course, we had a lot less people working during the closure. Dana – So, are they teaching at SUU or the Aquatic Center? Chris – They are just teaching here now. They do have a swim team, which is a separate program, and they still go to SUU. We have never been in more demand for swim teams. Every swim team around is wanting to come up and use our space. In fact, even the Air Force has their Special Forces group that have been coming in regularly because they have been kicked out at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. The high school swim teams have been running swim meets and streaming them which has worked very well. Other than that, we've been getting caught up on projects. Christy Florence – I've been up there and seen the colorful chairs and everything and it does really give it an updated, fun look. Chris - We are looking at doing an ADA Accessible Floating Dock on the lake for people to fish from. It's a modular dock and we can add additional features as wanted. It will be affixed at the shore and once we get all that figured out, handicapped people can access it from the trail that goes around the lake.

Ken – I want to thank my division heads as they have been able to come up with ways to make everything work out. They have been very creative during this last year and everything they do is a credit to them.

3. **Canyon Park Water Project:** Ken – This project is still doing their funding and the Rotary Club is still in the drawing stage. They received some RAP Tax money for it. They have changed a few things, but it is very much still planned for down the road a couple of years.
4. **Parks and Recreation ties to the City Master Plan:** A lot of things are moving along. The City is updating the City Master Plan and have started a General Plan Concept. A lot of it is matching park space with the number of people coming to town and those kinds of ratios. Trails, parks, amenities, recreation, etc. Obviously, the City continues to grow, so we need to grow. I will just give you an update with the trails since some of you are interested in that. Currently, we have three trails systems that are being done. The Industrial Road Trail on Industrial Road. From 300 West to Airport Road, they cleaned all that up where the railroad tracks were. Eventually, we hope to take it down Airport Road to the arena and make the

loop, but this gets us one step closer. They are going to widen the road and cut through on those streets that run north and south. The other trail, that I'm excited about, is the Southview Trail. We finally got the connection that we needed to connect to Greenslake Road. We were stuck because that was private property and we just kept going over and over, but finally we got permission to buy that for \$8,000 and finish the trail. That will be a nice connection to make. The last connection is from the arena going across the hillside and down to connect to the Cross Hollows trail. So, it will go under the road on Cross Hollows Drive and come up and make the connection up by Walmart. We are just trying to make some of those connections. All that property is deeded to the City, so we will not have any of those hiccups to get that done. Dana – That will go under the road? Ken – There is a box covert on Cross Hollows Road that will take us under the road, and we won't have to build a bridge. It will be nice for school kids and it will be very scenic like the Southview Trail. As far as the master plan goes, we're just moving forward with those needs. If you want to go on-line to the City website, there is a link where you can go and make suggestions. I encourage people to do that because recreation is big for quality of life.

5. **Effects of COVID / Tourism to City Programs:** That is another interesting aspect. You would think it wouldn't be because of Covid, but with all the tournaments that came to town, our sales tax and RAP tax was up every month. For the total Covid world, from March to October, monthly we were always at least 13% higher and sometimes 20%. The TRT tax was down a lot early on but then it came back, but we are tickled that sales tax and RAP Tax was extremely high for us. The effects of Covid were different in places, but in our world because of those tournaments, it really was beneficial and, all of those tournaments want to come back. Dave – So, are you saying you hope it stays? Ken – No, but we have gleaned some good things from it. If California and Nevada are shut down, they want to bring their Little League Regional tournaments to town. It's crazy to me, but people are seeing what we have in Cedar City.

6. **Gymnasium Update:** Ron, you can chime in on this if you want. The City has received the funding to move ahead, so they gave us the loan. There is a referendum going around out there that is trying to get it on the ballot for vote. We're ready to move forward in our world. The architect is finishing up plans that will be so detailed that they will be ready to send out for bid. We would like to see the actual cost of the building. The City can look at that and then they can weigh whether we proceed further, whether it is too much, whether we pause, or whatever action we need to take. We are still hopeful that it moves forward. It is a tremendous need. It is finishing the building. Ron, do you have any information to add? Ron – We were moving along with the process and I'm disappointed after reading social media that this is just a big ploy to stall the City's progress. They don't really care if you build the MAC center, but we want to cause you havoc. I've labeled them our "Havoc Group" and I could probably tell you the ten people that are part of it. It doesn't matter what it is – the MAC center is just another example. They try to stall the progress by putting out misinformation constantly to influence the public. The biggest thing I could say here is that we know there is a large group of people and we've all received lots of e-mails and input, and I actually understand and respect a lot of the people because they have to work with people in the community and sometimes, they don't come to City Council meetings and are as vocal, but they support it. We didn't want to go to a ballot, especially during these times so this was not the timing to put something on a ballot, but they forced this recreation stuff through and if they get all the signatures in place and everything, then I guess it will go on the ballot in November. As Ken mentioned, we kept trying to push forward with all of the abuse we were taking to keep the process going because we want to see the cost. We want to

get to that point at least so we have a number, so we know exactly what we are working with. We pushed that forward, despite opposition to get to that point with the gym or MAC center. I hope that things will go forth and get out and support it if goes on the ballot. Tonight, we are voting on Impact Fees. I'm anxious to go ahead with the construction. We have enough revenue to build it but, we wanted to take advantage of a low-interest bond. The bond is paid off on the Heritage Center. I feel like the Council and City Staff have been very conservative and I hope we can continue with the plan to get it built. It's been interesting to see that all the sales tax numbers are up even though we didn't have Summer Games or the Shakespeare Festival this year. I'm hoping on the gym that we'll be able to continue moving forward. I was just furious reading some of their posts that just want to slow us down.

7. **Next Advisory Committee Meeting – TBD:**

Dana – Our next meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at noon. Christy Hughes made a motion that we adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

Ruth Sessions, Executive Assistant
Cedar City Leisure Services