

# **City of Fruita – Livability Commission Meeting Minutes – March 21, 2024**

**Members in Attendance:** Carmen Flores, Terri Potente, Al Condor, Tom McNamara, Amy Miller, Jamie Vavra, David Karisny, John Rodwick, and Shiela Adamson

**Members Absent:** Dr. Chris Taggart, Jessica Ruffule, Connie Overton,

**Staff in Attendance:** Ciara DePinto, Kimberly Preisser, Jennifer Cupp

**Guests in Attendance:** Jean Rodwick

## **I. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Dave Karisny, Chair for the Livability Commission, called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

## **II. Welcome and Introductions, Carmen Flores**

Carmen introduced herself. She is a recent Fruita resident as she moved here in June 2023. She had been missing a sense of community and was happy to join the Livability Commission and be engaged with her community. She went on to say she studied Anthropology at CU Boulder. After graduation, she worked for the sorority she had been a part of and traveled across the United States. When she moved to the Grand Junction area, she worked for Mesa County Public Health in their emergency preparedness and public health, youth and substance use prevention. Currently she works from home for a private company. After Ms. Flores introduced herself the other commission members introduced themselves.

## **III. Public Comment**

Mr. Karisny opened the meeting for public comment. After seeing none, or anyone that wanted to provide a comment to the Livability Commission, Mr. Karisny closed this item.

## **IV. Review and Approve Minutes**

### **a. Regular Minutes – February 15, 2024**

There were no changes to the minutes from the February 15, 2024, meeting. Mr. Rodwick made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. McNamara seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **V. Member Reports**

a) Mr. Rodwick gave a brief overview of the AARP and explained that Fruita, being one of the first 100, was one of 850 Livable Age Friendly Communities. Both Mr.

Rodwick and Mrs. Potente are point people for the AARP although they do not have an official position. Mr. Rodwick is also on an advocacy team for AARP. Currently, AARP is reviewing about 100 pieces of legislation before the House that concern the 55+ community.

## **VI. Staff Report**

### **a) Elmwood Heights HOA**

Ms. DePinto said that Elmwood Heights HOA had been recognized by City Council for their contribution to the Adopt a Street/Trail program. Mr. Karisny thought that, instead of presenting each volunteer with a certificate, a certificate could be presented to the entire volunteer group. It was decided that this would be what would happen going forward. Mrs. Potente asked if the Adopt-A- Street program went as far as 19 Road. Mr. Karisny said no, just the City limits. Mrs. Potente asked if 19 Road was in the City limits. Councilor Miller said only parts of it are currently within the City limits and the City is working on annexing the other pieces.

### **b) Election**

Ms. DePinto let the group know that there is an election coming up on April 2, 2024. There are three City Council seats and one Mayor seat available. She explained that voters can drop ballots in the drop box in the parking lot, in the lobby, or mail them in.

### **c) Reed Park**

Ms. DePinto gave an update on the construction at Reed Park. She said that the contractor is currently working on the restroom structure and sidewalk improvements. She explained that the playground installation was scheduled for the week of April 1<sup>st</sup> and the wheel park should begin in late April. Ms. Preisser asked if, once the playground was installed, it would reopen. Ms. DePinto said that she didn't know, but she would check. Mr. McNamara asked if there would be pickleball courts. Ms. DePinto explained that the mini-pitch court being installed would include pickle ball courts. Mrs. Potente said she thought pickleball would be going in at Little Salt Wash Park. Ms. DePinto said that yes, that was a future goal. Mr. Rodwick asked if a plaque would be going up at Reed Park. Councilor Miller said yes, the Historic Preservation Board was working on it.

### **d) Waterslide**

Lastly, Ms. DePinto let the group know that the installation of the waterslide at the Fruita Community Center had started. She said they were currently in phase 1 of the project and were on track for a September 2024 opening. Mr. Rodwick asked if the red slide would be going away. Ms. Preisser said yes, it would eventually be leaving. Mr. McNamara asked how much the new slide had cost. Ms. DePinto said that it was \$850,000. Councilor Miller said that it was actually \$865,000. Mr. Rodwick asked if we had received a grant for any part of that.

Councilor Miller said no, not at this point. There were some questions about expanding the Community Center. Ms. DePinto explained that once the wheel park was open at Reed Park, the skate park at the Community Center would come down and that space would be used for something else. Mr. McNamara asked if the new slide would be open year-round. Ms. DePinto said yes, it would. Mr. Rodwick asked if the slide would require an extra pump and water. Councilor Miller said, because it is a self-contained unit, that it will have an additional pump, but the water it needs will recirculate.

**e) Other**

- i) Mr. McNamara asked if the old Fruita Bridge would be fixed and made active. Ms. DePinto said no. Mr. Karisny explained that the right of way to the bridge was privately owned and that the bridge is no longer structurally sound.
- ii) Mr. McNamara asked when construction would begin on the Maple Street Bridge. Councilor Miller explained that it would be completed in 2025.

**VII. Discussion Items**

**a) Goals/Items for 2024**

Mr. Karisny said that at the November meeting the group looked at 2023 and what they had accomplished. He said that going forward in 2024 the Commission would be continuing the Adopt-A-Street/Trail program and participating in the Farmers Market. Mr. Karisny said that there were a few things that needed to be worked out before the Farmers Market starts up again. He explained that there needed to be two volunteers needed to work in each of the four Farmers Markets. He also said there needs to be a consistent place for the umbrella and booth supplies, including pamphlets and something to give out to the children. Councilor Miller explained that they were working on a signage piece for each of the Boards and Commissions at the Farmers Market. Mr. Karisny went on to review the Wellness Checks that the group was working on. He said that there is a Senior Engagement Group that goes to existing senior centers and hosts engagement events. Mr. Karisny also recapped the visit from Josh Stewart and working with both Meals on Wheels and the American Red Cross. Mr. Stewart was hoping to partner with Meals on Wheels to help get information out about the free smoke detector program the American Red Cross funds. Lastly, Mr. Karisny recapped A Little Help, which is a volunteer organization based out of Denver, that coordinates volunteers and elderly clients who need help with basic household activities.

Mr. McNamara asked Mr. Rodwick if AARP had a contact with Life Alert and if the group could somehow offer life alert products at no charge. Mrs. Potente said that they advertise with AARP, but not through the non-profit section. Mr. Rodwick said that through his insurance, he is offered this type of unit at no charge. He said many insurance companies are offering services to keep

customers well. Mr. McNamara said that he was going to follow-up on Medicare Advantage plans offering life alert units and the service at no charge to the customer. Mr. Karisny said that there would be a change in Medicare at some point due to new legislation. Councilor Miller asked if the Commission could invite Dr. Klein to back to talk about Senior Life Solutions. There was some discussion about continuing to talk about the solutions or if the list of compiled resources could be made available on the City Website.

Mr. Karisny also recapped the visit from Dr. Klein and his overview of health insurance companies. Dr. Klein explained that the hospital interacts differently with Medicare. Medicare pays in 60 days and the Medicare Advantage plan pays within 120 when it pays, but often denies requests for payments and returns it to the patient.

Mr. Rodwick suggested bringing Meals on Wheels and the Food Bank of the Rockies in to speak at the same time.

Mrs. Potente said that GVT is not ready to talk about a circular route in Fruita at this point.

#### **VIII. Action Items**

##### **a) Officer Position Appointments**

Officer positions were briefly discussed. There weren't any nominees for any of the positions. Mr. Karisny is currently the Board Chair and can no longer meet all the demands of the position. Mr. McNamara, Mr. Karisny, and Mrs. Potente thought of forming a nominating committee, however this goes against open meeting laws.

##### **b) AARP Community Impact Grant**

Mrs. Cupp explained that she had submitted the grant application for the Book Locker, however there was no further update given. It was decided to continue this discussion at the next meeting.

#### **IX. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.