



Ken-Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District Organizational/Management Study



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May 29, 2009

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Section I - Introduction

The purpose of this study is to critically analyze the organization and management of the Ken Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District. More specifically this study concentrates on identifying factors, issues and concerns within the parks and recreation district's organization that need to be addressed, changed, altered or improved to increase operational efficiency.

This report is based on information gathered from two separate site visits to the district (April 8, 9 and May 4, 2009), interviews with administrative staff, parks staff, recreation staff and Master Association director. In addition, a tour of the district's parks, pools, community centers and other facilities was conducted on April 8th.

The intent of the visits was to gain a basic understanding of the district's staffing and management structure as well as the extent of the programs and services that are offered and the facilities that must be maintained.

Staff Interviews:

- Darrell Windes – District Manager
- Allen Rogers – Parks & Facilities Director
- Pat Malloy – Parks & Facilities Supervisor
- Judy Anderson – Tennis & Facility Supervisor
- Gina Hawk – Recreation & Aquatics Supervisor
- Kristen Peterka – Youth Services Supervisor
- D.G. Hinkley – Landscape Foreman
- Rick Plack – Irrigation Foreman
- Jim Ruschetta – Preventive Maintenance & Facilities Maint. Foreman
- Steve Vite – Fleet Foreman
- Patti Heggen – Accounting Supervisor
- Chris Pacetti – Master Association Executive Director

While no direct interviews were conducted with members of the Ken-Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District Board, a meeting was held on July 23, 2009 to review initial findings and receive comments and input from the board on the study.

In addition to the staff interviews there was also a review of operational, maintenance and administrative information, records and material supplied by the district. This information included:

- Ken-Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District
 - Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, 1990 & 1998
 - Safety Guidelines
 - Employee Handbook
 - Facilities Use Terms and Conditions

- Service Plan, 1987
 - Financial Reports 2003-2007
 - 2009 Adopted Budget
 - Organization Chart
 - Facilities Maintenance and Inspection Procedures
 - Vehicle and Equipment Inventory
 - Reserve Analysis
 - Overview of Plains Litigation
 - Work Plans and Schedules
 - Performance Appraisal Report Form
 - Job Descriptions
 - Monthly Status Reports 2008-2009
 - Benefits Summary
 - Parks Division Budget Workbook and Amenities Inventory
- Ken-Caryl Ranch Master Association Master Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions
 - Ken-Caryl Ranch Master Association Reserve Analysis
 - Letter of Understanding Ken-Caryl Master Association and Ken-Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District

Specific Audit Tasks Include:

1. Identify organizational/management constraints and parameters
 - a. Goals and objectives
 - b. Staffing plan
 - c. Roles and responsibilities
 - d. Budget impact
2. Review organizational structure/staffing plan
 - a. Management
 - b. Parks maintenance
 - c. Recreation programs and services
 - d. Facility operations
3. Review staff roles and responsibilities
 - a. Job descriptions
 - b. Areas of responsibility
 - c. Tracking of work load and schedules
4. Review operational budget
 - a. Staffing expenditures/wage scales
 - b. Expenditures
 - c. Revenues
5. Prepare a written report with the following recommendations

- a. Organizational structure changes
- b. Adjustments to staff roles and responsibilities
- c. Operational budget implications
- d. Overall organizational assessment
- e. Priorities for changes
- f. Implementation

What follows is an analysis of the operation and management of the district that have been outlined above with an assessment of what changes or improvements should be made to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the district while still supporting the mission of the Ken Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District. Any recommendations being made are with the knowledge that it may be difficult to implement all of the findings in this report with the current operational funding level for the district, the staffing level of the district, and the necessary time requirements for completion.

Section II – Organizational/Management Constraints and Parameters

This section will summarize the current general organizational constraints and parameters.

General:

- The district has set high standards for operations, maintenance and recreation program delivery.
- The district has aging facilities that require a higher level of maintenance and often do not function well for their uses. With the majority of facilities reaching 30 years of age, these amenities are now at the “tipping point” where they will need to be upgraded and/or renovated in the near future.
- The full-time staff level for the Administration and Recreation divisions is at a minimum level.
- A larger parks staff that has a significant number of differing facilities to maintain and operate at a high level of service.
- Despite a very strong working relationship, there is an intertwining of ownership and operation of facilities with the Master Association. The Master Association is the primary funder of facility improvements.
- Financial resources are limited for the district and impact operations, maintenance and services. Despite recent improvements with the mil level increase in 2008, the district must plan cautiously for the future.
- The presence of the Plains Metro District has presented challenges for the district in many ways.
- Staff morale is generally low and employees feel unappreciated for their work by the district board.
- The district will need to determine its future expected level of service for parks and facilities maintenance and recreation programming.

Section III – Organizational Assessment

The Ken-Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District operating structure is basically divided into three areas, Administration, Parks & Facilities, and Recreation. The following is a basic assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each area.

Administration

Considering the financial challenges that the district has faced the last five to ten years combined with the overall loss of upper level management and support staff, the administrative employees of the district do a remarkable job of operating the organization.

Strengths

- The administrative staff manages to operate the district with only two full-time and two part time employees. This is an incredibly small administrative staff for a district the size and magnitude of Ken-Caryl.
- The district has a well crafted and identifiable mission statement.
- There is a strong emphasis on financial matters which reflects that background and orientation of the District Manager and Accounting Supervisor.
- There are effective budget practices in place to keep the district within the financial limitations that exist.
- The organization has strong general operating policies and procedures in place including an employee handbook, and safety manual. The district has current, well written, job descriptions.
- The district has a number of public documents that outline facility, parks and open space use terms, rules, and general policies. They also produce an annual program brochure that outlines recreation programs and services that are offered in the district.
- The district has completed a reserve analysis for all of their facilities that identify long term capital expenses that will be necessary to adequately maintain district parks and facilities.

Weaknesses or Concerns

- Most of the administrative staff's time is spent with the day to day operation of the district which does not allow time for long range planning or formulating new directions for the organization.

- Even though the administrative staff does a great job of operating the district, there is no strong district management experience or parks and recreation operations background beyond the time working for Ken-Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District.
- While the administrative staff does an admirable job with the time and resources that are available many tasks and functions are not receiving the full attention that is needed. This includes:
 - Even though evaluations are completed for all full-time staff there should be a stronger emphasis on developing well defined work plans and performance measurements for each position. Also there are limited formal evaluations of any part-time staff.
 - There is no coordination of background checks for all new part-time staff prior to hiring. Sole responsibility rests with the direct supervisor.
 - Training opportunities are limited and there is no comprehensive training plan or strategy in place.
 - Staff communications, especially between parks and recreation is not nearly as effective as it should be.
 - There is no coordinated marketing plan for the district.
- The vast majority of the full-time staff has been with the district for a great deal of time and the organization is highly reliant on this knowledge base for maintaining effective operations and management. If key staff were to leave the district, there will likely be a significant void to fill, especially in recreation.
- The Recreation Division has three supervisors reporting directly to the District Manager. This is unusual and requires a great deal of time by the manager to manage this division.
- The district lacks a well defined part-time pay scale that lists rates of compensation based on general part-time positions and their responsibilities. The current compensation level is based almost solely on the numbers of hours that have been worked.
- There needs to be a greater focus on automating more functions within the district this includes time cards, task, and facility scheduling.
- The district suffers some from a lack of clear identity and understanding of roles and responsibilities in Ken Caryl Ranch. This is in large part due to the intermingling of functions with the Master Association but also is in part because of the relationship with Jefferson County (Community Center) and the Jefferson County School District (schools and parks).

Parks & Facilities

This division of the district has not experienced nearly the staff position losses as administration and recreation. As a result it operates more in line with traditional parks and facilities departments. They do a fine job of maintaining district parks and facilities.

Strengths

- The parks & facilities division is well organized and staffed at a level that allows for effective management, supervision, and operation. There is a high level of service that is being provided for aging facilities and parks amenities.
- The division must maintain parks, facilities and other recreation amenities that are older and are in need of upgrades, or replacement. Many of the park amenities include medians, greenbelts, and small pocket park areas that are difficult to maintain in a cost effective manner.
- The division has a traditional staffing pattern and supervisory structure that supports most maintenance and operations functions occurring in house.
- The vast majority of staff has been with the district for a long time and has a great deal of experience.
- Most key aspects of parks operations and maintenance are covered by full-time staff with specific expertise including forestry, horticulture and fleet maintenance.
- While there is ample management, supervisory and operations staff the division does not have any administrative support positions.
- The Parks & Facilities Division has a part-time pay scale based on total number of hours worked.
- The Parks & Facilities Division operates out of a new, well organized and equipped shop. They also have most of the equipment that they need to operate effectively.
- A number of parks maintenance functions are contracted including, fertilization (large areas), building custodial, building mechanical systems, pool mechanical, and certain chemical applications and equipment servicing.
- The division has strong record keeping and detailed budgeting practices. Work tasks and functions are tracked as is all equipment and vehicle maintenance. There is information on the cost of maintenance by vehicle, acreage and other characteristics. Inspection records are kept on playgrounds, irrigation backflow tests, facilities inspections and other critical safety functions.

- Operating budgets are in place for major cost centers including facilities, parks maintenance shop, and the community center.
- The division produces monthly updates for the board that detail tasks completed during that time period.
- There are detailed inventories of acres of turf, miles of fences, irrigation heads, and other characteristics regarding what must be maintained in the district.
- The planned reorganization of the division to move preventive & facilities maintenance under irrigation should result in better utilization of staff.

Weaknesses or Concerns

- The Parks & Facilities Division has a much larger staff and a full organizational structure that is very different than the minimally staffed administration and recreation divisions. This sets them apart from other aspects of the district's operation.
- Despite strong inspection and maintenance task lists the Parks & Facilities Division lacks an overall maintenance management plan for the division as a whole and for facility maintenance in particular. The facilities maintenance management plan should include a major focus on preventive maintenance measures and tasks.
- The district needs to adopt a vehicle and equipment depreciation and replacement schedule based on the realistic life cycle of these items. While this effort has been started, yearly budgets should support this plan.
- The facilities staff should have staggered work schedules to cover more of the times that the facilities are actually open and operating.
- The division should attempt to computerize more of its record keeping and maintenance functions tracking. This will probably require more detailed tracking of employee time by task and function.

Recreation

The Recreation Division has undergone a significant reduction in staff over the last 5 years. They have been able to maintain basic programs and operations during this time but services have not adapted or increased.

Strengths

- The division operates with a bare minimum of full-time staff for the programs and services that are offered.
- The full-time staff has been with the district for a long time and has a great deal of experience and knowledge of the district. If any of the full-time supervisors left the district, there would be significant loss of management ability.
- Despite having to utilize facilities (Community Center and Ranch House) that were really not designed to serve the current programs that must take place there, staff has been able to maximize the use of these amenities for a variety of recreation programs.
- Day to day operation of the Recreation Division is relatively strong even with a very small staff.
- Youth programs and tennis are the primary program areas in the division and both of these operate as enterprise funds.
- The division produces monthly updates for the board that detail tasks completed during that time period.
- The district is able to provide transportation from a number of elementary schools to district facilities for youth programs.

Weaknesses or Concerns

- The Recreation Division, with its small full-time staff, does not have the time for long range planning for recreation programs and services.
- With three recreation supervisors and no recreation director, they each must report directly to the District Manager. As a result there is a general lack of coordination and on-going management of the recreation division.
- While the recreation supervisors are hard working and dedicated to their job, they do not have formal training as recreation professionals. This is not a big issue by itself but when there is not a professional recreation director this issue becomes more acute.
- Supervisor's job responsibilities and roles appear to be random based on employee backgrounds and interest rather than on an organized plan based on compatible program areas.
- There is a minimal amount of adult, family and teen programming.

- There are only basic records kept regarding program and service delivery, registration, and overall effectiveness of the division. This is due to the lack of time that is available for these tasks.
- Budgeting practices are also very basic with limited backup documentation and no overall budget coordination for the division. This is due to the lack of a recreation director.
- Each of the recreation supervisors is responsible for marketing their own programs but there is no coordinated marketing effort or a recreation marketing plan.
- The district's recreation facilities are older and poorly laid out to adequately support many recreation functions that the district offers. This limits recreation programming and use.
- There is a lack of general record keeping and documentation of operational requirements and tasks.
- The division should attempt to computerize more of its record keeping and facility scheduling.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

The following is a brief assessment of the Ken-Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District's staffing and organizational structure.

Job Descriptions and Roles

- The district has well written job descriptions for its entire full-time staff. These have been recently updated and accurately represent the expected roles and areas of responsibilities for each position. However simple and basic job descriptions do need to be developed for key part-time staff positions as well.
- There is a well conceived organizational chart that delineates the general areas of responsibility for each staff and also shows the lines of supervision and control.
- With the loss of staff positions over the last 5 years, the organizational structure of the district is now disjointed. While Parks & Facilities has a well developed organizational structure that is suitably staffed, Administration and Recreation have a much smaller staff that requires responsibilities to be shared and specific roles are a lot less clear.
- The administrative staff with its two members cannot adequately provide overall leadership and management to all aspects of the district. Finance, human resources, purchasing, budget management and staff management is handled by

two staff. This is simply too large of a span of responsibility for these individuals to adequately cover.

- The Parks & Facilities Division is fully staffed with a structure that supports a comprehensive parks department. Job functions and roles are much more clear and distinct. However the division does utilize staff where needed based on the time of the year and the demands that are at hand.
- Recreation has a limited staff and no management oversight except at the director level. Management functions suffer as a result. To adequately operate the two community centers and conduct a full complement of programs, staff has had to share certain job functions and responsibilities. This results in a melding of job roles and responsibilities.

Tracking of Workload and Schedules

- Management level staff (foreman and supervisor levels and up) have only general tracking of how their time and work load is handled but this is normal for these types of positions in most organizations.
- Workloads and responsibilities for management staff in administration and recreation require long hours and unrealistic spans of control.
- Parks & Facilities Division management staff are hard working and often have long hours as well. However the workloads and responsibilities are more realistic.
- For line staff, Parks & Facilities does a good job of tracking workloads and tasks but there is not the same level of focus for recreation. Yet, it is often more difficult to track workloads and tasks for recreation services than for parks. This also takes a great deal of time to record, interpret and manage and recreation does not have this time available.

Budget

The Ken-Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District's budgeting practices are reviewed below.

General

- The district has a budget that is divided into a vast number of cost centers. This provides a clear breakdown of expenses and revenues by different aspects of each division.
- Detailed line item budgets for both expenses and revenues are shown for each budget category.

- A capital reserve fund account has been established with the expectation that there will be a greater monetary commitment to funding improvements to district facilities in the future.
- Reserve funds (enterprise funds) have been set up for five different budget categories. Most importantly youth programs and tennis are reserve funds that reflect key recreation program areas.
- The district has no general obligation debt which is highly unusual for most parks and recreation districts of any size and magnitude. Many districts vote in debt to fund a variety of capital projects. With the age of existing district facilities it may be necessary to incur some long term debt to fund renovations or expansions.
- District fees are listed for each activity and program but many parks and recreation agencies are now moving toward developing a comprehensive fee policy that stipulates rates of cost recovery for different levels of programs. Programs and services are then placed in the different categories and individual rates are calculated from this model.

Staffing Expenditures and Wage Scales

- Within any parks and recreation organization staffing, both full and part-time, make up well over 50% to as much as 75% of an operational budget. This is certainly the case with the district.
- In general full-time staff is paid within the realm of compensation for similarly titled positions in like sized agencies. This has been verified through studies conducted by the Mountain States Employer Council. However there are a number of staff that are at the lower end of this range and many positions (especially in administration and recreation) have a broader range of responsibilities than what is found in other organizations. It is also important to note that some benefits have recently been changed that also figure into overall compensation rates.
- Part-time staff compensation is acceptable as long as positions can be filled. However, the overall wage scale is mid range or slightly lower compared to other agencies.

Section IV – Future Directions

Based on the organizational assessment section of this report the following should be considered regarding the organizational structure and management of the Ken-Caryl Metropolitan District.

General

- The Ken Caryl Ranch Metropolitan District Board will need to make a well thought out and conscious decision on the level of service that the district should deliver to its citizens in the future. The current level of service is high and requires a commitment to an adequate staffing and budget to maintain this in the years to come. If the district wants to continue with its current staffing and budget levels (or reduce either of these), then the expected level of service will need to be reduced.
- With a growth in tax funding with the mil levy increase, the district will need to prioritize how these funds will be used. Key areas of concern are staffing levels and capital improvements.
- The district will not grow in geographic size and the population base will not increase either. As a result the district will not have to consider a large growth in facilities or services in the future. However, the district has an aging population with fewer young families. This may require a change in the focus of basic recreation services to better serve this demographic group.
- Most of the facilities that the district operates or uses are now close to thirty years old and their age and condition will require increased maintenance and repair. Parks and recreation amenities, once they reach 30 years of age, usually require a much higher level of upkeep and often must undergo significant renovation to continue to function at an effective level. In addition some of the facilities are reaching functional obsolescence as well.
- The district in many ways operates as a combination special district and home owners association. Long term the district must move away from this status to a true parks and recreation district. This is based in part on the district's reliance on the Master Association.
- The Master Association is the primary owner of many of the facilities that the district operates and manages and the district is highly dependent on the Master Association for capital improvement funding. The long term relationship and roles of each organization need to be clearly defined and documented.
- For the future, the role of contracting for services in the district will need to be determined. The current practice of contracting for specialized services seems to be the best approach and results in a good mix of in-house operations and

contracting. However, there are opportunities to contract out additional services or major areas of operation but the district risks losing direct control and the ability to adjust services on demand. Contracting is not always less expensive and wholesale contracting of services has not worked particularly well for most public parks and recreation agencies.

- A greater emphasis needs to be placed on long range planning for the district especially in the recreation and administrative areas. This will require either a reallocation of responsibilities among existing staff or more likely the addition of new staff.
- The Parks & Facilities Division should develop a comprehensive maintenance management plan for the district and this should have an emphasis on facilities maintenance in particular.
- The Recreation Division needs to develop a long term program plan that evaluates the lifecycle of existing programs and prioritizes future program offerings. This plan should place a greater emphasis on adult and family programs.
- A comprehensive fee policy needs to be adopted by the district to guide fee setting for facility use and programs. This should also allow for the growth in recreation revenues over time.
- A district wide marketing plan is necessary to coordinate individual efforts that are currently in place. This should be a short concise document that guides marketing efforts.
- A stronger emphasis needs to be placed on computerizing more administrative functions such as time cards, task and facility scheduling.
- There needs to be at least a small amount of district resources dedicated to developing a basic staff training program.
- The time has come to update the district's parks and recreation master plan. This should further identify organizational and management needs. As part of the master plan a specific trails master plan should be included.
- The district should consider conducting a formal survey of Ken-Caryl residents to help determine the future direction and priorities for the district in delivering parks and recreation services. This would include desired level of maintenance for all parks and facilities, priorities for new or renovated amenities, and the needs and expectations for recreation programs. This should also address the issue of long term willingness to fund the district as well.
- The issue of relatively low staff morale and relationships of staff with the board will have to be addressed for the overall health of the organization. This will

require a concerted effort and a long range plan to accomplish. The role of the Finance Committee in district management and operations also needs to be clearly defined and controlled by the board.

Organizational Structure Changes

- Additional staffing resources need to be added to the administration and recreation divisions. Several possible options have been considered including:
 - Utilizing the existing Parks & Facilities Director as a District Assistant Manager over operations of both the parks and recreation division. The Parks & Facilities Supervisor would be directly responsible for the operation of the parks & facilities division. While this option would not require the hiring of any additional staff, the move would not bring any recreational program or management experience to the district which is a major issue.
 - Hiring a Management Assistant to share the administrative duties with the Accounting Supervisor. With this option another staff member would have to be hired but the district would have additional staff to handle a variety of management and operations functions. However the issues associated with the management of the Recreation Division would remain.
 - Hiring a Recreation Director with the reallocation of some recreation program responsibilities or facilities management as well. This could include the responsibility of supervising the district's aquatic facilities and programs. Both the Parks & Facilities Director and Recreation Director should be expected to take on more district wide administrative responsibilities as well. This is the recommended option for the district and should be pursued as the best course of action to improve the operating structure of the organization.

Operational Budget Implications

- Adding a full-time Recreation Director will require additional funding. The exact level of funding will depend on the salary level that is adopted.
- The district will need to plan for significant capital expenditures to renovate or improve existing facilities and parks infrastructure in the coming years. The existing reserve analysis study should be utilized as the starting point with a five year capital improvement plan being developed and funded on an annual basis. This should be developed in concert with the Master Association and their reserve fund.
- If additional services are contracted then this will have a potential budgetary impact.

- The operating budget needs to include funding for staff training.

Section V – Priorities

Utilizing the points noted in the previous section the following are the recommended priorities for the district.

Short Term (next year to 18 months)

- There must be a clear determination of the desired level of service that the district will provide. This should then become the guide for the allocation of district resources and funding.
- The district will need to prioritize how the new tax funds will be utilized to best serve its citizens.
- Make a determination if any additional services should be contracted within the district. A cost benefit analysis should be completed for any of these services prior to entering into a contract.
- Commit to funding the capital reserve fund based on a five year prioritized capital replacement plan.
- Determine a preferred staff reorganization plan, fund and institute the plan.
- Confirm in writing long term relationships and specific roles of the district and the Master Association.
- Clearly define the role and limits of the Finance Committee.
- Work to improve communications between the parks and recreation divisions.
- Develop a plan to improve overall staff morale.
- Ensure that all full-time staff has specific work plans attached to their evaluations and all part-time staff is evaluated at least annually.
- Conduct a formal survey of district residents to determine future priorities for facilities, programs and services.

Middle Term (18 months to 3 years)

- Develop a comprehensive part-time pay plan by different levels of responsibility as well as time of service.
- Attempt to computerize more administrative functions such as time cards and work task functions as well as facility scheduling.

- Complete a comprehensive maintenance management plan that focuses on parks and facilities.
- Develop and fund at least a basic staff training program.
- Establish a 5 year program planning model that identifies recreation program priorities for the future.
- Develop a basic district wide marketing plan.

Long Term (3 plus years)

- Establish a vehicle and equipment depreciation and replacement schedule.
- Complete an update to the current parks and recreation master plan.