

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

May 24, 2006

Unapproved Minutes

Members Present: Chairman Tom Ronaghan, Judy Baker, Gary Davis, Tom Hersh, Jody Ledford, Kevin Null, Sue Podobnik,

Members Excused: Vince DePalmer, Earl Hersh, Jim Rodriguez

Ex-Officio Member Present: Jeff Degitz

Department Staff Present: Bill Schaefer, Loren Lustig, Matt Purkins

The Recreation and Parks Advisory Board met on May 24, 2006, in the Public Meeting Room of the County Office Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Tom Ronaghan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Kevin Null made a motion to approve the March Minutes as written, that was seconded by Jody Ledford and unanimously approved.

UPDATES/ISSUES:

Jeff Degitz provided the following updates:

Leister and Krimgold Parks – continuing with design work; hope to share with Planning Commission in next month or two and prepare construction documents and bid specs; still anticipating fall groundbreaking.

Gillis Falls Park – due to the increased possibility of reservoir development, we will not be building a trail within the maximum pool area – 95% of the trail is planned within this area. We will look to possibly develop the main park area located up the hill from Salt Box Park, with pavilions, playground, and some trails around the perimeter of the lake with existing funding.

Landon C. Burns Park – A new access road to the Ag Center will eliminate a planned additional ballfield at this park. The \$170,000 budgeted in FY09 for this project will be reallocated to other projects. Since this field was to replace a field at Carroll Community College, we will need to look at other areas.

West Carroll Regional Park – The Department is working with the Town of New Windsor as they negotiate with Lehigh regarding a rail spur and possible replacement of Seibel fields. We will be requesting a capital project in this next CIP process for funds to develop this park. In the meantime, we will be looking to start design work on ballfields at the Bark Hill site since West Carroll Park may take awhile.

Program Open Space – Notification was received from the State that the County is receiving over \$3.6M in POS funds for FY 2007. We also received notification from the State that we have been certified as having over 30 acres of parkland per thousand residents which now allows us to utilize up to 100% of POS funds for either acquisition or development (instead of the previous required 50/50 split), giving us much greater flexibility in the use of these funds. In addition, the required local match decreases from 25% to 10%. As in past years, 25% of this total will be made available to the towns for municipal projects. This week, we updated a Memorandum of Understanding with the towns that reflects the change in the local match from 25% to 10% with this contribution continuing to be split evenly between the towns and County.

Deer Park Walking Trail – Layout and design of a new walking trail is being prepared for this project which was approved \$66,000 in FY07; we hope to bid this work out during the summer and begin construction in the fall.

New Department Office Location – Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in July on the old Robert Moton Elementary School and we anticipate moving our offices in approximately one year.

Therapeutic Recreation Day – This annual event was held on May 22nd at the Farm Museum with 285 people enjoying an art show, games, music and great food. Change, Inc., ARC, Springfield, and Granite House participated.

Hashawha Manager – Melissa Boyle has been selected for this position and will start in June. She was formerly a Naturalist at Bear Branch Nature Center.

Piney Run Park:

Loren Lustig, Park Manager, provided the Board with information about the park.

- Park season is April 1 – November 1
- Fees: \$4/in-county vehicle, \$6/out-of-county vehicle and season passes are \$20/in-county, \$30/out-of-county; walk-ins are permitted in the off season at no charge
- 100,000+ visitors annually
- 10 fishing tournaments are held annually including the upcoming Governor’s Youth Fishing Derby (June 3), which is now the only one of its kind held in the State.
- 6 pavilions that are 100% booked with waiting list
- 6 piers, one of which is new; the others need replacing (funded with State Waterway Improvement Funds)
- 700,000 rock fish have been put in the lake in the past two years by DNR Fisheries
- Since it began 21 years ago, 1000 middle schoolers have participated in the annual Chesapeake Bay Field Trip sponsored in cooperation with the Outdoor School and Chesapeake Bay Foundation.
- Recent upgrades include installation of benches on the piers; new pavilion #6; upper comfort station renovations. The aging tennis courts that are only partially usable due to safety issues are scheduled for resurfacing in the CIP.
- Working to keep the hydrilla plant in the lake controlled. This invasive plant has tremendous powers to reproduce. 40% of the lake bottom is covered, but it has stayed 20” below the surface.

Sports Complex:

Matt Purkins, Manager, presented a handout to the Board providing an overview of the facility that is in its 18th season. (Addendum 1)

- The facility is used by adult softball leagues that are mostly local teams sponsored by local businesses, and tournaments with participants coming from as far away as Texas and Iowa.
- Leagues have grown from 45 teams in 2004 to 56 in 2006 and include Men’s, Women’s, Church, and Co-ed. Demand has increased for weekend tournaments with 29 tournaments over 25 weekends planned this year.
- Revenue for user groups is generated through field rental and light usage fees. Three of the five ballfields have lights, but lighting the other two fields may need future consideration.
- Outfield advertising is available for a yearly fee for businesses that sponsor teams; currently 7 businesses are participating.
- Charles Carroll Recreation Council has been a regular user of the facility since opening in 1989 for baseball, softball and soccer. As a volunteer recreation council, user fees are waived.
- A full-service concessions operation serves a variety of foods and is a vital part of the facility’s revenue recovery, increasing each season.
- Parking has become a major issue, but with the help of Hashawha maintenance staff, the Roads Department, and recycled millings, a new parking lot has been built at no cost to the County in the location where an old barn once stood.

Chairman Ronaghan thanked Loren and Matt for their presentations and expressed the importance of enlightening the Board about our parks and facilities

Constitution and By-Laws:

The final draft of the revised Constitution and By-Laws was reviewed (Addendum 2). Kevin Null explained that only

some minor changes were made to the draft. Mr. Degitz thanked Mr. Null and the Committee for the time and effort they put into preparing a more user friendly document and for a job well done. Mr. Ronaghan motioned to accept the Constitution and By-Laws as revised, which was seconded by Gary Davis and unanimously approved.

Other Business:

Chairman Ronaghan recommended that the Board schedule a tour of facilities after the capital project requests are heard in June. Since some of the newer park projects, i.e. Krimgold, Leister and Gillis Falls, will not be in these upcoming capital requests, Mr. Degitz suggested having one tour before the June meeting for existing projects and a second tour after the June meeting for new capital requests. This was agreed upon and will be scheduled by the staff.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. with a motion from Jody Ledford, seconded by Gary Davis.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Degitz, Director

Darlene Rohrbaugh, Secretary