

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting
September 27, 2006
Approved Minutes

Members Present: Chairman Tom Ronaghan, Judy Baker, Gary Davis, Vince DePalmer, Earl Hersh, Tom Hersh, Jody Ledford, Art Nelligan, Sue Podobnik, Jim Rodriguez

Members Excused: Kevin Null

Ex-Officio Member Present: Jeff Degitz

Department Staff Present: Brad Rogers, Bruce Dutterer, Barbara Lages, Bill Schaefer

Guests: Representatives from community recreation councils.

The Recreation and Parks Advisory Board met on September 27, 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:

The July Minutes were unanimously approved with a motion by Judy Baker and seconded by Jody Ledford.

UPDATES/ISSUES:

Jeff Degitz provided the following updates:

Bark Hill Ballfield Project – Design is underway; because of traffic concerns and poor site distance with the planned entrance off of Raywell Avenue, other options for access are being considered, including from Peace and Plenty Drive. We hope to determine a course of action by the next meeting.

Deer Park – Construction began this week on the walking trail and completion is expected by next week.

Leister Park – Planning Commission review is scheduled in October.

Krimgold Park – Planning Commission review is anticipated in November. Then, design documents will be completed, with the project expected to be bid this winter and construction beginning in the spring.

MDA Lockup – Mr. Degitz participated in the Muscular Dystrophy Association Lockup event. Over \$500 was raised on his behalf and he thanked everyone for the donations.

Program Open Space – A recent article in the Carroll County Times recognized the importance of Program Open Space and encouraged all politicians to pledge not to cut POS funds. Four out of five years, monies have been taken for other uses by the State, but this year full funding was received. If Board members have the opportunity to talk to candidates prior to the election, it was suggested that they ask where they stand regarding Program Open Space and let them know that it is important to them.

Web site – The new Department web site will be completed in about two weeks. It will include Places to Go, Things to Do, and General Information. Places to Go will provide links to park facilities, a locator map, directions, photos and amenities. Things to Do will include the Program Guide, nature center programs, recreation council information and flyers. General Information will have a staff listing, Board minutes, the Annual Report and Parks Ordinance.

Customer Service Survey – Copies of the new Customer Service Survey were reviewed. Barbara Lages reported that the surveys are in the libraries and facilities and have been sent to citizens in our data bases. There are three surveys covering recreation councils, the Community Recreation Program, and Parks and Facilities. Completion will be the end of the year and a report will be presented to the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board and the Board of Commissioners in January.

SELF-HELP PROJECT PRESENTATIONS:

Winfield and Freedom Recreation Councils:

Andrea Brandt, representing Century High School Athletic Boosters, presented two requests:

- New dugouts to be built on the main baseball field at Century High School to provide protection from the weather for the Winfield Recreation Council and Sykesville Baseball programs as well as the high school program. Currently, the players only have access to a bench. The overall field appearance will also be improved. It was asked if storage within the dugouts was considered. Ms. Brandt advised that they would have to be a larger size which would then block the bleachers. Ms. Baker asked the percentage of use by the recreation councils and the school and who would be responsible for maintenance. Mr. Rodriguez advised that there is not enough money in the school budget for these kinds of improvements. Mr. Degitz commented that council programs do have significant access to the school. The Boosters and the Recreation Councils also put in a great deal of money and time. Total cost: \$10,950; County contribution - \$8,213; Community contribution - \$2,737.
- Practice wall (backboard) for Recreation Councils' and high school's soccer and lacrosse programs. The backboard would be mounted on the far right exterior fence of the tennis courts, directly behind the student parking area by volunteers. Total cost: \$6,780; County contribution - \$5,117; Community contribution - \$1,663 and 18 volunteer hours.

North Carroll Recreation Council:

Jeff Beard presented a request for ballfield mix for Hampstead Elementary and North Carroll High School to bring the fields up to tournament level. Quality mix from Valley Quarry keeps weeds down and provides good drainage. Mr. Schaefer advised that the recreation councils in the northern part of the County get mix from Valley Quarry and those in the southern area use a vendor in Kent County. All purchases are made through the Department. Mr. Beard commented on the Century High School discussion that, in the long run, recreation councils take care of the fields they use more than the schools. Total project cost: \$5,980; County contribution - \$4,625; Community contribution - \$1,355 and 80 volunteer hours.

West Carroll Recreation Council:

Brian Klein presented a project request to replace the 25 year old baseball field backstop located at Francis Scott Key High School. It is in very poor condition with rusting, gaps and holes and it has become a safety issue for spectators. Mr. Klein reported that although Carroll County Public Schools has provided assistance in improving field conditions, funds are not available to purchase a new backstop. The Recreation Council has also providing funding and volunteer hours to put in new sod and new scoreboards. Earl Hersh commented that the Council has done a wonderful job with this field and it is in the best condition it has ever been. He noted that the backstop is very much needed. Total cost: \$12,565; County contribution - \$9,424; Community contribution - \$3,141.

Mr. Nelligan asked who is responsible for getting field maintenance into the Public Schools' budget since it seems the logical responsibility for the school system. Mr. Rodriguez responded that there are limited funds for all seven high schools. School Athletic Directors would submit requests to him and the higher cost items, i.e. tennis courts, would then go through the Board of Education and Board of Commissioners. He advised that the Athletic Boosters at each school, with the help of recreation councils, help out tremendously and play a big role in providing funds and volunteer hours.

Earl Hersh commented that all recreation councils are able to play on the main fields now, not like years ago when they could only use practice fields. Gary Davis added that everyone is also working together better now – the Boosters, Athletic Directors, and Recreation Councils and that we have to make the best use of the facilities we have. He expressed the need to get elementary schools to work with the recreation councils as well as the high schools. High School Athletic Directors coordinate use of facilities, but in the elementary schools, it's the Principals or Assistant Principals.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m. with a motion by Judy Baker, seconded by Sue Podobnik.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Degitz, Director

Darlene Rohrbaugh, Secretary