

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting
July 25, 2007
Approved Minutes

Members Present: Chairperson Jody Ledford, Gary Davis, Vince DePalmer, Colin Furneaux, Jim Rodriguez, Tom Ronaghan,

Members Excused: Tom Hersh, Kevin Null, Sue Podobnik

Staff Present: Bruce Dutterer, Abby Gruber, Barbara Lages, Brad Rogers

The Recreation and Parks Advisory Board met on July 25, 2007 in Room 003 of the County Office Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairperson Jody Ledford.

Newly appointed Board member, Mr. Colin Furneaux, was introduced. The Commissioners are reviewing applications to fill the two remaining vacancies and appointments are expected to be made soon. Mr. Furneaux who is from the United Kingdom, has resided in Finksburg for the past 2 ½ years. He has had many years of experience in recreation, both in his education background and personally. Mr. Furneaux was actively involved in setting up the Bedfordshire Schools' Mountain Training Centre in North Wales, a full time residential centre for school groups and adults in a mountain environment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The June Minutes were unanimously approved with a motion by Gary Davis, seconded by Jim Rodriguez.

APPROVAL OF CIP RECOMMENDATIONS:

Ms. Ledford reviewed the Board's recommendations for placement of the four new capital project requests within the proposed FY 2009-2014 Capital Budget. Mr. Ronaghan made a motion to accept the recommendations as stated. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rodriguez and unanimously approved.

UPDATES

Brad Rogers provided the following information:

Hap Baker Firearms Facility: Since the February 9th fire destroyed the rifle range, the Department has been going through the insurance process and finally gotten approval to put the rebuilding project out to bid. Bids will close on August 1st and, hopefully, the range will be ready to reopen mid-September. The insurance company required two quotes for the project which came in at \$280,000 and \$290,000.

Chestnut Tree Planting: The American chestnut tree has become nearly extinct due to blight many years ago. The American Chestnut Foundation is conducting a research project in an attempt to bring this tree back again. Hashawha was selected as one of four sites selected by the Foundation to participate in the project. Students from Francis Scott Key High School and the Outdoor School planted 250 Chestnut trees in a fenced in acre of land at Hashawha, and next year

more trees will be planted. All but six of the trees are growing. After four years, the trees will be inoculated with the virus to find out which ones will produce chestnuts. Funds for the project came from the Board of Education and Hashawha/Bear Branch Council.

Fall Community Program Guide: Copies of the new fall program guide were handed out. Abby Gruber pointed out the guide's new look and that programs are now listed in date order and keyed by icons. The number of programs has also increased. Mr. DePalmer commented that the program guide has been a wonderful publication and source of information to let citizens know all of the programs available to them through Recreation and Parks.

CAPITAL PROJECT CONSTRUCTION

Bruce Dutterer provided information on the status of capital projects:

Westminster Community Pond Renovations: The old, outdated playground equipment will be removed and replaced with a 6-bay swing set and 100% ADA play unit that will be located in a different location near Route 140. The old pavilion will also be removed and replaced with a new pavilion and single table pavilions. Other phases will include pond renovation and a walking trail around the pond. The Department is waiting to hear from State Highways regarding a possible change to the park entrance. Mr. Davis provided a contact with the State, Mark Crampton, who may be able to be of assistance.

Sports Complex: Replacement of the outdated wooden playground is planned.

Double Pipe Creek Park: Plans are underway to install a playground that will have a poured base safety surface due to high water from Double Pipe Creek., a 20' x 40' pavilion and two single table pavilions. In addition, a Waterways Improvement Grant from the State has been requested to construct a kiosk designating this facility as a water trail park with put in-take out point for the 8-mile water trail starting at Hapes Mill in Carroll County to Frederick County.

The playground equipment and pavilions for Westminster Community Pond and Sports Complex will be bought through U.S. Communities which is made up of a group of pre-qualified vendors. Every five years, the Bureau of Purchasing reviews the vendor list. Ms. Gruber explained that it is used for volume buying where several counties pull together to get discounts and better products.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. DePalmer commented that the sign for Hashawha at Route 97 and John Owings Road was cleaned up and looks very nice.

Mr. Furneaux asked for the Board's view on whether horses should stay on horse trails and stay off other trails. Mr. Rogers replied that signs are posted on the Hashawha trails, but ignored. Mr. Furneaux questioned whether the policy should be abandoned, but due to the Outdoor School and possible liability issues, Mr. Rogers felt it needed to be kept. He noted that the same issues also happen with ATV's.

Ms. Gruber doesn't feel that the Equestrian Council members are the offenders; they are trying to educate others about not going past certain points. Riders are coming onto the trail not knowing they aren't official equestrian trails. She recommended looking into better educating people and checking other sites and their management of trails.

Mr. Rodriguez asked about the Department's plan to check on recreation council use of athletic fields. Ms. Gruber reported that procedures have been outlined and the recreation councils that have been earmarked are: Westminster Area, Deer Park, North Carroll and Charles Carroll. These councils will submit requests for field use along with their schedules. Spot checks will then be made.

Mr. Ronaghan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m., seconded by Mr. Davis.

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Rogers, Bureau Chief of Parks

Darlene Rohrbaugh, Secretary