

**Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting  
June 25, 2008**

**Approved Minutes**

**Members Present:** Sue Podobnik, Chairperson, Vince DePalmer, Colin Furneaux, Hernan Padilla, Tom Ronaghan

**Members Excused:** Gary Davis, Kevin Null

**Members Absent:** Tom Hersh, Jody Ledford, Jim Rodriguez, Bobbi Tucker

**Ex-Officio Member Present:** Jeff Degitz

**Staff Present:** Barbara Lages and Brad Rogers

**Guests Present:** Ted Zaleski, Director, Carroll County Department of Management & Budget; Beth Ward, Carroll County Times; Dave, Dawn and Dominic Albertini, Dan Gounaris, Karl King, Chris Dizan, Matt McGivern and Tom Spaid, representatives of the South Carroll Lacrosse program, sponsored by Winfield Recreation Council.

Chairperson Podobnik opened the meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board at 7:30 p.m. on June 25, 2008 in the Public Meeting Room of the County Office Building.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Due to the lack of a quorum present, approval of the May Minutes was tabled until July.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- *Robert Moton Gymnasium* – Use of the gym has started with summer camps and basketball. Heavier use is expected later in the summer and during the school year.
- *Double Pipe Creek Park Grand Opening* – Ceremony will be held on Tuesday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m.
- *July Recreation & Parks Month Calendar* – Recreation & Parks Month has been celebrated in July the last 3 years with a calendar of activities to familiarize the public with our parks and to get them to visit places they haven't seen before. This year's calendar also includes photos of each of the County Commissioners participating in recreation activities in some of the parks.
- *Bed Bugs at Hashawha* – One bunk room in one of the cabins was found to have bed bugs. Mattresses were discarded and the area has been treated twice. User groups and parents of children that had scheduled the cabins during the month of June were contacted. On July 6, groups will return to use the facility.

**BUDGET PERSPECTIVES:**

In past meetings, the Board has discussed challenges the County is facing and their affects on the Recreation & Parks capital budget. Mr. Ted Zaleski, Director of the County's Department of Management & Budget, was invited to tonight's meeting to give insight on the budget process.

On the capital side of the budget, Recreation and Parks projects are funded with revenues from Impact Fees and Program Open Space. In addition, about \$100,000 per year is provided from general revenue for projects that aren't eligible for Impact Fees or Program Open Space funds.

**Impact Fees:** When a house is built, a portion of the Impact Fee is set aside for parks, with limitations – i.e., must be used to provide facilities that are needed due to growth. These funds are now not what they have been in the past.

**Program Open Space:** The County receives a portion of the State's Transfer Tax collection for Recreation & Parks projects. In the last couple of years, the County received in the millions of dollars and was able to take on some larger projects.

Mr. Zaleski has talked with the Board of Commissioners about putting in more general fund money for park projects, but the problem is where is it going to come from.

He recommended that the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board concentrate recommendations on two approaches: Based on what the Board feels the needs are or what priorities are, based on the amount of expected revenue. When he builds the capital budget, Mr. Zaleski considers available resources, limitations and priorities of the County Commissioners.

Mr. Ronaghan asked if the County considers borrowing money for Recreation & Parks projects. Mr. Zaleski replied that it has not been done in the past and, so far, the Commissioners have not been willing to put more money into park projects. Bonding has certain criteria of how much debt is the County willing to take on and do we have enough money to pay for it.

Ms. Podobnik asked how the Commissioners see Recreation and Parks. He feels that they would like to be able to put more money into park projects.

Mr. Ronaghan asked if the impact on the operating budget is considered when a new capital project is funded. Mr. Zaleski explained that a six-year operating plan is built for each capital project with an estimated operating impact.

Mr. Furneaux asked if consideration has been given through Planning and Zoning for developers to provide land and/or facilities as part of the development process. Mr. Zaleski explained that the problem is that Carroll County doesn't develop big enough for developers to do these things.

Mr. DePalmer asked his opinion on artificial turf fields and at \$1M each, how can it be done. Mr. Zaleski advised that it has been talked about with the Board of Education and with Mr. Degitz and we are taking a let's watch and see what happens with other jurisdictions. He doesn't feel that maintenance savings has been proven yet.

Ms. Podobnik asked where else funds might be available or what can the citizens do. Mr. Zaleski stated that the Commissioners can consider increasing the amount of general tax money for park projects, but it's important that citizens let the Commissioners know of their interests and why they feel it is important either through email and letters or open meetings held every Thursday as well as some community meetings. If the effort can't be made to help the Commissioners understand why something should or shouldn't happen, then people shouldn't get upset if they don't get what they want.

### **CAPITAL PROJECT REQUESTS:**

Brad Rogers, Bureau Chief of Parks, presented the following Capital Project requests:

- **Little Pipe Creek Trail – Design:** This project has been requested the past two years but has been modified to include engineering and design only for a 3.5 mile compacted stone (millings) trail from Union Bridge to New Windsor along Route 75. Grant funds will be pursued for construction of the trail through various sources. Mr. Degitz feels that this may be the way to get the trail approved in

the CIP, get the trail. Both towns are very supportive and have developed some of the trail on their ends. Eventually, this trail may extend to Westminster. Estimated project cost for design: \$196,700.

- **Bennett Cerf Walking Trail** - Design and Construction of a 6' wide (hard surface), 2 mile long walking trail between Bennett Cerf Park and the County Office Building on Center Street. Millings could possibly be used in some areas of the trail. This project was also modified to remove the section from Route 97 to the airport. The Department will pursue State Highway Grant funds for the section of the trail between Hahn Road and Rt. 140 including design, (2) pre-engineered bridges and construction totaling \$146,700 of the \$371,700 project cost. The trail will give citizens a safe place to walk, jog and run and it will provide a link to a county park from the City of Westminster and also connect to a future trail to the Airpark at Rt. 97 North with the anticipated extension of Bennett Cerf Drive. Mr. Furneaux asked that bicycling also be added in the description. Mr. Padilla asked if the Department would apply for a grant before the project is considered in the budget. Mr. Degitz explained that County funding will be proposed for the trail and grant funding would be used for the section between Hahn Road and Rt. 140. If no grant funding is received, the Department may have to come back for additional funds, but at least we would be able to get started.
- **Park Entrance Signs** – There are ten County Parks either with no signs or very old routed type signs that are in poor condition and need replacement. Management and Budget may recommend this project be included in the Park Restoration fund that is allocated for maintenance type projects. Proposed costs for the signs: \$20,000.
- **Sports Complex Renovations and Fencing Replacement** – This proposed project includes fencing replacement on Fields 1, 2 and 3 and creation of a courtyard environment in the hub of the three fields. The Sports Complex is 20 years old and has the original backstop and outfield fencing which is deteriorating. The courtyard will provide an even walking surface caused by washouts and extensive foot traffic and will help control dust and erosion in this area. The courtyard will either be a concrete or macadam surface. Fencing replacement for Fields 4 and 5 in the back of the Complex will probably be addressed in a year or two as Phase II of this project. Mr. DePalmer requested consideration in Phase II for covering for the dugouts to provide shade. Project cost: \$170,600.

The Board will establish priorities for capital projects at the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

### FIELD USE POLICY:

Mr. Degitz provided an overview of the Field Use Policy draft (Addendum 1). As recommended at the May meeting, **Item No. 11 was added: *The Department of Recreation & Parks reserves the right to accept or reject requests for field usage. Additionally, the Department reserves the right to cancel or postpone use due to field conditions or scheduled maintenance.*** The Policy encourages that programs associate with recreation councils and also provides criteria for field use by groups not covered by recreation councils. Fields would include County, school, municipal and private sites that are available to programs.

Written comments on the draft were received from Gary Davis and Kevin Null and were read:

Gary Davis: "I would like to see the following added to the policy under number 2: (Otherwise, I approve). 'Not only must the program be a non-profit organization, but no one associated with the program can be financially compensated in any way. This also includes stipends and reimbursements for travel, hotel, fuel, etc'."

Kevin Null: "I think it's a good start. Ideally, I would like to see an agreement between the BOE, all field 'owners' and the Rec Councils to require all field usage to be scheduled by the Department and/or Rec Councils. While they 'owners' would have the right to keep field(s) out of the process, it gives more weight to the Field Use Policy. Having said that, this type of agreement will take some time to work out and may never happen, so I would recommend adoption of the Field Use Policy."

Mr. Degitz felt that Mr. Davis' suggested addition would be difficult to monitor, but could be requested.

Mr. DePalmer felt that because of a problem North Carroll Recreation Council had with Shiloh Middle School fields that the recreation councils should have input.

Mr. Degitz advised that the policy attempts to have a way to deal with these groups; they are taxpayers and have rights. The Department does not want to undermine recreation councils and encourages groups to affiliate with, but this policy is for the handful of programs that will not.

Mr. Ronaghan made a motion to accept the Field Use Policy draft as presented; seconded by Mr. Furneaux. The motion was approved by the members present and the two proxy votes received from Gary Davis and Kevin Null.

### NEW BUSINESS:

Members of the South Carroll Lacrosse program, sponsored by Winfield Recreation Council, addressed the Board regarding facility use at South Carroll High School and the impact on playing fields due to renovations to the Fine Arts addition. This program is made up of five major lacrosse travel programs and is a spin off from Freedom Recreation Council. They broke away from Freedom to get closer to their own community. The program includes youth from Freedom, Winfield as well as Mt. Airy which has no facilities. Finding enough field space is a problem. They now use fields at Linton Springs, Winfield Elementary and South Carroll High, but will be losing fields at South Carroll with the Fine Arts addition and the school is then planning to take over the practice fields. The group uses personal funds and limited resources to maintain the fields.

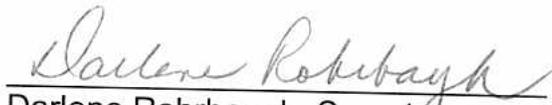
Mr. Degitz explained that Krimgold Park development is taking a long time to go through the review process and traffic issues have been the hold up. The park will be able to open with up to 3 fields and they will be multipurpose fields. However, at best, it will be two years until these fields will be playable. Both Freedom Area and Winfield Recreation Councils are expected to use these fields. He advised that Recreation and Parks schedules Mayeski Park fields and issues permits to South Carroll High School, so we can be of help with scheduling the park for the lacrosse program. Mr. Padilla asked if the Department can look into what fields are available. Mr. Degitz reported that, based on field checks in other areas, there have been some times scheduled that were unused.

The lacrosse representatives requested consideration to reallocate fields for next year and they will try to work with the recreation council. Mr. Degitz recommended that they work with Woodbine, Winfield and Freedom Area Recreation Councils and Ms. Podobnik suggested that they go directly to Winfield's President and Community Coordinator, first, and get them to find some time for the program.

The meeting adjourned with a motion by Mr. DePalmer and seconded by Mr. Furneaux.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Jeff R. Degitz, Director

  
Darlene Rohrbaugh, Secretary

- DRAFT -

FIELD SCHEDULING POLICY

1. The Department of Recreation & Parks strongly encourages all youth sports programs to become members of and work through the County's volunteer recreation councils. This enables all programs to work cooperatively with the same priority use levels for County parks and schools with a goal of most effectively maximizing the usage of available athletic fields.
2. If youth sports programs choose not to participate through a County recreation council, the following criteria must be met to receive scheduling consideration:
  - A. The program's goal must be to serve Carroll County residents
  - B. The program must be a non-profit organization
  - C. The program must be open to the public
  - D. The program must be able to provide the County with proof of liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$1 million
3. Programs that meet the criteria listed in number two above must :
  - A. Complete a field request form
  - B. Provide accurate, documentation of registration for their program.
  - C. Provide a complete listing of all fields currently used by the requesting program
4. A total inventory of fields will be prepared by the Department including County, school, municipal and private sites that are available to programs. Fields will be divided and assigned to user groups on a percentage basis, equal to the percentages of youth served by their documented registration figures.
5. Every attempt will be made to allow groups the ability to use the same fields from year to year, promoting the concept of ownership and local maintenance. When adjustments need to be made to field assignments due to increased registration or to accommodate new programs, the Department will take into consideration the following:
  - A. Fields not used to their fullest potential
  - B. Any financial and volunteer contributions made to improve a field
  - C. Fields in close proximity to other sites used by that organization.
6. Permits should very closely reflect both anticipated AND actual usage of athletic fields. Fields that are reserved by permit and not used will be reassigned to other user groups.

7. User groups are expected to maintain fields that are permitted to them and to leave those fields in as good or better shape than they found them.
8. The Department of Recreation & Parks will not schedule non-recreation council usage of municipal, private or Board of Education sites. If requested, we will provide those agencies with a letter stating that the Department will not schedule that location to allow for field usage by the independent organization listed by name.
9. Independent users of County park athletic fields for youth sports will be required to provide the Department with a certificate of insurance in the amount of \$1 million, prior to their 1<sup>st</sup> permitted date of use. Certificates should be mailed to Carroll County Department of Recreation & Parks, 300 S. Center Street, Westminster, MD 21157
10. If a recreation council plans to perform maintenance on a field and/or take it out of regular use because of maintenance concerns, that request will be forwarded to the administrator of the field (County, BOE or municipality). IF the administrator agrees with that action, that field will be taken out of the inventory of fields available for usage and percentage usage will be assigned from that smaller inventory.
11. The Department of Recreation & Parks reserves the right to accept or reject requests for field usage. Additionally, the Department reserves the right to cancel or postpone use due to field conditions or scheduled maintenance.

Draft (2)  
6-08