

**Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting
July 23, 2008**

Approved Minutes

Members Present: Sue Podobnik, Chairperson, Gary Davis, Vince DePalmer, Colin Furneaux, Jody Ledford, Kevin Null, Hernan Padilla, Jim Rodriguez, Tom Ronaghan, Bobbi Tucker

Members Absent: Tom Hersh,

Ex-Officio Member Present: Jeff Degitz

Staff Present: Abby Gruber and Barbara Lages

Chairperson Podobnik opened the meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board at 7:30 p.m. and thanked the Board for making the effort to attend.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MARCH, MAY AND JUNE:

March 26th Minutes unanimously approved with a motion by Colin Furneaux, seconded by Gary Davis.
May 28th Minutes unanimously approved with a motion by Bobbi Tucker, seconded by Tom Ronaghan.
June 25th Minutes discussion: Vince DePalmer stated that he did not vote for or against the Field Use Policy and requested that it be noted for the record that he abstained from the vote. Gary Davis motioned to approve the June Minutes noting Mr. DePalmer's comments. The motion was seconded by Colin Furneaux and unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- *Double Pipe Creek Dedication* - July 29th, 6:30 p.m. Two County Commissioners will attend and invitations were sent to Detour residents.
- *Bennett Cerf Park* – A State Community Parks & Playground (CPP) grant funds were awarded to purchase climbing equipment, a new pavilion and to construct an additional parking area. This grant provides funds for different types of projects but they must be within priority funding areas. Another possible project may be a bridge to the island at the Westminster Community Pond. Mr. Furneaux asked if there are any safety issues with climbing walls/equipment? It was explained that they are basically a rock, 8 ft. tall at the highest point, with foot holds and a poured rubber surface at the base like playground equipment. Safety considerations are reviewed and they fall in line with existing playgrounds. The Bureau of Facilities inspects play equipment during regular park checks according to a checklist. Mr. Furneaux asked if there have been any lawsuits. To Mr. Degitz' knowledge, there have been none. Mr. Furneaux requested to include in the Minutes that new equipment is being adequately assessed for liability concerns.
- *Forecast for Program Open Space Funds* – At a recent MACO meeting, the forecast for this year's POS funds is similar to the assessment of the County's funding, as presented by Ted Zaleski at last month's meeting. POS funds will decrease significantly from \$4 million last year to \$400,000. Howard County went from \$9 million to \$1.1 million. Yet Howard County still has a \$20 million capital budget. Ours is \$4 million. This is information the public doesn't understand and we can try to get it out to the recreation councils. The current and past Boards of County Commissioners have elected not to bond which could be the main reason we don't have the same facilities as Howard County.
- *Month of Sundays Concerts* – Sunday, July 27, is the last concert of the season. The Van Dells will perform beginning at 7 p.m.

- *Bed Bugs* – 9 treatments have been done in Cabin 5, but unsuccessful. A new thermal remediation treatment from a company in Virginia is being considered. Hot air is blown into the cabin up to 150°. Staff is looking into the cost per treatment compared to purchasing the equipment which is \$18,000 for a small unit and \$50,000 for a larger unit. We are looking to the Board of Education for some assistance since Outdoor School needs all 5 cabins. Without cabin 5, Hashawha's revenue would also be affected. If the equipment is purchased, all the cabins would be treated on a regularly scheduled basis. Mr. Davis suggested that some of the area hotels may be interested and could share in the cost.
- *Merge of Recreation Councils* – Abby Gruber announced that Deer Park and Sandymount Councils recently merged and will be known as the Central Carroll Recreation Council. Until completion of fall programs, however, they will act as two separate councils.
- *Software Program* – A Web-based application, "Active Network", will soon be installed to advance efficiency and participation and level of service to our consumers. Program registrants will be able to pay by credit card. Program registration fees will be increased by \$4 to cover the cost of the system. Mr. Padilla stated that Prince George's County uses a similar program. Service. Mr. Ronaghan asked if this system can be used by recreation councils. It was thought that at some point it may be applicable for their use.
- *Fall Program Guide* – Will be out the second week of August.
- *Amusement Park Ticket Sales* - \$4,000 ahead of last year's sales with \$25,000 in sales – last year's total was \$32,000. The proceeds benefit the Month of Sundays Concert Series and MRPA.
- *Robert Moton Center Gym/Activity Room* – Scheduling has begun and an online calendar was developed for the staff as well as Bureau of Facilities so they can adjust heating and cooling to maximize energy savings.
- *Therapeutic Recreation* – Last week was Therapeutic Recreation Week and the third week of Therapeutic Recreation Camp that was held in the Activity Room. 6 to 9 campers attended this program.
- *MRPA Award* – Matt Purkins, Sports Complex Manager, received MRPA's Bi-Annual award for the many things he has done for the organization during his 5-year membership. Matt was nominated by a Baltimore County member. On behalf of the Board, Ms. Podobnik sent congratulations to Matt.

PRIORITIZE CAPITAL PROJECT REQUESTS:

The four Capital Project requests presented at the June meeting were reviewed:

• Little Pipe Creek Trail Design	\$196,700
• Bennett Cerf Park Walking Trail	\$371,700
• Park Entrance Signs	\$ 20,000
• Sports Complex Renovations	\$170,600

Mr. Degitz explained that these projects would be requested in FY 2015, year six of the CIP. However, if more funds become available, some projects can be moved around in the plan. Since the Middlebrook Trail project will not be developed, those funds may go to the Bennett Cerf Trail project.

Gary Davis recommended the Sports Complex Renovations project as Priority #1 because of the need to maintain existing parks and facilities. Vince DePalmer suggested that consideration be given to putting in dugouts at the Sports Complex. Mr. Degitz advised that they could be added as a second phase of the renovation project.

Tom Ronaghan recommended the Park Entrance Signs project as Priority #2. Ms. Ledford asked if this project could be done with Self-Help funds. Mr. Degitz explained that it could; however, there may be several signs within one recreation council's area. He advised that another option may be to include this

project in the existing Park Renovations capital project.

Vince DePalmer asked if Little Pipe Creek Trail project could have the same problems as Middlebrook Trail. Kevin Null responded that there shouldn't be issues because both New Windsor and Union Bridge already have trails that the Little Pipe Creek Trail will connect to and it will be built along a State right-of-way. Mr. DePalmer recommended that this project be Priority #3 and Bennett Cerf Park Trail as #4.

Gary Davis made a motion to prioritize the Capital Project requests as follows:

1. Sports Complex Renovations
2. Park Entrance Signs
3. Little Pipe Creek Trail
4. Bennett Cerf Park Trail

The motion was seconded by Tom Ronaghan and unanimously approved.

DOG PARK UPDATE:

Mr. Degitz reported that a Dog Park project has been requested in the Capital Budget the last two years but not recommended for funding by Management & Budget. He discussed the project with the Board of Commissioners before adoption of the budget and while they do not support the use of County funds for a Dog Park, they are open to the idea of using an area in an existing park if a group wants to build and operate the facility. Mr. Degitz will be meeting with two citizens, Susan Olson and Laurie Walters, who are proponents of a Dog Park in the Westminster area and are interested in operating one. A meeting with the Commissioners may then be scheduled. Bennett Cerf Park may be a possible location for a Dog Park.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER TRAIL PROJECT:

Staff met with City representatives last week to discuss a joint effort in the extension of a trail that currently goes from Tahoma Farm Road to Uniontown Road. The City wants to work with the Department to extend the trail to connect Uniontown Road to the County's proposed trail that will parallel the future Bennett Cerf Drive extended.

OTHER BUSINESS:

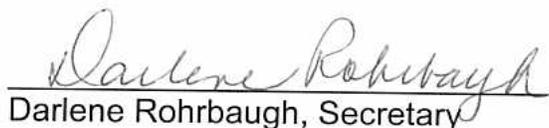
Field Use Policy – Mr. DePalmer feels that because of the wording in the policy, more youth sports groups may choose not to participate through a recreation council. He also feels that recreation councils should have the final say on controlling field usage.

Trail Status – Mr. DePalmer inquired about the status of the trail between the new Manchester Valley High and Ebb Valley Elementary Schools. Mr. Degitz reported that he spoke with the engineer working with the property owner and it looks like it may be an ongoing issue and could be very expensive. There doesn't appear to be another way around the landowner.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. with a motion by Mr. Ronaghan and second by Mr. Rodriguez.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeff R. Degitz, Director


Darlene Rohrbach, Secretary