

**Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting  
February 25, 2015**

**Approved Minutes**

**Members Present:** Brad Knatz, Judy Baker, Brian Clancy, John Marks, Mike Rodgers, Carolyn Garber, Colin Furneaux, and Derek Ludlow

**Members Excused:** Jim Rodriguez

**Members Absent:** Bobbi Tucker

**Staff Present:** Candy Sharrer

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

The Recreation and Parks Advisory Board met on February 25, 2015 at the County Office Building's public hearing room 003/004. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by board chair Judy Baker.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Judy Baker moved to approve the October 22, 2014 meeting minutes, Brad Knatz seconded, all concurred and minutes were approved.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- **Heritage Tree Project:** Working with Westminster Tree Commission to designate portion of Westminster Community Trail in Bennett Cerf Park as Heritage Tree Trail with QR codes that will identify species, age and value of trees. Targeting Arbor Day (4/24/15) event and will work on brochure to promote trail
- **Westminster Veterans Memorial Park:** Project went to Technical Review Committee on 2/23 and received mostly favorable comments from review agencies. Approximately 6 citizens spoke up against project (neighbors) and/or raised concerns
- **ORV/Motocross Trail:** Wind O'Neal and Motocross Council continue to lobby for development of ORV trail and have reached out to Westminster Aero modelers and Equestrian Council for their support
- **County Wide Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan:** We have been approached by Department of Land Use Planning and Development to participate in development of County bicycle pedestrian master plan with kick off meeting scheduled for next week
- **Rail Trail:** Meetings held with Rails to Trails and Germany Township (PA) regarding possible development of rail trail. Additional meetings being scheduled with Littlestown and Adams County, PA staff
- **Turf Fields:** We have recommended to the Athletic Field Committee that we table this issue until after this year's County and Board of Education budget process is complete
- **Fee Schedule:** Staff will be meeting with Commissioners this week to give briefing on fee schedule used at major park facilities including goal, rate of success and other variables that

affect results. A new recommended fee schedule will be provided to Commissioners on March 5 for their consideration and approval

- **Department reorganization:** After retirements of Park Superintendent Dave Rohrer and Park Technician Jacki Koch at Hashawha, we have moved former Bear Branch Naturalist Dawn Harry into the newly established role of Park Operations Coordinator and are moving Bureau Chief Brad Rogers' office up to Hashawha. We have created the new position of Park Development Manager who will manage capital projects, grant pursuit and administration and work closely with the capital budget. Park Planner Bruce Dutterer will be moving into a Recreation Coordinator position to provide additional support to Recreation Councils

### **NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY:**

Jeff Degitz shared the Needs Assessment Survey given to 620 random county homes back in November and some of the results from the survey. We received an 18% response with 110 surveys collected. An email will be sent to the board once the survey summary has been posted on-line.

- John Marks suggested possibly moving current events to different parks to increase awareness. Jeff shared that a few years back we started Park Pursuit which is an event that gets friends/family together for fun activities and increases awareness of our parks. Carolyn Garber suggested the Advisory Board create a team and be a part of Park Pursuit.

### **CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE:**

- There have been significant cuts to Program Open Space in the Governor's proposed budget with an estimated loss to Carroll County of \$892,000
  - This will delay projects in the recommended CIP by 1-3 years or knock them out of the current plan completely
  - Concerns about "banking" funds for multiple years to afford larger projects and appearance of "not using/needing" funding
- Review preliminary recommended CIP vs. possible changes
  - Jeff shared the Community Investment Plan for 2016-2021, asking the Board to focus on 2016. Westminster Veterans Memorial Park Project may need to hold off for a minimum of two years. Jeff will be meeting with budget staff in the upcoming weeks to discuss projects, funding and re-prioritizing.

### **TOBACCO FREE PARKS - DISCUSSION:**

- Origin - Discussion originated after recent application for cigarette restitution fund grant request and Needs Assessment Survey presentation; offered to discuss with Advisory Board and come back with recommendation
- History - Policy adopted 2001 prohibiting use of tobacco within 50 yards of athletic fields during rec. council youth activities; later amended in 2012 to include tot lots
- Possible Course of Action – revise County Parks Ordinance or adopt department policy; discussion of mandatory vs. voluntary; signage placement & cost
- Benefits

- Consistent with department mission of “supporting strong, healthy community and natural environment”
  - Consistent with current regulations regarding public buildings (govt., BOE, libraries, CCC, RMC
  - Reduce danger from second hand smoke – danger can be as high as indoors
  - Promote change in community norms and positive role models that influence youth
  - 81% of MD residents non smokers
  - 80% of household responses supported tobacco free parks in needs assessment survey
  - 25 out of 32 NFL stadiums tobacco/smoke free; both Camden Yards & M & T smoke free
  - 5 MD counties have restricted tobacco use in parks (Howard, Carroll, Anne Arundel, Montgomery and Prince Georges)
- Next steps – recommendation to change or not; present Board’s recommendation to Commissioners as follow up
    - Discussion went around about the different options and pros/cons of each. Brad Knatz moved to approve a Tobacco Free Park department policy, Derek Ludlow seconded and all concurred.

**NOMINATION OF VICE CHAIR:**

John Marks, Jim Rodriguez and Brian Clancy will continue email/phone conversations to come up with a nomination.

**MARCH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING:**

Jeff Degitz shared that due to a workshop the March 25, 2015 meeting will need to be rescheduled to April 1, 2015. As this is a lunch meeting, discussion was had to extend an invitation to the commissioners. After a short discussion it was decided to have lunch at Hashawha at 1:00pm, starting the meeting at 1:30pm and also extending an invite to the commissioners.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion by Judy Baker and concurred by all, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jeff R. Degitz*

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Jeff R. Degitz, Administrator

*Candy Sharrer*

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Candy Sharrer, Secretary