

County-wide Recreation and Parks Advisory Board

Monday, September 11, 2017

Meeting Notes

Present: Gabe Albornoz [Rec], Chris Richardson, Mike Riley [Parks], John Nissel [Parks], Doug Ludwig [Parks], Arie Baker [Parks], Phyllis Rand [Commission on Aging], Craig Kwiecinski, Brad Ryan, Amina James (phone), Carol Petrucci, Morton Davis, Jeff Bourne, Paul Lofgren (phone), Felecia Wilson, Carl Blake, Jeffrey Szuchman, Safiatou Barry, Ron Maxson [Rec], Matthew Lee, Benjamin DuGoff, Connie Latham, Nancy Steen, Beth Gochrach, Jonathan Brice (phone), Onyel Bhol-Gibson (phone)

Meeting called to order by Chris Richardson at 7:09pm.

Review of Agenda

- accepted

Overview of Green Farm Maintenance Facility

- project was started in 2012
- ribbon cutting ceremony held in May 2017
- houses 3 divisions
 - o Facilities Management
 - o Horticulture, Forestry, and Environmental Education
 - o Portion of Northern Region
- 11 acres, 11 buildings including chemical storage and fleet management

*Montgomery Parks will have a campaign to raise funds to help Houston Parks & Recreation with the effects of Hurricane Harvey. Funds raised will go to the families of Houston Parks & Recreation employees.

Review of June 2017 Meeting Notes

- accepted

Review of County Boards/Committees/Commission Rules

- Connie Latham, Special Assistant to the County Executive
- Function of the board is to survey the needs and services of county residents.

- New this year is the requirement of parliamentary procedures, training, State Open Meetings Act training.
- Members should have ethics training.

Q: How do we access the training:

A: Currently being worked on; hasn't been rolled out as yet.

Q: If you're on one board and interested in another, are you more likely to get it?

A: individuals can only serve on one board, unless there is legislation that says a board can have a representative from another board.

Q: Do we have to take the State Open Meeting training yearly?

A: No, only once.

Q: Individuals serve a three year term. Do we have to apply again?

A: Yes, but the individuals won't have to interview again.

Q: Can you work for the department and be on the board?

A: Yes, but will have to sign a conflict of interest form. Be sure to always inform the board of any changes in address or employment.

Q: When will the changes to the document be made? Will we have the opportunity to review the bylaws? Some areas have no mention of Parks and there are some grammatical errors.

A: Those changes will have to be an amendment to the legislation.

Recreation Update

Gabe Albornoz, Director, Montgomery County Recreation

- Thank you for your service
- The department had a great summer
- Large number of kids in camps
- Two extra weeks because of late school start
- Thanks to CUPF for helping relocate camps due to CIP work being done at schools
- 4th of July fireworks show had a record turnout at Wheaton and Einstein
- There was a rise in delinquent behavior
- *Dr. Bryce asked that Gabe send an email regarding fireworks and CIP construction projects

- Summer Fun Centers had waiting lists at every location and this has been noted for future planning.
- Future plans for SFC are being proposed that we expand the option; this may mean shrinking the two-week summer programs.
- Looking to fill position of coordinator of Montgomery County Sports Hall of Fame (a contract position)
- There's been a decline in youths in sports because of
 - o Costs
 - o Availability
 - o Specializing in one or two sports early on
 - o Lack of quality coaches
- Recreation wants to create a time and space to fill this void. They will need the board's help to facilitate the discussion.
- Gabe will take a leave of absence because he'll be seeking an elected office position.

Parks Update

Mike Riley, Director, Montgomery Parks

- The Green Farm Maintenance Facility was created because of the Smart Growth Initiative.
- The department's biggest challenges are:
 - o Built a great suburban park system
 - o Have a challenge of providing "walk to" parks in areas where people live in high rises such as Silver Spring and Germantown
 - o The focus has been on how is the department going to provide great spaces in densely populated areas
- Energize Public Spaces Plan
 - o Currently at the Planning Board and will be sent to the County Council
 - o More information can be found on the Parks website
- New Planning Board Member: Tina Patterson
 - o Small business owner from Germantown

- CIP Budget consists of two budgets
 - o Capital (brick and mortar)
 - o Operating
- Fall is the busiest time for the Parks. Events include:
 - o Two solar eclipse events were held in August
 - Martin Luther King Park
 - Black Hill Park
 - o Parks Half Marathon was held on September 10th
 - o There will be a public meeting on Sept. 12 regarding the Oursiman Honda Encroachment
 - Parking garage column in Capital Crescent Trail
 - Ultimately the decision will be made by the council
 - o Park-ing Day – September 15th
 - Parking spaces turned into pocket parks
 - o Monarch Fiesta – September 16th

Q: What specific modifications would you like to see to the bylaws?

A: We can start a red line and get that out to the board before the next meeting. Gabe can send his red lines as well.

Overview of Budgets

Jeff Bourne, Montgomery County Recreation

- Best way to describe the budget is that the Capital is a mortgage and the Operating is a checkbook.
 - o With capital you borrow and pay it off over 20 to 30 years.
 - o Operating is daily use money
- A Development Plan is created every 20 years and updated every 5 to 6 years
 - o This plan will walk you through what is hoped to be accomplished by 2030
- Every month, board members will receive a one-page update of Recreation's CIP status
- Operating budget is every year and shows the future fiscal impact.
- The operating budget becomes effective July 1st

Q: What do you typically spend on capital per year?

A: There is no typical amount. It depends on projects and varies every year.

Q: Do you only use county money?

A: Half of one percent of taxes collected on real estate is split by the state and county. Other funding comes from grants occasionally and facility planning studies.

Nancy Steen, Montgomery Parks

- The budget process in Parks is similar to that of Recreation
- Most of the funding comes from taxes
- The department is competing with everyone else for county tax dollars
- Budgets has to be balanced and can't be overspent
- The department has to have a six-year plan
- The department also has non-tax supported funds
 - o Project Management
 - o Enterprise (must be self-sustaining)
 - o Special Revenue fund
 - Sometimes moving money back and forth for services such as Park Police for events or snow removal.
- Sometimes the department has to dip into their "savings"
- The department also has expenditures
 - o Staff costs
 - o Supplies and materials
 - o Equipment
- The budget timeline is a year-long process
 - o CIP and Operating budgets are on different timelines
- Parks budget goes before the Planning Board for approval
- November is the final proposed budget request
- The budget also goes to the Commission to get a bi-county "blessing"
- Then goes to the County Executive in January and sent to the county council

**Mike Riley asked that the board provide advocacy by attending budget forums (January through March) and council reviews (April – May). The department will provide some rationale (talking points) to the board members so they can be advocates.*

Q: Where does technology fall in these budgets? Is it CIP or Operating?

A: It's Operating for Recreation. The department makes sure new building have

*fiberoptics and are retrofitting older buildings.
For Parks, it could be either. There's a fund for equipment such as laptops
and servers under the operating budget.*

Q: Is there any cross departmental spending (like the Green Farm building)?

*A: All departments compete for General Obligation Bond bond. There's one CIP
fund but separate operating budgets.*

CUPF Update - Ron Maxson

- CUPF serves as “middle man” between many government facilities and the community
- Would like to clarify the myth of Recreation hogging all the gyms

Commission on Aging – Phyllis Rand

- The commission has three areas of focus:
 - o Housing
 - o Transportation
 - o Communication
- Two additional proposal in the works:
 - o Senior Scape
 - o Forest Bathing

Q: What is wrap around service?

A: Rather than one service, trying to get all these services to the one person

- *Personal priority is Senior Playgrounds*
 - o *The county is lacking in the area as there are currently none*
 - o *The cost is approximately between \$25K-\$50K*

**Mike Riley mentioned that Parks is looking at Senior Scape because the demographics of the county are shifting.*

** Suggestion was made to invite a representative from HHS to present on the Villages Program in which neighbors help neighbors.*

MCPS Update

Dr. Jonathan Bryce

- Schools have been working closely with Recreation

- During the first week of school year, all students were fed and no children were lost.
- Met with Recreation to make a tighter connection between after school programs and what is going on in school.
 - o i.e. – STEM, Robotics
- Low income families may not be aware of available funds that can be used for programs.
- MCPS is fundraising to support the schools affected by Hurricane Harvey
 - o The goal is to raise \$1 per student for a grand total of \$162K

Commission on People with Disabilities

- This commission advises the council
- Works with Parks (the Program Access Office) about accessibility in Parks

Old/New Business

- Subcommittee announcements
 - o Handout distributed showing the consolidated lists of committees
 - o Monthly reports
 - o Will be on the agenda for the next meeting

Q: Is there any interest in changing the meeting day?

A: Any day might present a conflict for board members. Best to keep it as is (first Mondays).

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Meeting Adjourned at 9:10pm