

Countywide Recreation and Parks Advisory Board
2425 Reedy Drive, Floor 10
Wheaton, MD 20902
Feb. 9, 2026

Attendance:

Members Present (In-person and remote)

- Banda
- Delgado
- Flores
- Goettsch
- Holeywell
- Hutton
- Krauze
- Ricci
- Royster
- Ryan

Members Not Present

- Bentley
- Hudson
- Sparer
- Zarubin

A quorum was established at the meeting.

Staff Present

- Adejo
- Albornoz
- Clutter
- Dunn
- Fasteau
- Kress
- Samuel
- Turnbull

Ex Officio members present

- Ross
- Kellner

Ricci called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions:

Ricci advised that the board should work towards adding new members, given the numerous vacancies and the backlogged process.

Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes and Meeting Agenda

Ricci shared the January 2026 minutes and the February 2026 agenda. Board members unanimously voted to approve both.

Agenda Items

General updates – Ricci asked about the response to the winter storm, which Albornoz and county staff provided. Staff said the facilities' closures are especially challenging for seniors. Both recreation and parks staff said they are working to reschedule or refund missed programming sessions. The recreation department is back at full operations, Albornoz said.

Budget – Ricci also asked about budget advocacy regarding the Capital Improvement Budget. Turnbull said the Parks Foundation is drafting an advocacy letter. She pointed to the impact of the budget on the Wheaton Action Sports Park, the climate/solar initiative, trail projects, and lifecycle replacement. Albornoz highlighted the need for several recreation facilities to get refreshes, which are noted as line items in the CIP budget. The board discussed drafting a letter in support of adequate funding for recreation and parks in the CIP budget. The board approved the motion unanimously.

Fields updates – The board had a lengthy discussion about the merits of grass athletic fields vs synthetic turf fields, following 1) MCPS's budget proposals to convert several grass athletic fields to synthetic turf, and 2) the county executive's proposal to convert the North Potomac Community Recreation Center's synthetic turf field to grass. While some stakeholders prefer grass fields due to the perception of health risks associated with synthetic turf, grass fields allow considerably less play time, due to their requirements for maintenance and rest.

The board agreed that its letter to the County Council regarding the CIP budget would include a message 1) in support of MCPS's efforts to convert grass fields to synthetic turf, and 2) in opposition to the County Executive's proposal to convert synthetic turf fields to grass, citing its priority on expanding opportunities for exercise and sport in the county. The board unanimously voted to include this message in the letter.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be March 9, 2026.

Adjournment

The board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. Ricci adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m.