

COUNTYWIDE RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
November 3, 2014
MEETING NOTES

Present: Renee Katz, Ron MacNab, Dave Magill, Vernard McBeth, Mark Pharaoh, Ingrid Pufahl, Chris Richardson, Michael Waters, Felecia Wilson, Gabe Albornoz [Rec], Morton Davis [Commission on Aging], Susan Hoffmann [Rec], Ron Maxson [CUPF], Robin Riley [Rec], Mike Riley [Parks]

Absent: Joy Barrow, Erik Johnson, Myron Johnson, James Krzyminski, Paul Lofgren, Sean Thomas Smith, Jeff Bourne [Rec], Tony DeVaul [Park Police], Susan Hartung [Commission on Disabilities], John Nissel [Parks]

By phone: Wesley Japp

Guests: Connie Latham [County Executive], Tiffany Presmy [Parks]

Chair Richardson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

The Agenda review and the October 2014 meeting notes were approved unanimously.

Rec Update – Gabe Albornoz

- November 1
 - Ribbon cutting of the Scotland Neighborhood Recreation Center in Potomac, which was renamed for Bette Carol Thompson. Thanks to Parks for their help with the easements.
 - Groundbreaking at Ross Boddy Neighborhood Recreation Center in Sandy Spring. The new construction will include a high school size gym.
- Halloween is huge throughout Recreation. The Haunted Forest at the Damascus Community Recreation Center won an award.
- Longwood, Clara Barton and Wisconsin Place Community Recreation Centers have new center directors.
- Movie Night at Potomac Community Recreation Center attracted 700 – extremely well-attended.
- The new Kid Museum in the Davis Library basement in Bethesda is staffed primarily by our Teen Works, high school students trained by Recreation.
- The Wheaton project: Community Recreation Center, Library, Gilchrist Center - the number in the budget book was about 50% off once the value engineering was completed. A major challenge with the Office of Management and Budget is coming and Recreation will need the support of the Board.
- ActiveNet – we are now getting into policy decisions. Will be bringing the project manager to a future meeting with some updates.

Parks Update – Mike Riley

- This coming weekend will see the Haunted Train in Wheaton and the Scary Train in Cabin John. It is great fun “scaring kids” in an age-appropriate environment.
- Emancipation Days was well-attended.
- Synthetic turf – toured turf in Gaithersburg, which is comprised of coconut, rice husks and light infill. There is no crumb rubber from tires. If there is a product that performs well, and doesn’t have health concerns, Parks will go with it.
- Mike reiterated the new Planning Chair, Casey Anderson’s, priorities:
 - Urban Parks – wants to optimize opportunities
 - Trails – amending park trails master plan
 - Athletic fields – hold a forum that brings in user groups and stake holders to identify the issues
- Montgomery County Council Pesticide legislation – MC 52-14 -- legislation would severely limit the use of pesticides on lawns and County fields. Would have a devastating impact on fighting non-native invasive species and weed control. Parks has over 30,000 acres of land and only 8,000 are developed. Will be asking the Countywide Recreation Advisory Board to weigh in. Golf courses are exempt, but fields are not. There will be a public hearing in January. Mike will bring someone to the December Board meeting to help explain the impact of the legislation on Parks. **DISCUSSION ENSUED.**
- Christy Turnbull will fill the position made vacant by Christine Brett’s retirement.
- In response to a question on deer management, Mike explained that bow hunting and sharp shooting will be expanded. There is a strong push from the public to get the whitetail deer population under control.
- Tiffany Presmy presented Parks’ Mobile Surveys
 - We want to know “how are we doing?”
 - On site, consumers are offered an iPad with the “Parks Simple Survey,” which asks five questions and the results can be used in real time.

County Executive Special Assistant Connie Latham came to the meeting to respond to a number of questions posed by the Board:

- CERB Report
 - The Montgomery County Council will deal with the CERB report in December or later. Implementing the recommendations requires legislation. The County Executive cannot act until the Council proposes something.
- The Montgomery County Delegation
 - The Countywide Recreation Advisory Board would go through the County Executive and his office of Government Relations, regarding anything at the state level. The Board cannot go directly to the delegation in Annapolis.
- How can the Board engage with the public via social media or email?
 - All social media must be monitored by a County employee due to liability issues. Direct contact with the public would be possible as long as it is made clear that one is speaking as a private citizen, not as a member of the Countywide Recreation Advisory Board or on behalf of Montgomery County Recreation or Montgomery County.

Local Board Reports

- Eastern County, Mark Pharaoh – no meeting
- Mid County, Paul Lofgren – absent
- Upper County, Vernard McBeth – no report

Ex Officio Reports

- Community Use of Public Facilities, Ron Maxson – no report
- Commission on Aging, Morton Davis – Keep Seniors Safe – going into Senior Centers. He will be ending his six years on the commission. Will bring the Keep Seniors Safe program to the December meeting.
- MCPS, [vacant]
- Commission on People with Disabilities, Susan Hartung – absent
- M-NCPPC Police, Chief Tony DeVaul - absent

Old/New Business – Chris Richardson

- The December meeting will include a full presentation and discussion of the Pesticide Bill – MC 52-14. Staff will email the bill to the Board. Councilmember George Leventhal and Trish Heffelfinger, Soccerplex Executive Director, will be invited.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.