

RECREATION AND PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
February 23, 2022
Approved Minutes

Members Present: Donald Gerkin, Anita Taylor, Michael Duffy, Megan Vaughn, Dave Ferguson, Brad Rockwood, Michael Rodgers, Kristin Darby, Tony Rosas

Members Excused: Caitlin Christ, Tom Long

Staff Present: Laura Tawes

Ex-Officio Member Present: Jeff Degitz

The Recreation and Parks Advisory Board met on February 23rd, 2022, at the County Office Building in the public hearing room 003/004. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Kristin Darby, Board Chair.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Jeff Degitz introduced new member Megan Vaughn to the board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Michael Duffy moved to approve the October 27th, 2021 minutes; Donald Gerkin seconded, all concurred and minutes were approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Capital Project Update

- Westminster Community Pond slide replacement (March)
- Westminster Veterans Memorial Park –playground installation completed, stormwater pond modifications soon, sign installed, spring ribbon cutting event, fall planting memorial area
- Gillis Falls Trail – working on construction drawings, spring/summer bid
- Charles Carroll Community Center – groundbreaking 3/1 at 9 am
- Sports Complex roof replacement almost finished
- New play equipment (Hashawha before June 10; Cape Horn (late spring), Landon Burns (summer), Charles Carroll (summer)
- Hashawha/Bear Branch paving (spring/summer)
- Bear Branch new pavilion (fall)
- Piney Run paving (fall)
- SC Dog Park shade structure (spring)

2. **Charles Carroll Community Center** – Groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for March 1 at 9 am; letter from Advisory Board regarding having community suggest names for building sent to Commissioners on February 22, 2022; no field use at Charles Carroll Park this year.
3. **Staffing Updates** – Chris Duffy is the new Piney Run Park Superintendent; Ann Marie Foster is the new PT Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and Becky Eckard is the new Office Associate (Main Office).
4. **Carroll County Arts Council** – new Executive Director is Lynne Griffith
5. **50th Anniversary Event** – We have made decision not to hold in person event in June; will be creating video memory board to be added to web site
6. **March Meeting w/ Commissioners** – 1 pm day meeting at Bear Branch Nature Center with Commissioners invited; lunch served prior at 12:30 pm
7. **Union Mills Trails** – project in recommended CIP; open session agenda item March 10 (later changed to March 17)
8. **State Budget Update** – Full funding of Program Open Space (POS) included in budget plus additional Local Park & Playground Infrastructure (LPI) funding is likely, similar to last year's budget
9. **Community Parks & Playground (CPP) and Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Update** – The City of Westminster was awarded \$1 million in LWCF funding for Wakefield Valley Park and CPP funding awarded to Taneytown High School Park skatepark (\$136k), Westminster Municipal Pool (\$113k), Sykesville Linear Park (\$100k) and to Manchester Christmas Tree Park playground improvements (\$75k)

Land Preservation Park & Recreation Plan Update:

Carroll County is required to submit an updated LPPRP to the State every 5 years to be eligible for POS funds. With the assistance of in-house staff, the department completed their updated LPPRP, submitted the initial draft plan to the State & towns and is currently waiting on comments. The plan focuses on 3 main areas: Recreation & Parks, Natural Resources and Agricultural Preservation. The update includes an overview of our parks including a map & our goals, input from the 2019 & 2021 Needs assessments, town survey, listening sessions and the web site.

The previous single metric of 30 acres/1,000 residents for meeting acreage goal now also features equity and proximity. Carroll County has the best Park Equity mapper score in the State of Maryland. Over 99% of county residents live within 5 miles of Park & Rec land and over 95% of town residents live within ¼ mile of Park and rec land. Carroll County has met the acreage goal since 2006 and still acquires land as needed. 50% of the land mass is currently in Agricultural use; 26% is permanently preserved for Ag (76,849 acres).

Many larger counties use their POS funds to hire consultants to develop and write their LPPRPs. Carroll County has never use POS funds for this process and instead uses in house staff. The final plan is due to the State by July 1st, 2022.

Capital Budget Process Review:

Jeff Degitz presented the Capital Budget timeline to the Board. The Timeline is as follows. In early March, letters are sent to the Recreation Councils and towns for capital project ideas with a requested due date of April 15th. This is also shared on the web site for the public to suggest ideas. The towns are also reminded about CPP funding applications that are typically due in August. On April 15th, a letter is sent to the towns advising the anticipated POS funding; FY23 rotation includes Hampstead, Manchester, Mt. Airy and Sykesville. At the May 25th Advisory Board Meeting, a summary of capital project ideas received from all sources will be shared. The staff looks for direction from the Board as to which projects to include in a presentation at the June meeting with cost estimates. On June 22nd, the capital requests (including cost estimates) will be presented to the Advisory Board with an opportunity for questions to be asked and adjustments to be made. On July 27th, the Advisory Board will vote on priorities for new projects (which will likely be placed in FY29) as well as prioritizing opportunities to move projects forward if funding allows.

Nomination Committee – Elect Vice-Chair at March Meeting:

Michael Duffy and Tony Rosas were selected to be the nomination committee. A new Vice-Chair will be elected at the March meeting.

Other Business:

Tony Rosas submitted a letter from the Advisory Board members to the Commissioners suggesting a “Name Your Community Center” promotion for the new Charles Carroll Community Center. A response had not been received at the time of the meeting. Tony also attended the Charles Carroll Rec Council meeting. He is interested in joining their council to be active in various adult programs in the Hashawha/Union Mills area.

Dave Ferguson asked for clarification on the Self Help process after the board approves the projects for funding. Jeff Degitz explained that after board approval, the Park Development Manager works with Purchasing to facilitate the project.

Brad Rockwood has been in contact with an individual that is looking for field space in the West Carroll area for a Cricket program. The Department is currently exploring areas to accommodate an area with the right amount of field space and parking to try to accommodate the program.

Public Comments:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 23rd, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. On a motion by Don Gerkin, Michael Duffy seconded, and concurred by all, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff R. Degitz

Jeff R. Degitz, Director

Laura Tawes

Laura Tawes, Secretary