

Countywide Recreation and Parks Advisory Board

2425 Reddie Drive

Monday, May 13, 2024

Board members present: Michael Jacknis, Hannah Hutton, Melanie Stickle, Aravind Banda, Robin Sparer, Skip Plate, Ann Horton, Robera Tasissa, Kelli Dominique Hudson, Duncan Mullis, Gus Delgado, Gislene Tasayco, Yolanda Goettsch, Ed Krauze, Aravind Banda, Michael Ricci

Staff: Henry Coppola, Gary Burnett, Robin Riley, Adriane Clutter, Sandra Samuel

Ex-Officio members present: Derek Ross, Gregory Kellner

Welcome – Melanie Stickle

- Melanie welcome the board.

Roll Call to establish quorum

- Call to order at 6:35 pm

Review and approve May 2024 agenda

- Reviewed and approved the Agenda meeting. Robin Sparer motioned. Gus Delgado seconded.

Review and approve March 2024 minutes

- Per Melanie, removed March minutes from the agenda as it was approved at the previous meeting.

Nominating Committee

Call for Officer Nominations – Melanie Stickle

- Annually in June, the board has an election to fill the Chair, Vice Chair, and Executive Committee positions, as required by the bylaws. The timeline for this process will be communicated in advance to ensure everyone is prepared.
- Melanie mentioned having someone lead the nominating committee.
 - Melanie discussed the coordination for the committee and the role intended for each position.
 - Nominating Committee –
 - The Nominating Committee will email to the entire board and contact the nominating members to ensure acceptance.
 - Gus Delgado

- Ann Horton,
 - Robin Sparer
 - Keli Hudson
- Chair - N/A, Melanie is stepping down for personal reasons
 - Ed and Hannah mention by the board
 - Melanie nominated Michael Ricci
- Vice Chair – Hannah Hudson, nominated by Melanie Stickle
- Executive Committee
 - Gislene Tasayco mentioned she would like to join the Executive Committee
- Melanie mentioned that the June meeting would be fun, and the board election will be on the agenda, allowing the board to move forward with structure for 2024/2025.

Presentation by Parks – Gary Burnett

- Report submitted electronically
- Montgomery Parks Sligo Creek Festival went incredibly. Approx. Four thousand people came out to enjoy the festivities in the rain and enjoy themselves. Numerous elected officials came out to support the event. This will continue to be an annual event
- This weekend at Pope Farm Nursery, Montgomery Parks will have its final weekend of our Native Plant Sale; all locations have sold out at this point. We expect the Pope location to sell out as well. The plants are propagated and grown right here in the county.
- Montgomery Parks had an arson fire at Greenbriar Local Park. It destroyed half of our playground. The estimated damage is about a million dollars. No suspect at this moment. We don't know how long restoring the playground takes, but we estimate about a year.
- Board: I've heard the water levels are back up at Needwood?
- Gary: The final repairs to the dam still need to be completed. We put divers down into the waters. They figured out the problem. We could close the gate enough to retain more water, which helped with the rain. We still have final repairs, and we're looking at early June.
- Board: Is there anything we can do about the arson? Maybe we can use a camera to prevent further incidents in the future.

- Gary: That location has no infrastructure for electricity, Wi-Fi, or anything on that line. Once the playground is back up, our Park Police have solar-powered cameras that might be an option. We are still looking into other options.
- Board: Referring to all locations
- We're including Wi-Fi, putting cameras, and doing public Wi-Fi in many locations. During renovations, we installed security cameras. However, due to cost, it's not in the capital project. It is difficult as it costs a quarter million, around 400 thousand—running cables and setting up a system with cameras. Also, we are doing this on the CIP side. It is a priority for our upcoming Police funds surveillance with our cameras. Upgrading is already in place, and higher-definition cameras are being provided. We are working on it, but obviously will take a while.
- Robin: Do you need a fishing permit to fish?
- Gary: Yes, you need a license anywhere to fish. There is free fishing days that are advertised a few weeks in advance. You license to fish anywhere in the state.
- Adrienne: Under sixteen of age do not need a license
- Gary: That is correct.

Presentation by Recreation – Robin Riley

- Report submitted electronically
- Today was the much-anticipated opening day for summer registrations. We started at 6:30 this morning, and the response was overwhelming. We encountered some software hiccups, but our team is diligently working to resolve them.
- We have the Seniors Olympic playing pickleball in Howard County (Columbia) and Finksburg, with over 750 entries.
- We sent a link for our summer and team guide. We published a team guide that lists all our team activities.
- The Kenny Shriver Aquatic Center will be closed on June 28th. It is estimated for two years.
- Thanked the board for their support on the budget.
- Thanked the board for their support on the budget.
- Next week the County Council will review the reconciliation list. Not sure if anything will come off the list. There is a big decision to make with public school budget. We'll know late next week or early the following week.

- Working with the Department of Transportation entrance to Long Branch Rec. Center. Right now, it's a hot mess. I'm working on the redesign and waiting for State Highway to approve it. Work is estimated to start after Labor Day.
- Cultural Heritage Free Concert Series – Asian American and Just American Month. Robin will send the flyer to the board.
- East County Rec Center partnering with District 3 on Friday nights during a three-on-three basketball tournament. Park Police, State Police, and County Sheriff – partnering with Target
- Brand new slide at Upper County Community Center
- At the end of Summer and the beginning of Fall, we will be replacing the slides at Martin Luther King Regional Park
- Martin Luther King Outdoor Pool doing some ADA work, outdoor deck, and lazy river. Also, we are doing a new slide a Germantown Pool
- Received a 1.4 million State Bond Bill, East County playground will come down in June and the brand new one will be installed. Also, Praisner and Bauer Drive, Damascus, Upper County, and Ross Boddy
- Melanie: About Long Branch, Is there an opportunity to partner with library for parking?
- Robin: That is a great idea. We're trying figured that out.
- Fireworks on July 4th Germantown Glory at South Germantown Recreational Park and at July 6th at Albert Einstein High School. Robin will send the info.

Work Session – [Ad Hoc Working Groups](#)

- Melanie presented an in-depth PowerPoint presentation on Ad Hoc Working Groups, which was a continuation of the retreat. Melanie will email the notes from the retreat.
- Melanie requested that each Board Member choose at least one Ad Hoc Committee to participate in and make efforts to meet regularly between the regularly scheduled meetings.
 - Established objectives for each group. What are the best processes to split the work?
 - Each group will report back to the board at our regularly meetings.
 - This is an attempt to bring structure to this board.
- Ex-Officio members are encouraged to participate and select a group that aligned with their goals

- Community Outreach
 - Advocacy
 - Equity & Inclusion
 - Staff Appreciation & Recognition
 - Governance
- Robin S. asked how the groups were selected.
 - Melanie explained from the previous chair and board.
 - Adriane Clutter mentioned one good reason for an Ad Hoc Working Group is that is not subject to open meetings act as a formal committee would be.
 - Kelli Hudson inquired about basing the working groups on the latest needs assessment.
 - Michael Jacknis mentions inter-board and inter-agency affairs, as in working with other MC Advisory Boards and MCPS.
 - Michael mentioned the first goal of each Working Group is to establish its goals and audience
 - It was mentioned in the meeting the working groups to meet at least once over the summer
 - Derek Ross would like to work with the Communications Group
 - Gislene Tasayco would like to participation in the Staff Appreciation & Recognition
 - Gislene mentioned that working groups can absolutely change over time to fit the needs of the group and so can each person's membership – so it's not all written in stone.
 - Duncan Mullis would like to be a part of Staff Appreciation & Recognition
 - Ann: I would love to add a bylaws subcommittee
 - Ann: On who behalf are the Ad HOC Working Group for, the advisory board, right? When talking about equity and inclusion is for the board or the outreach for Parks and Rec.
 - Melanie: Absolutely. Our focus is on equity and inclusion within the Parks and Rec department. We must actively seek and listen to feedback from our communities, especially on matters related to equity and inclusion. Based on this feedback, we are here to advise our department leaders for Parks and Rec.
 - Skip I was pushing for this last year. I feel like I'm not doing enough on this committee; having an advocacy group or outreach would give more participation in going out and finding out what is happening out there and be able to report back to Gary Robin and the other staff members what's active.
 - Skip: There's nothing wrong with reaching out to the Boys Scouts or other groups to say the Rec department has this going on and Parks has this going on.
 - Skip: Staff must direct and advise outreach and advocacy. Let the board know the critical areas that need to be addressed.

- Gislene – We are here to serve our communities
- Duncan: Comments for Robin, Gary, and Adriane: We have a recreation committee that asked the community for feedback on policy changes and amenities. Maybe the staff is asking for a change to a policy, and they want to hear our feedback on one policy versus reviewing over 20 policies. I'm trying to understand these buckets and staffing. I don't think this can be done on our own.
- Adriane put in the chat:
 - Some top issues facing parks and recreation: Review of 10 primary topics of Park and Recreation Departments
 - Recruit, train, and retain Quality Staff
 - Enhance Programs and Services that Meet the Unique and Pressing Needs of the Community.
 - Increase the Efficacy of Advocacy and Elevate Public Understanding of the Value, Benefits, and Importance of Park and Recreation Services.
 - Resolve Problems of Aging Infrastructure, Deferred maintenance, and Infrastructure Maintenance.
 - Acquire Land and Develop Facilities and Services.
 - Enhance Internal Operations; Engage in Continuous Quality Improvement.
 - Address Equality, Diversity, and inclusion in all Operations.
 - Increase Capacity of Data-Driven Decision-Making
 - Address Environmental and Physical Resource Issues
 - Increase Collaboration among Community, Governmental, and Non-Governmental Partners.
 - There is a need to educate local politicians about the importance and impact of Parks and Recreation.
 - There is a need to educate on a County and State level about the importance of Parks and Recreation.
 - There is a need to identify the public's perception of what parks and recreation is.
 - There is a need to document the value that the public is receiving from park and recreation services.
 - What are the future needs of the public and how can parks and recreation provide those needs.
- Kelli mentioned knowing what success looks like would be a useful measuring impact. Also, willing to join the Governance Working Group
- Ann Horton will join the Governance Group
- Hannah will join the Advocacy Group
- Michael Jacknis will join DEI
- Skip will join the Outreach Group

- Ed will join the Staff Appreciation

June Meeting

- Robin mentioned having our next meeting at Josiah Henson Museum and Park
- Kelli mentioned the multipurpose room at Wheaton is gorgeous as an alternative
- Gary will check the availability for June 10th
 - Motion made by Robin S. and seconded by Hannah to have the at Josiah Henson

Action Items

- Board members are to decide what Ad Hoc Group to participate in.
 - Advocacy
 - Staff Appreciation & Recognition
 - Equity & Inclusion
 - Community Outreach
 - Board Governance

Adjourn – 8:02 pm

- Motion made by Yolanda and seconded by Robin seconded
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Next Board Meeting: June 10, 2024