

Countywide Recreation and Parks Advisory Board  
**Monday, Sept. 9, 2024**

**Board members present:** Banda, Horton, Krauze, Tasayco, Delgado, Hutton, Hudson, Ricci, Sparer, Holeywell, Goettsch

**Board members absent:** Mullis, Stickle, Jacknis

**Staff present:** Gary Burnett, Shawna Fachet, Jason Fasteau, Robin Riley, Janet Dixon, Adriane Clutter, Carmen Berrios

**Ex-Officio members present:** Tonya Gilchrest, Derek Ross, Greg Kellner

A quorum was established and Ricci called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Reviewed and approved Sept. 2024 agenda, with the adjustment that staff would present first. Krauze motioned. Hutton seconded. Approval unanimous.

Reviewed and approved Aug. 2024 minutes, pending changes to reflect updated list of board attendees. Krauze motioned. Hutton seconded. Approval unanimous.

Krauze provided context for Ross's report on facility permitting. Krauze stated that schools seem to have taken back more of their time available for community use.

Ross provided a synopsis of current state of fields and school use. Ross said schools are using facilities more -- for pickleball, flag football, and more. Opportunities for permitted use are increasingly at locations *besides* high schools, given increasing usage by schools and students. Ross said the trend is likely to continue. Ross said they've had to lead community members to consider other facilities.

Ross discussed the process by which county staff work with the community to allow public use. He said staff work closely with the public to determine which facilities meet their needs and which considerations have to be made, based on the type of event/usage.

Hutton asked how the county determines who gets to use a facility when there is demand by multiple entities for the same location/time. Ross stated schools have top priority, then sports and student-involved organizations such as PTA. Ross said the county focuses on how to get groups access to the most appropriate location. Riley said there is often deference to groups that have historically used a facility. But some groups are booking space they don't actually use. Riley said the county encourages organizations to consider all possible facilities and makes them aware of facilities they may not know of.

Krauze said he believes schools are not adhering to calendars/deadlines.

Kellner said some coaches have jobs and coach part time, so they can't start practice immediately after school, which pushes practice even later. Kellner said as athletics add more and more programs, it impacts availability of facilities.

Riley said summer was challenging for summer camps due to construction projects.

Kellner said middle school practices have to be between the end of school until 4:30 p.m. So middle school and elementary gyms are available for community use.

Burnett said the process is similar in Montgomery Parks. Ross invited the board to email him with their concerns.

Riley provided an update and thanked Sparer and Hutton for joining the half marathon water stop.

- Recreation partnered with schools on pickup from summer school to camp, as well as with "Food, Fun and Fitness" sites over the summer.
- Rec Extra and Rec Zone and Club Adventure start this fall.
- Youth flag football will be held at several locations.
- Her Time 2 Shine / girls volleyball growing rapidly
- Voting at many county facilities means some classes will have to be canceled temporarily.
- An ADA accessibility project is underway at the MLK outdoor pool. SSRAC is also closed temporarily for repairs.

Fasteau said the creative team marketed the Her Time 2 Shine multisport summer camp to educate youths about different sports. Riley added that with a marketing budget of just \$40,000 it can be challenging to get the word out, particularly to vulnerable families. There was consensus that funding to market towards those communities would be welcomed. Holeywell asked if the board could advocate for more marketing funds, with an emphasis on equity.

Burnett offered his updates:

- New mountain bike park at Wheaton Regional Park opened July 21
- Brookside Gardens' rose garden has re-opened.
- The Urban Tree Summit is on 9/18.
- The Fall Twilight Series at Brookside Gardens and Acoustics and Ales will be highlights
- Burnett said the burned playground at Greenbrier Park will cost \$850,000 to replace; the equipment has been ordered and should be installed by the spring.

Ricci and Hutton presented a tentative in-person meeting schedule with meetings at North Potomac, Meadowside Nature Center, and Jane E. Lawton Community Recreation Center.

**Stickle motioned to adjourn. Holeywell seconded. Adjourned at 7:54.**