

Countywide Recreation and Parks Advisory Board
2425 Reddie Drive, 3rd Floor, Wheaton, MD
Oct. 13, 2025

Board members present: Banda, Bentley, Sparer, Hutton, Ricci, Ryan, Flores, Krauze, Royster, Mullis, Zarubin, Hudson, Flores, Goettsch, Holeywell, Sparer

Board members absent: Banda, Delgado, Jacknis, Tondo

Staff present: Burnett, Fasteau, Berrios, Clutter, Samuel, Coppola, Facht

Ex-Officio members present: Ross

Michael Ricci called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m., and a quorum was established.

Ricci shared the September 2025 minutes and the October 2025 agenda. Bentley motioned to approve both. Royster seconded. They were both approved unanimously.

Ricci, Hutton and Flores shared that they attended the Project Play/Children's Bill of Rights in Sports event that was discussed at the previous meeting.

Clutter said that the three local cities and the recreation department all endorsed the document. "It gives us direction on what we should be doing going forward," she said. Clutter said that, for example, the document will inform how the recreation department considers coaches training in the future - perhaps by including more training around mental health first aid. She said it is also influencing future ways the department may conduct performance metrics/benchmarks.

Clutter said the department may try to do more "directed free play" in the future, as the department looks to provide kids with opportunities beyond pay-to-play.

There was a discussion about balancing the needs of community users of nearby playing fields with those of leagues/organizations. New guidelines will address those issues, she said.

Staff recognition: Mullis provided an update on the Dec. 8 staff recognition event. There will be eight award recipients across several categories (career employees, seasonal employees, youth and teen volunteers, and adult and senior volunteers). Fasteau said department managers were given the opportunity to nominate employees. Everyone who is a finalist will be recognized internally. Mullis said the County Executive, Council President, and Planning Board Chair will all be invited to the recognition event.

Bentley motioned to approve the slate of awardees, and Hutton seconded. It was approved unanimously.

Parks update: At 7:13 p.m., Burnett provided the parks update, which included:

- The semi-annual budget update to the council on Sept. 17.
- 100+ participants in Walk Maryland Day

- The Urban Tree Summit
- The Parks Fall Festival (employee appreciation picnic)
- The Fall Harvest Festival, which had 1,700 attendees
- The restoration of “Porky the Litter Eater” at Cabin John
- Acoustics and Ales at Blackhill Regional Park

Recreation update: At 7:17 Clutter offered her recreation update”

- She encouraged the board to read the email update
- Active Aging Week is approaching
- Budget proposals are forthcoming
- Burtonsville Day occurred in September
- Aquatics has several floating pumpkin patches at pools
- The department is working with MCPS to coordinate on better ways to manage out-of-school time

Ricci said the County Executive continues to give updates on the proposed budget. At one of the forums, Ricci said, he urged the County Executive to focus on rec center maintenance. Ricci suggested the board send a letter to the County Executive’s office reiterating that point.

Ricci also said a recent visit to the Upper County Community Recreation Center was enlightening and revealed to him some of the rec centers’ shared challenges.

There was a discussion about inviting elected officials to upcoming board meetings.

Sparer asked about any bike safety efforts considering the recent fatal collision involving a child near Earle B. Wood Middle School. Several ideas included bike safety classes or a helmet drive, potentially in concert with area bicycle advocacy groups.

Sparer motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Hutton seconded. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.