

Montgomery County, MD
COUNTYWIDE RECREATION AND PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Monday, March 8, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Present Board: Carl Blake, Alison Gillespie, Karen Kincer, David Pullen, Chris Richardson, Michael Shimoff, Melanie Stickle, Felecia Wilson

Ex-Officio: Ramona Bell-Pearson, Benjamin DuGoff, Myriam Paul, Marcia Weber

Staff: Adriane Clutter, Janet Dixon, John Nissel, Robin Riley, Sandra Samuel
Guest: Dominic Tamani, Francesca Ugolini

Absent: Jeff Sullivan

Meeting called to order by Karen Kincer at 6:35 pm.

Welcome and Announcements – Chair

- Karen Kincer welcomed the board

Review of March Agenda

- Remove Rod Vital from CUPF and replace with Romana Bell-Pearson
- Motion made by Dave Pullen and Myriam Paul seconded. Approved.

Review and January Minutes

- Motion made by Melanie Stickle and Felecia Wilson seconded. Approved.

Guest Presentation – Dominic Tamami and Francesca Ugolini – Skate Parks in Potomac/Bethesda

- Dominic Tamami made a presentation to construct a skate park specifically in Potomac.
- Request building a skate park in Potomac to eliminate skating in other unsafe areas such as parking lots, neighborhoods, in streets, and other unsafe areas.
- Skateparks provide a safe environment for skateboarding.
- Skateparks reduce damage to private property.
- Skateparks are a win-win as skateboarders have a place to pursue their passion. Law enforcement and business owners no longer have to spend their time and money on unwanted skateboards.
- Another benefit of the skate park will reduce long distance rides to other parks and locations outside the area.
- John Nissel will email additional information to the presenters.

Reports

Officers and Committee Reports

Ex Officio Reports

Community Use of Public Facilities – Ramona Bell Pearson, Director of CUPF

- Childcare programs (Equity and Distance Learning Hubs) concluded as Friday, March 5th, as in-person learning will start on Monday, March 15th, kindergarten thru third graders will begin a four-day week.
- Transitioning to permits for before and aftercare and all day on Wednesdays (Hub Care).
- Registration process has started for fields, February 15th for a start of March 15th going thru the season of August 15, waiting for Dr. Gayle's permission to resume indoor community use, suspended permits thru April 30th anticipating indoor use
- Summer camps have not been permitted yet, in the process of having summer camps for a four-hour block, expect using all elementary schools for summer schools, in-person rotating schedules (A and B). The relationship that MCPS has with the provider will operate the camps in conjunction with MCRD.
- Open reservations for tennis courts on February 15th for Spring and Summer to start on March 15th through August 15th in conjunction with outdoor basketball courts, permitting 15 different courts/public schools on weekends and holidays (sunrise thru sunset) and weekdays (afterschool hours until sunset). The link is on the CUPF website and February Newsletter.
- Allowing permits for parking lots at MCPS facilities, only available thru permits
 - Karen – Are you permitting MCPS fields?
 - Only middle and elementary schools, high schools are for athletic events

Commission on Aging – Marcia Weber

- Hosting a forum on May 18th on Social Isolation and Loneliness, working with Sara Swarr from the MCRD
- Marcia – Will the Senior centers open again for seniors?
 - Will open when the state of emergency is lifted.

Community Action Board – Myriam Paul

- Submitted report electronically
- Virtual VITA appointments available for Montgomery County residents with household incomes of \$57,000 or less

Montgomery County Public Schools – Jeff Sullivan

- In Jeff's absence, Karen spoke on his behalf
- Falls sports are underway and going well, started on February 27th
- Spring session will begin in April; the high schools are limited access to allow the kids full use of the facility
- Allison – Concerns with outdoor graduations, not all schools have outdoor facilities, maybe a collaborative effort on MCRD and Parks to accommodate these efforts.
 - John – Working with Blair High School to have their graduation on the football field (The field belongs to Parks). I not received requests for additional schools. Permitting must go thru Parks to utilize that field.

Commission on People with Disabilities – Benjamin DuGoff

- No report

MCRD – Robin Riley

- Opened a rec for fitness activities called RecFit by appointments, access to the fitness rooms, enjoying family fitness together, or joining a class. There are eight facilities from 12:30 – 8 pm, three days a week.
- Still doing vaccines and testing at the facilities
- Preparing for summer camps, our camp guide will be on the MCRD website this week. Registration will start on March 15th.
- Still doing seniors meals
- Rec Your Way is going well.
- Senior programs are still doing virtual classes
- Youth development program, Excel Beyond the Bell, is going well at two sites.
- Soccer for Change in the Spring with elementary, middle, and high school\
- Aquatic is getting ready to open their outdoor pools. Target date before Memorial Weekend. Diving is back on a limited basis.
- RecAssist Program is going a little slow and pushing more on the scholarship efforts.
- Adrienne thanked the Advisory Board for the support on Rec Your Way.
- Adults sports will kick off in Spring.
- Budget Update – MCRD has finalized the budget with the County Executive with his recommendations. The Press event is scheduled for March 15th to announce his decision to Council. As of today, public hearings are not on the website.
- We had some reduction.
- The County Council made a Proclamation. Robin thanked Dave Pullen for assisting with the election process. Dave thanked MCRD for the support.
- Chris -Will there be indoor swimming available online? Virtually there are no slots.
 - Appointments are only eight days in advance. Starting April 1st, two people per lane, with clearance from the health dept.
- Carl – What do you envision the usage for outdoor pools?
 - Laps swimming and possible on the weekend recreational opportunities.
- Karen – Are family swim laps/areas available?
 - Yes, we have that occurring on weekends at Germantown and other facilities through reservations only. Baby pools are not open yet.

Parks Report - John Nissel

- Crews are prepping our fields, restrooms, shelters, and playground in anticipation of the warmer weather.
- Working the health dept in preparation of spring and summer programs, including camps, wedding ventures, ice and tennis programs, boat rentals. Little Bennett Campgrounds has been open all winter, very successful. The driving range is going well.
- Working the health dept regulations for the Splash Park and Wheaton Miniature Train, and Ovid Hazen Wells Carousel.
- Montgomery Parks will continue to offer programs virtually
- Converted the Parks RV into a rolling Nature Center. Allowing great opportunities to bring nature to the neighborhoods and open parkways.
- Josiah Henson Museum Park is getting ready to open. Due to COVID-19, tours are available by appointment only.
- Parks had a lot of snow this winter. Crews were busy pushing snow and clearing sidewalks. Due to virtual learning, the Sidewalk to School program, moving miles of snow off sidewalks was not utilize this year.
- Budget Update – Parks will receive our budget numbers from the County Executive on March 15th.
- We are asking for our Parks advocacy to step forward as we prepare our operating budget. We have strong Parks advocacy program. Letters and testimonies are the keys.
- Dave – Are you requesting help before March 15th or before the hearing?
 - Requesting help before the hearings. If you are interested in becoming a Parks advocacy, please send me an email.
- Allison – Did the nature center cancel summer camps?
 - No – will continue with virtual camps.
- Allison - Will the rolling RV be available on the open parkways?
 - Yes, any request, please send an email to David Vismara, Division Chief.

Budget Priorities – A discussion of what priority areas the board may want to focus on for budget advocacy

- Karen – What is the timeline for the Council.
 - Robin will follow up tomorrow with Karen. It is usually the second week in April.
- Distribute information on March 15th or 16th to the board.
- May need to adjust the following meeting schedule to review items we may want to advocate for at the public hearings.
- John and Robin will put together bulletin points to distribute to the board for reconciliation purposes.
- David – Should we wait until the next meeting to review and approve or send our draft back in forth in email like last year?
- Maybe back and forth and schedule an interim meeting.
- Carl suggests moving the next meeting to the first week in April.
 - Maybe not Easter Monday as it will still be Spring break but another day that week.
 -

Nominating Committee Formation

- **Nominating Committee for 2021-2022 Board Year**
 - Chair – Michael Shimoff
 - Co-Chair – Dave Pullen

Action Items:

- All members board to check and make sure the departmental procedure is completed. Karen will send a link.
- John will distribute information to Dominic Tamami and Francesca Ugolini about skate parks. Karen will forward their emails to John.
- May need to move our next meeting. We will decide after March 15th.

7:57 motion adjourn Dave Pullen and seconded Felecia Wilson. Approved.