



Minutes
Mecklenburg County Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners

September 11, 2007

North Carolina
Mecklenburg County

The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in the Administrative Office Building Conference Room B at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 11, 2007.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chair Scott McClure
John Barry
James Brown
Beverly Lawston
Owen Furuseth
Larry Huelsman
Brad Pearce
Jeffrey Tarte
Mary Wilson

Absent: Laura McClettie

Vacancies: CPDIII, N. Towns, S. Towns

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Vice Chair Brad Pearce, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a moment of silence to remember those who lost their lives on 9/11 after which, the following matters were addressed:

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

(1) Introductions

Michael Kirschman, Division Director Stewardship Services, introduced 3 new Park and Recreation Managers: Kevin Metcalf, Manager over Latta, Hay Market, Cowan's Ford, Auten, Stephen's Road and Bracket Bluff; Bridget Strong, Manager over Reedy Creek, Evergreen and Ribbon Walk and Michael Campbell, Manager over McDowell, Copperhead Island and Flat Branch.

(2) Proclamations and Awards

2A-1 Karla Gray, Therapeutic Recreation Manager, recognized four National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award winners from the Therapeutic Recreation Division: Marilyn Rainey, a team leader for youth at risk. Her program was “Beyond Barriers” that is an after school program done in partnership with Catholic Social Services for children who are new to this country who are refugees. Kerri Good, a team leader working in our disability community. Her Achievement Award was for the program “Challenger Flag Football League”, a program organized by Park and Recreation in partnership with Pop Warner Football and with the Carolina Panthers. This one of a kind program offers youth with disabilities the opportunity to participate in sports. The panthers are offering other NFL teams the opportunity to do the same in their community.

Vernice Gallon, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, received her Achievement Award for the program “Shining STAR”, a day program for adults who have survived traumatic brain injuries. This program gives them the opportunity to become an active part of the community again and provides them the opportunity for socialization.

James Worsley, Recreation Facility Manager I (not able to be in attendance) received an Achievement Award for the “Little League Book Club”, an intervention program into the lives of homeless children, bettering the lives of disadvantaged youth from diverse backgrounds.

Commissioner Barry shared with the Board that the NACo Achievement Awards are awarded each year at the annual NACo meeting. Nominated for their programs, these award winners are recognized for their achievements and make it possible for people nationwide to see what Mecklenburg County is doing.

2A-2 Dot Law, Deputy Director, recognized Andra’ Eaves, Park and Recreation Manager in the Southwest Park District, and she won the NACo award for the Harris Teeter/Purina Bark in the Park. Andra’ was in charge of this program when she was a Manager in the East Park District. The first two festivals in 2005 and 2006 included dog contests, vendors of dog services, pet products, pet adoption agencies, the nationally-known Purina Incredible Dog Team, as well as local and national celebrities. The festivals drew thousands of participants and pets. They raised substantial money to help build future dog parks. This is one of the Department’s most publicized and best attended events.

2A-3 Michael Kirschman, Division Director of Stewardship Services, recognized: Michael Campbell and Officer Lisa Speas for the Copperhead Island Summer Day Camp; a survivor program for at risk youth experiencing serious gang pressure. This program was a Park and Recreation partnership with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police. Officer Speas shared that these youth are given the opportunity to spend a week in an environment that is very uncomfortable for them; the woods. Without any electronics of their normal lives, they are given the chance to experience camping, kayaking, rock-climbing and a variety of other activities presented as an alternative to joining a gang.

Gary Marshall for the Invasive Exotic Plant Control Workshop. This program was an 8-hour workshop for more than 75 staff from seven local agencies addressing the invasion of non-

native, exotic plants and animals which are a threat to native biodiversity. A second workshop is planned this fall.

2A-4 Dot Law, Deputy Director, recognized:

Jeff Robinson for the NACo Achievement Award for Synthetic Turf Fields. Park and Recreation partnered with the NFL Carolina Panthers to create a much needed synthetic turf football/soccer field for youth athletics at Revolution Park. This partnership resulted in substantial savings for the county on mowing, irrigation, fertilization and reseeding.

(Note: Chair Scott McClure joined the meeting)

2A-5 Lee Jones, Division Director, Capital Planning and Alliance Development Services, recognized:

Blaine Gregory for the NACo Achievement Award for “Dog Park Enhancements”. Since 2001 Mecklenburg Park and Recreation has built four dog parks and made significant improvements in each new one that came on line offering separate sections for large and small dogs and more space for running. Proceeds from Bark in the Park help to pay for new dog parks.

2B Stephanie Frisbee introduced and recognized Lue McFadden for her retirement after 11 years of Service to the Department. Lue was given a service plaque in honor of her service to the county.

2C Dot Law, Deputy Director, introduced and recognized Karla Gray, Therapeutic Recreation Manager, for being named NCPRA 2007 Therapeutic Service Provider of the Year, the highest award in the state given for TR services. Marilyn Rainey and Kerri Good, employees of Karla, spoke highly of Karla’s leadership and shared their heart-felt sentiments for her as their supervisor.

(3) Public Appearance

Robert O. Reid appeared before the board in favor of Electric Radio Controlled (RC) Boating at Freedom Park. Having been advised by the Freedom Park Staff of an ordinance against RC boating, Mr. Reid came before the Board to see what the process would be to have the ordinance changed. Questions and discussion followed about RC boating. During discussion staff produced the ordinance which stated a permit was required for RC Boating. Mr. Reid will be advised of the process for obtaining the permit.

(4) Program Presentation – North Park Region Sportsplex/Project Update

Lee Jones, Division Director, Capital Planning and Alliance Development Services, introduced, Joyce Figueroa, North Park Region Planner.

Joyce Figueroa, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the North Park Region Projects. Her presentation included updates on ongoing construction projects at Robert L. Smith District Park, Robert Caldwell Bradford District Park, Mallard Creek Community Park, Eastway Specialty Park, Shuffletown Sportsplex and the Reedy Creek Nature Center Addition as well as completed construction at Nevin Sprayground and Jetton Mountain Bike Trail.

(Note: A printout of this PPT presentation is included in the PRC Minutes Binder housed in the Director's office)

(5) Appointments – Advisory Councils – Applicants

Aquatics: *A motion was made by Commissioner Tarte to reappoint Kurt Schuitema to an expired term, expiring 6/2010 and to defer consideration for appointment of applicants Daniel Medvin and LaTonya Gaddy to the October PRC meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Brown and approved unanimously.*

Charles T. Myers Golf: *A motion was made by Commissioner Brown to defer reappointment of Theodore McClain to the October PRC meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Huelsman and approved unanimously.*

Revolution Golf: *A motion was made by Commissioner Lawston to defer reappointment of Shaun Donaldson to the October PRC meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Furuseth and approved unanimously.*

South Park District: *A motion was made by Commissioner Huelsman to appoint Charlie Williams to an unexpired term, expiring 6/2009, which was seconded by Commissioner Pearce and approved unanimously.*

(6) Public Hearings

None

(7) Advisory Council – Committee Reports

Commissioner Huelsman gave an update on Charlotte Regional Visitor's Authority (CRVA) branding movement. CRVA has produced a branding book stating a brand promise and commitment with 9 recommendations. *(A copy of the CRVA book is included in the PRC minutes binder housed in the Director's office)*

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

(8) Director's Report:

Director Garges reported on the following:

Isaac Applewhite will be moving into a new role as Department Community Services Coordinator. His primary function will be to act as our liaison for youth and family initiatives. Isaac will be asked to do a program presentation on his new role for the PRC in the near future. James Worsley, Recreation Facility Manager of Albemarle Road Recreation Center, was recently awarded "Young Recreation Professional of the Year" by the North Carolina Recreation and Park Association. It was also decided by senior staff to take a young professional from the Department to the 2007 National Recreation and Park Association Conference. Interested employees applied for consideration by submitting an essay stating why they felt they should be selected and how they would use what they would bring back from the conference to bring new improvements to the Department. James was selected to be this year's young professional attendee.

Get Going Guide: The "Get Going Guide" is again ready and a very important piece for getting our programs out.

PRC Retreat: The Board was reminded of the upcoming PRC retreat on September 20. Director Garges said he was looking forward to participating and asked that any materials needed for the retreat be turned in so that they could be ready and available.

Brooklyn Village and New West Park Public Workshops: These workshops are going very well. The last workshop will be October 3 at Johnson and Wales University. At this meeting citizen input will be put together in concept form and discussed again in groups and then move into the design phase. Staff and LandDesign have done a professional job putting the workshops together and have been well attended by a diverse group of citizens in age and gender. The Board will receive a stakeholders report on the workshop results outlining what was found, where we are and what the timing is on other parks.

CMS/CPDII Proposed Project: Director Garges advised the Board that CMS plans to build a 30 story condo/school on the parking lot of Ray's Splash Planet. The Department feels from a planning prospective, it is not a good idea. A presentation on this CMS proposed project will be made to the CPD II Advisory Council, then to the PRC Board and the BOCC. Our response and recommendations should be in reaction to the planning concerns and issues.

Commissioner Tarte asked if the presentation would be made just to the CPD II Advisory Council or would Aquatics be included? Director Garges suggested that both councils be invited for this presentation. Prior to the presentation to the Advisory Councils, Director Garges said the board would receive the presentation information and what our recommendations are in response to the planning. Chair Scott McClure asked Commissioner Tarte to take the lead in working with staff on this issue. Commissioner Hueslman recommended that this is an issue that the Board needs to get their arms around and be well informed as CMS continues to look at park land for schools. Commissioner Wilson asked about the purpose of the project for CMS and if the plan included a school. Director Garges responded that the proposed projected included plans for an IT Center on one floor.

Master Plan: Deputy Director, Dot Law, reported that the Kick-off Meeting for the Master Plan will be at the Government Center in CH 14 on September 19. PROS Consulting LLC and team will be present to answer questions from the public, outline the objectives, scope of work and

schedule.

CONSENT ITEMS

All Consent Items (9 – 10B) having no objections, were approved by unanimous consent.

STAFF REPORTS AND REQUESTS

(12) Lee Jones, Division Director for Capital Planning and Alliance Development Services brought information before the Board regarding the land swap at Ballantyne YMCA. This land swap is in response to the YMCA's need to improve the configuration of their property for further development of their campus. *A motion was made by Commissioner Huelsman to accept and support staff on the information presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Brown and approved unanimously.*

(Note: A copy of the PPT presentation and Mandatory Referral Report on the proposed Land Exchange Involving Ballantyne Park and Morrison YMCA Sites is included in the PRC minutes binder housed in the Director's office.)

PARK COMMISSIONERS REPORTS AND REQUESTS

(13) Each Commissioner reported from their areas as follows:

Commissioner Tarte reported that the Sailing Center proposed project on Lake Norman has resurfaced and an acceptable location may have been identified at Blythe Landing. If that comes to be, Community Workshops will be held to determine if that can move forward.

Commissioner Furueth reported that we now have a sign for the Kirk Family Farm Fields and a celebration will be forth coming to officially open the fields.

Commissioner Huelsman reported that a car had made its way on to the greenway in the SPD.

Commissioner Wilson reported she tried out the new greenway across from Trader Joes over the week-end.

Commissioner Lawston reported she had recently enjoyed Nevin Spraygrounds with her grandchildren and also attended the grand opening of the Stratford/Richardson YMCA.

Commissioner Brown reported there will be a community workshop on November 28 on Evergreen Nature Preserve.

Director Garges reported that Maxine Eaves from Eastway Specialty Park went before the BOCC asking for an informational meeting about naming Eastway Specialty Park. The naming

policy will be discussed and reviewed with the BOCC as well as Ms. Eaves.

Chair Scott McClure reported that Commissioner Lawston will be serving on the Fees and Charges Committee and Commissioner Wilson will be serving on Stewardship.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made, seconded and unanimously carried that there being no further business to come before the Board that the meeting be adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Upcoming Events are included in the Agenda Packet

Video archives of all meetings are on file in the Director's office.