



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Southview Recreation Center located at 1720 Vilma Street, Charlotte, NC at 6:00 p.m.

**May 13, 2008**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present:**

- Scott McClure, Chair**
- Brad Pearce, Vice Chair**
- Mary Wilson, Executive Secretary**
- Kirk Otey**
- Brenda McMoore**
- Michael Noble**
- Jeff Tarte**
- Larry Huelsman**
- Owen Furuseth**
- Dot Law**

**Absent:**

- James Brown**
- Joe Pata**
- Beverly Lawston**
- John Barry**
- Jim Garges – Pineville Town Board Master Plan Presentation**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Scott McClure, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Park and Recreation Vision Statement was read by Commissioner McMoore.

The Park and Recreation Mission Statement was read by Commissioner Noble.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

**(1) Introductions**

Greg Jackson introduced Phil Fleischmann, new Athletic Manager. Phil shared that he comes to Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation from Greensboro Parks and

Recreation. The main change in the restructuring process will be the division of the Athletic Coordinators into two teams; 6 to develop sports in the county and a team of 4 to manage facility events. Phil looks forward to a more customer friendly focus and improved efficiencies.

Greg Jackson introduced Brenda Tengel, new Recreation Program Manager. Brenda comes to Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation from the YMCA of Charlotte and has 25 years of program delivery and development experience. She shared that her goal is to focus on the 4 core program areas that came out of the Master Plan, improve efficiency and reduce the duplication of efforts.

Commissioner Otey asked if the PRC Board could get a Department organization chart and have it updated monthly.

Joe Grahl, Facility Manager II, introduced Verdell Sanders, Facility Manager I over Southview who introduce the center's staff to the Board. Verdell shared that Southview was the first recipient of the Best Program of the Month award for Resurrection Weekend Outreach '08 and that their biggest challenge was getting parents involved.

Chair McClure encouraged center staff to invite PRC to any special events or programs taking place at their locations.

## **(2) Proclamations and Awards- Carolina Public STAR Award**

Jeff Robinson, Division Director of Specialized Park Services, announced that at the June 4, 2008 Board of County Commissioner (BOCC) meeting, the Department would be awarded the Carolina Public STAR Award. This prestigious award from the North Carolina Department of Labor – Division of Occupational and Health, focuses on safety programs, practices and training. Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation is the first Park and Recreation to receive this award. The long and difficult process of preparing for and receiving this award was led by the Park and Recreation Department STAR Committee members:

Fred Moody, Greenway Maintenance  
Eric Short, Structural Services  
Hugh Brown, Park Repair  
Joe Konkle, Greenway Maintenance  
Virgil Osborne, Structural Services  
James Rainey, Specialized Park Services  
David Lilly, Park and Recreation Administration  
Jim Tolle, Turf and Irrigation  
Peter Cook, Specialized Park Services

All were invited to attend the BOCC meeting preceded by a reception at 5 p.m. in the lobby of the Government Center.

## **(3) Public Appearance**

None

## **(4) Program Presentation – Update of NFL Hub Grant**

Akida Jordan gave an update of the NFL Hub Grant. Topics covered included:

- Park and Recreation Responsibilities
- Coach/Parent, Education/Development

- Youth Football Organizations Database
- Increase Advocacy for Youth Football
- Organizations and Participation
- Future Steps

**Note:** A copy of the power point presentation with details of the above topics is included in the PRC Minutes Binder housed in the Director's office.

Commissioner Otey noted that it looked like Mecklenburg County was getting more bang for its buck from the HUB Grant in terms of growth. Akida said that one reason is we are not creating the organization process, but focused on improving what already exist. Commissioner Otey also wanted to know if a geographical analysis was done to understand where the gaps and opportunities were. Akida said since a voice does not exist to speak out about what is necessary and what is lacking, they had to pull people in with surveys, flyers, phone conversations, and traveling football clinics.

Commissioner Tarte asked about the age range, the strongest area and next area of opportunity and CMS partnership opportunities? Akida said the age range was 7 to 17. The strongest areas exist in CPD I, II and III and need exist on the East side, Mallard Creek, Highway 51 and the Matthews area. CMS opportunities have been possible through Jr. Camps at East Mecklenburg, South Mecklenburg, Olympic and Hopewell high schools.

Commissioner McMoore asked if coaches were required to be certified. Akida said they are working to bring all organizations under the Pop Warner umbrella (Pop Warner head coaches are required to be certified) and offer certification through clinics)

Chair McClure invited Akida to give another update at the August PRC meeting.

#### **(5) Appointments –Advisory Councils – Applicants**

**CPD I:** The application of Thomas Sowell was pulled from the agenda for appointment consideration at the request of the applicant.

**CPD III:** *Motion was made by Commissioner Otey to appoint Jennifer Coble to an unexpired term, expiring 6/2009, which was seconded by Commissioner Pearce and approved unanimously.*

**EPD:** In the absence of Commissioner Brown, appointments to the EPD were deferred to the June PRC meeting.

**NEPD:** *Motion was made by Commissioner Furuseth to appoint Vianne Howitt to an expired term, expiring 6/2011, which was seconded by Commissioner Pearce and approved unanimously.*

**SWPD:** In the absence of Commissioner Barry, appointments to the SwPD were deferred to the June PRC meeting.

**NPD:** *Motion was made by Commissioner Tarte to appoint Sherry Augustine to an expired term, expiring 6/2011, which was seconded by Commissioner Huelsman and approved unanimously.*

#### **(6) Public Hearings**

None

#### **(7) Advisory Council – Committee Reports**

### **(8) Director's Report**

Dot Law, Deputy Director, referred to Jim Garges' Director's Report included in their agenda packets and offered to answer any question

### **(9) PRC Chair Report**

**Bond Project List:** Chair McClure advised the Board that the Department has been asked to provide County Finance with a list of projects to be used in support of the development of a plan for a \$200 million park bond that the BOCC would approve with the County Manger's Budget when presented on May 20. Staff should have that project list complete by the end of tomorrow, May 14. The Board has been asked to meet either on Thursday afternoon, May 15 or Friday afternoon, May 16, to review and support this project list. With the support of the Park and Recreation Commission, Chair McClure asked that the Board empower him and Commissioner Pearce to then take the project list the following week to the Town Managers for their support, placing the Department and the PRC in a positive position to go to the BOCC for their support.

The majority of the Commissioners agreed to meet Friday, May 16 at 2 p.m. at the Administrative Office Building to discuss the bond project list.

Deputy Director Dot Law assured the Board that they would be e-mailed the excel spreadsheet of the project list prior to the meeting on Friday and a map provided at the meeting showing the location of each of the proposed projects.

Commissioner Furuseth expressed concern over project locations in the districts due to population disparities.

Deputy Director Dot Law said that during the Master Planning process everything was looked at regionally (North, South and Central) simply because of population disparities and pulled only the projects found on the CNA.

Commissioner Otey expressed that the selling of the concept of 'regions' was not a completed task and that citizens will continue to think towns, districts and neighborhoods, a reality the Board will have to deal with.

Deputy Director Dot Law said that she felt it was fair to say the Department had looked at the gaps throughout the county, where the least amount of recreation amenities were and to try to fill those gaps to provide for all of Mecklenburg County. She assured the Board that many of their concerns were also concerns expressed among staff which is why it is important for the Board to review the project list as they may be able to see or suggest another project that staff had not seen or considered.

Commissioner Pearce said that concerning a bond package, we need to be absolutely transparent to everyone about what we do and what our decisions are so that we do not have political or legal questions years after the fact.

Commissioner Otey said the advantage of having the Master Plan is that you are able to support the purpose of the bond.

Commissioner Tarte felt that the watchword will be equitable balance and that it will be important to consider, population, level of tax contribution, districts as well as regions and separation of the land component from the programming, parks and facilities in order to help the bond.

Commissioner Huelsman suggested partnering with other groups interested in preserving land, such as the City of Charlotte in order to maximize our financial resources and also finishing out the projects across the regions and districts that are already started.

Commissioner McMoore agreed that to finish the projects started in some neighborhoods would suffice as still getting something in their area.

Commissioner Otey said that we need to do a better job of presenting the planned projects visually so that it sells itself and to help people overcome “what’s in it for me” by giving them a larger sense of what “me” is; such as nature preserves and greenways are in ‘your’ county.

Deputy Director Dot Law responded that once we get a list of projects that everyone agrees upon and once we know \$200 million is the bond amount, we will then determine a way to present so that the citizens can understand and see the picture of what they are getting.

Commissioner Wilson asked if we had heard from the Chamber what the tax payers are willing to spend.

Chair McClure answered that the number from the Chamber has been rumored but not made public, however the number from the CCBAC is \$200 million and suggested that the job of the PRC is to advise the BOCC as to what the number needs to be, which is why staff is going to prepare two different list to review and consider.

**Board of County Commissioner Relationship:** Chair McClure ask that each of the Commissioners continually work on building our relationship with the BOCC and suggested that a thank you be sent for their endorsement and vote of confidence for the Master Plan and to keep in mind thanking them for any other ask that is given.

**Sponsorship and Recognition:** Chair McClure appointed three commissioners to work with staff on developing a process for review of naming petitions:

John Barry – Chair  
Kirk Otey  
Brenda McMoore  
James Alsop – Staff Support

**Eminent Domain Task Force:** Chair McClure shared that he and Julie Clark, Division Director of Greenway Planning and Development, had met several times with Tom Cox, Chair of the Eminent Domain Task Force, who will be reaching out to people this week to serve on this committee.

**Nominating Committee Report:** *Motion was made by Nominating Committee Chair, Larry Huelsman to approve the following slate for nomination for the coming year:*

*John Barry – Executive Secretary*

*Owen Furueth – Vice Chair*

*Brad Pearce – Chair*

*which was seconded by Commissioner Otey and approved unanimously.*

**(10-12) Consent Items**

*Motion was made by Commissioner Pearce to approve the PRC minutes of March 2008 and April, 2008 and all other consent items, which was seconded by Commissioner Tarte and approved unanimously.*

**Staff Reports and Requests**

- (13)** Brian Conroy, Central Region Planner, presented and asked for endorsement of the Southwest Community Park Master Plan. The Department has been working on this plan for approximately two years. The original site had an approximate 70 foot elevation change and would require excessive grading as well as the removal of approximately 30 feet of wooded area in order to build the ball fields. At the first workshop the adjacent property owner came forward and the Department was able to purchase an additional 27 acres. The park will now have two NCAA standard baseball fields with the bulk of the wooded area reserved for hiking trails, fitness trails and possible mountain bike trails through the Trail Blazers.

Commissioner Otey asked which bond is funding the Southwest Community Park. Brian answered 2004.

Chair McClure asked when the ground breaking would take place. Brian answered January 2009.

Commissioner Furueth asked if, in connection with the West Blvd. CPCC campus, would this include walking pathways. Brian answered that there would be separate walking trails for pedestrian access/traffic and possibly a future greenway connection.

Chair McClure asked if there was any opportunity to have a ground breaking event for this park in October 2008 in order to tie in with the upcoming bond campaign and so show the citizens what has been done with the 2004 bond money. Brian answered that it would be possible to have a 'soft' opening.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Otey to endorse the Southwest Community Park Master Plan, which was seconded by Commissioner McMoore and approved unanimously.*

**Park Commissioners Reports and Requests**

Commissioner Huelsman reminded the Board of the CBM Forum August 7 through 9 and referred them to the packet of information placed at their seats.

## **Adjournment**

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.