



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Berewick Recreation Center located at 5910 Dixie River Road., Charlotte, NC 28278 on Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at 6 p.m.

PRC MINUTES
March 9, 2010

ATTENDANCE

Present: Rob Brisley
Paul Bailey
Charlie McRee
Ed Barnhart
Scott McClure
Owen Furuseth
Brad Pearce, Chair
Brenda McMoore
John Barry, Executive Secretary
Jeff Tarte
Jim Garges
Dot Law

Absent Beverly Lawston
Brenda McMoore (Business)
Norman Mitchell

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Brad Pearce, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Joey Grahl.

Welcome and Introductions:

Chair Brad Pearce introduced himself and welcomed all guests to the Park and Recreation Commission meeting.

- a. **Berewick Staff Introductions:** Lola Massad, Division Director of Community and Recreation Center Services welcomed everyone to the newly opened Berewick Recreation Center, a joint use facility with Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. By joining capital funds from Park and Recreation and CMS when building an elementary school, a gymnasium, multipurpose room and playroom are available for recreational activities and programs. Lola introduced Joey Grahl, Facility Manger II, who welcomed the Commission and invited everyone

to tour the facility after the meeting. Joey then introduced Tom Lawing, Facility Manger I, who shared information about the surrounding community and introduced Berewick staff. (**Note:** A community fact sheet was provided. This fact sheet is included in the PRC Minute's Binder, March, 2010, **Section 1a**, housed in the Director's office.)

Carla Platter, Recreation Specialist, shared information on programs and activities:

- Grand Opening January 8 – 10, 2010; including several public officials
- 4-H
- Sports and game programming
- Providing space and programming for community groups
- Toddler to adult programming
- Track team and youth sports club
- Special and holiday events
- Senior club
- Teen program
- Field Trips

(**Note:** A fact sheet on programs and activities was provided and is included in the PRC Minute's Binder, March, 2010, **Section 1a-1**, housed in the Director's office.)

- b. Ed Barnhart – SPD Park and Recreation Commissioner:** Director Garges introduced newly appointed PRC member for the South Park District, Ed Barnhart. Ed has served on the Greenway Advisory Council in the past, has a strong interest in Park and Recreation and understands the importance and benefits of Park and Recreation to the community. Commissioner Barnhart shared that he was a native of Charlotte, worked in the airline industry and feels that Park and Recreation is a huge part of quality of life.

Proclamations and Awards

Public Appearance – Garden of Love and Forgiveness:

Lee Jones, Division Director of Capital Planning and Alliance Development, introduced Blaine Gregory, Sr. Planner, to share information on the Garden of Love and Forgiveness and to introduce representatives Beverly Dorn-Steele of WTVI and Jo Washington of Growth Resources International. Blaine said that the Department has been working with this group to locate a suitable area to place a bench that will be conducive to personal reflection on love and forgiveness. An area in Freedom Park has been selected and the group tonight has come before the PRC to receive endorsement.

Beverly Dorn-Steel explained that the concept behind the Love and Forgiveness Campaign evolved after 911. WTVI was one of 7 PBS stations from around the country to receive a grant from the Fetzer Institute to conduct conversations in the Charlotte community around the topic of Love and Forgiveness. Placement of the red bench of Love and Forgiveness and a designated day of forgiveness will culminate the 4 years of conversations and provide a spot to continue the vision of the Love and Forgiveness Campaign. The dedication and recognition of the campaign's partners is scheduled for June 10, 2010. (**Note:** A handout on this campaign is included in the March PRC Minute's Binder, **Section 3a**, housed in the Director's office.)

Motion was made by Commissioner McRee to endorse the proposed Garden of Love and Forgiveness and placement of a red bench in Freedom Park, which was seconded by Commissioner Tarte and approved unanimously.

Program Presentation – Greenway Planning and Development – Carolina Thread Trail

Julie Clark, Division Director of Greenway Planning and Development, and Ann Browning, Project Director of the Carolina Thread Trail, were present to give an update on the Carolina Thread Trail adoption process and to request endorsement from the PRC of the Carolina Thread Trail plan through Mecklenburg County. (The Carolina Thread Trail is a plan to develop and connect regional greenway and trail systems; connecting 15 counties.) Of the 15 counties, 6 have adopted a greenway master plan, 3 are in the planning phase and 6 are in the outreach phase. At the conclusion of a PowerPoint presentation and regional update by Ann Browning and an update on Mecklenburg County by Julie Clark, discussion and questions followed. (**Note:** The Carolina Thread Trail Executive Summary, connection maps and the PowerPoint presentation are all included in the March, 2010 PRC Minute's Binder, **Section 4a-1 through 4a-14** housed in the Director's office.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Furuseth to endorse and recommend that the BOCC adopt the Carolina Thread Trail plan through Mecklenburg County, which was seconded by Commissioner Tarte, and approved unanimously.

Appointments – Advisory Councils – Applicants

CPD I: In the absence of Beverly Lawston, CPD I Park and Recreation Commissioner, appointments to the CPD I Advisory Council were deferred to the April 13, 2010 PRC Agenda.

NEPD: *Motion was made by Commissioner Furuseth to appoint **Shawn Meachem** to an unexpired term on the NEPD Advisory Council, expiring 6/2012, which was seconded by Commissioner Barry and approved unanimously.*

SPD: *Motion was made by Commissioner Barnhart to appoint **Howard Linn Finger** to an unexpired term on the SPD Advisory Council, expiring 6/2010, which was seconded by Commissioner Barry and approved unanimously.*

Director's Report – Jim Garges

Director Jim Garges Reported the following:

FY10 and FY11 Budget Update: Director Garges Reported the following concerning the current fiscal year budget and the upcoming FY11 budget.

- The Department turned in a 5% reduction model (\$1.8 million) to the County and it looks like they will be taking the 5% and perhaps more before the current fiscal year ends
- Reductions to the FY11 budget will be severe, resulting in deep cuts to service levels

- The County may not have a bond sale in July, impacting 13 employees in the Department who are bond funded as well as capital projects and land acquisition opportunities
- Reduction in the operations budget could mean closing facilities, reducing hours, reducing park maintenance and staff
- Once the service model is complete, Director Garges would like to call a separate meeting of the Commission for them to review it, ask questions and provide feedback before the proposal goes to the County Manager.
- The long term and short term impact of a severe reduction in service level will need to be made clear to the Commission so that they can share that with the County Manager and subsequently to the Board of County Commissioners.
- Director Garges pointed out that due to the reevaluation of property, we may find ourselves facing another reduction in FY12 and should be prepared.
- The Department will cut as much as possible from the Operating Budget and keep as much staff as is possible.
- The County will also be looking at across the board cuts.
- Park and Recreation expects to receive their target soon. That percentage is driven by many factors including sales tax revenue, property tax, and unfunded State mandates. However, since Park and Recreation is not a mandated service, we can expect to receive the lion's share of the cut.

Chair Pearce asked about plans for closing facilities. Jim said that if recreation centers close factors to consider will be: geography and duplication of services, an overall reduction of hours, open certain days or times of day, change to rented only openings, etc.

Chair Pearce asked about the deadline for selling 2004 bonds. Jim answered that they would have the highest priority. Deputy Dot Law advised that the Department can request an extension.

PRC Chair Report

Staff Reports and Requests

- (13)** Marion Chang, Sr. Fiscal Administrator, covered FY2011 Proposed Fees and Charges for amenities at Revolution Park Sports Academy, reservation fees for outdoor basketball courts, camping at Copperhead Island, Historic St. Mary's Chapel, events on Greenways and Trails, senior citizen rates and golf course rates. (**Note:** All of these proposed fees and charges are in the March PRC Minute's Binder, **Section 13**, housed in the Director's office.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Tarte, to endorse the fees and charges as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Barry and approved unanimously

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Commissioner Brisley to approve all consent items, including the February 9, 2010 PRC minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Tarte and approved unanimously.

Park Commissioners Reports and Requests

Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Note: Closed Session requested by Commissioner Scott McClure, which was held directly after the PRC meeting.