

RECREATION AND PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

June 26, 2024

Robert Moton Center

Unapproved Minutes

Members Present: Austin Johnstone, Michael Duffy, Anita Taylor, Gary Davis, Donald Gerkin, Lynn Karr-Kratz

Members Excused: David Ferguson, John Woodley, Nadine Rosendale, Kristin Darby, Meghan Vaughn,

Ex-Officio Member Present: Bob Hicks, Director

Staff Present: Lisa Carroll, William Brozy, Stacey Widener, Jilienne Widener

The Recreation and Parks Advisory Board met on June 26, 2024, in the Friends of Robert Moton Meeting Room at the Robert Moton Center. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mr. Davis.

Welcome and Introductions:

Welcome and Introductions were exchanged around the room. We welcomed guests Dawn and PJ Prosser, Dave Becker and Cindy Solomon, all of Winfield Softball, and Carolyn Garber from the Carroll County Equestrian Council.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from May could not be approved as the board needed more numbers attending.

Director's Report- Mr. Hicks

Staffing Updates: A few of our staff members are here today.

Stacey Widener, Office Assistant, is taking minutes tonight since our new Administrative Assistant, Kaitlyn Craven, was sick today.

Lisa Carroll, Recreation Bureau Chief, will have some updates for us.

William Brozy, Park Development Manager, will share some updates on capital projects.

Jilienne Widener, our summer intern, is with us tonight.

Upcoming Projects

Will Brozy gave a review of capital projects for FY25:

- Bear Branch pavilion will be constructed in the summer/fall
- Piney Run will have paving done on some roads during the fall of 2024.
- Reshaping of boat trailer parking lot at Piney Run to re-slope and re-pave to afford better drainage.

- Cape Horn Park is getting lights installed at Field 1 in the next month with an early fall completion.
- The Freedom Challenge Course has the color selection completed. Entry arch coordination complete with CBF and Shannon-Baum.
- On the handout, the light blue areas show projects for the next calendar year, and the salmon areas show projects two years out.
- The sports complex will undergo some upcoming long-overdue renovations. This very large project will be done in phases over multiple years. Everything needs to be re-graded, which will kick in stormwater regulations that are very costly and more stringent than they were 20+ years ago. Program Open Space funds, the funding mechanism for capital projects, as well as grants, will pay for this.
- Director Hicks mentioned that Project Open Space allocations have dropped due to the low amount of home sales. The transfer tax on home sales funds POS, and when home sales are low, transfer taxes are also low. POS allocations recently dropped from \$2.4 million to \$876K.
- We will replace the 21-year-old playground at Piney Run by Pavilion 2 and add more shade structures. Currently, there are none.
- The new structure will make it more accessible to everyone and specifically to the disabled.

Director Hicks mentioned going before the County Commissioner to present the municipalities projects. In accordance with the Board of County Commissioners going back to 1977, they share 25% of the allocation that year toward municipalities. 4 municipalities are done each year. This year, it was Manchester, which used theirs towards paving at Christmas Tree Park and some lighting there; Hampstead, which did some trail work; Sykesville, and Mt. Airy, which did some trail and path upgrades to Watkins Park. Each municipality received approximately \$54K.

Mr. Davis asked about any progress on the Northwest rail trails. Director Hicks replied that he contacts them monthly via phone and email, but the railroad never returns his calls or replies to emails. He said he will continue to try monthly to stay on their radar but doesn't want to bombard them and cause any animosity with them by contacting them too much.

Mr. Brozy mentioned that the self-help applications will be going out and are due back by September 7th. There is extra money in self-help this year: \$125K, up \$33K from the previous year. He confirmed that money from self-help is used or lost, with a very small window of wiggle room.

Mr. Brozy also confirmed that we cannot combine shipments of ball mix to ball fields around the county because the cost of freight varies from one part of the county to the other. The mix comes from PA. Shipping to north Carroll vs. south Carroll varies, and it would be difficult to combine an order because of the freight cost difference.

Lisa Carroll spoke about the upcoming events and programs:

On June 11th, we had our annual TR Day at the Farm Museum. We had 391 attendees. The event was open for all to attend. We had hamburgers and hot dogs and a DJ. This is always a great event, and we had nice cool weather this year. Ann Marie Foster has really grown this event and taken it to a whole other level from when it first started. Lisa questioned Mr. Duffy about how to get the word out and attendance up from the schools, especially Carroll Springs

right across the road from the Farm Museum. Mr. Duffy said if someone can get him the information for it next year, he will be happy to market it to the schools.

On Friday, June 28th, we will be having our Family Summer Bash with the Reagan Years at the Farm Museum. This will be a fundraiser for the Park Legacy Fund. 12 & under are free; 13 and older will be \$20 if pre-ordered and \$25 at the gate. There will be food and drink vendors, as well as craft vendors and artisans. Fingers crossed for good weather, as it was canceled last year due to rain.

July is National Recreation & Parks Month. Director Hicks will be going in front of the Commissioners to receive a proclamation for July being Recreation and Parks Month. Additionally, there will be a proclamation of the 40th anniversary of the Carroll County Equestrian Council and Center.

Director Hicks mentioned that the county has almost completed the closing on the purchase of 2 parcels of land totaling just under 44 acres adjacent to Cape Horn Park. They should be closing on those on July 24th. Since the land will not be developed into park land right away, they will look to do an ag lease on it. Also, we will soon be able to place properties on a hot list or wish list, and we can then be notified if they come up for sale. It makes it easier than searching the newspaper or real estate listings.

Lisa Carroll had Jilienne pass out Park Pursuit booklets to anyone who wanted one. This program was brought back after a long hiatus. We are trying to get people into our county parks to see what we offer. It should be a fun activity a family can do together.

Lisa mentioned that we have 3 upcoming family movie nights and free pickleball on Wednesday evenings from 6-8 p.m. at the Charles Carroll Community Center in July, which is Rec & Parks month.

Director Hicks shared a handout detailing some marketing numbers and how we've had an increase in followers and engagement on social media, which is great. He attended Sasquatch Saturday at Piney Run, which was well-attended; our bus trips have been well attended, though we'd like to increase attendance even more there and hope the numbers come back well for the Family Summer Bash.

Director Hicks shared that the Commissioners approved moving forward with the Smart Energy Savings Program. Mayeski Park and Deer Park lights will be replaced with LED lights at zero cost to the county. Materials have been ordered, and a BGE contractor will replace them. Field disruption should be minimal. Outside light on buildings will also be replaced.

Public Comments:

None

Adjournment:

The next meeting will be held July 24, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Robert Moton Center

Meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Hicks

Bob Hicks, Director

Stacey Smith Widener

Stacey Smith Widener, Secretary