

**Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting  
Wednesday, July 19, 2017 – 7:00pm  
Department of Recreation and Parks Headquarters  
Conference Room #1  
7120 Oakland Mills Road  
Columbia, MD 21046**

**Members Present:**

Sylvia Ramsey, Co-Chair; Tom Franklin; Dan Tracy; Edward Coleman, Dave Brown, Ananta Hejeebu

**Members Absent:**

Dr. Joel Goodman, Chair; Joanne Kiebler

**Call to Order:**

Ms. Ramsey called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

**Staff Present:**

Raul Delerme, Bureau Chief of Capital Projects, Park Planning and Construction; Nicola Morgal, Superintendent, Recreational Licensed Childcare and Community Services Division; John S. Marshall, Bureau Chief of Parks; Michael H. Milani, Bureau Chief of Administrative Services; and Lauren Davis, Assistant to Ms. Wetherald and Recording Secretary

**Approval of Minutes:**

Motion was made by Dan Tracy to approve the minutes. A second motion was made by Sylvia Ramsey. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comments:**

No public comments

**Director's Report:**

Mr. Byrd stated that there was no correspondence to report.

Mr. Byrd welcomed and introduced Mr. Hejeebu to the Board.

Mr. Byrd retorted the lasted draft of the Timbers lease was sent out today to Kemper Sports Management. We are hopeful to have it before the County Council in September and then transferred to a 10-year management contract.

Mr. Byrd reported that our Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) was adopted by the County Council. This was a long but good process. A lot of people were involved including staff, the Board, and the community. The product that we have now is the best yet.

Mr. Byrd stated that he had a nice meet and great with the new Howard County Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Michael J. Martirano. He certainly seems committed to our partnership and engaged.

Mr. Byrd reported that we had two appraisals on a parcel called the Downey property along the upper Patapsco and Woodbine on Morgan road. The owners have approached us to sell.

Mr. Byrd stated that we had an inquiry for a BMX race course in Howard County many years ago and now another request has been made. In our LPPRP, not one person requested that the County build a BMX race course. We told the person that requested the BMX course that we are not going to pursue it.

Mr. Byrd stated that we have not received the fair tickets for the Board yet but once they come in, we will get them out to the Board.

Mr. Byrd reminded the Board that we have our annual crab feast coming up on August 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm at Timbers of Troy Golf Course.

Mr. Byrd reported that the press release went out to the County stating that the department will be taking over the B&O Railroad Station Ellicott Station. Everyone seems excited that the County is taking it back. We now have the staff and resources needed to manage this location

Mr. Tracy asked if the building needs a lot of work.

Mr. Byrd replied by stating that the building does not need a lot of work. What

we do need to do is develop an exhibit, redo the caboose and create different programs. We officially take over on September 1<sup>st</sup> and it will be free to the public. We will also offer other fee based programs.

Bureau of Parks:

**Natural and Historic Resources Division**

- David Keane and Scott Bowen presented a chainsaw tailgate safety talk to the Mayfield Highways staff, which was very well received.
- Phil Norman has started working on schedules for sharpshooting and managed hunting for the 2017-2018 season. We are not looking to change any sites. No real update on the deer collar study now though the team is looking to begin the tick study.
- Robinson Nature Center hosted a “Wild for Water Day” on Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup> attended by 250 people.
- Management began planning the transition of operational duties of the B&O Museum from Baltimore to the Department effective August 27, 2017. The facility will be closed 4-6 weeks to assess what changes need to be made for new programs and exhibits.
- Heritage Program Docent Mattie Hayes interviewed two alumni of the segregated Cooksville School, class of 1947 as part of an ongoing oral history project.

**Horticulture and Land Management Division**

- Horticulture staff are seeing a rapid decline in park ash trees due to the emerald ash borer beetle as well some elms succumbing to Dutch elm disease We are also slowly losing all the purple plums.
- Tim Overstreet is designing an educational peony garden for the Elkridge Library to be dedicated to retiring Valerie Gross.

**Park Operations Division**

- Atholton Park: installed pickleball courts. Mr. Marshall present a picture of the courts to the Board.
- Rockburn Branch Park Skills Park renovation by Dirt Sculpt Inc. will be conducted June 9th through June 15th.
- Belmont Manor and Historic Park visitation in June was nearly 2,695 people.

**Other**

- The Department is working with traffic engineering on the Rt. 29 pedestrian bridge. Construction still slated for late fall with an opening slated for early spring 2018.
- Staff did a presentation this morning for the Emergency Operation Management Group on Recreation and Parks' Department Operation Center (DOC). Several other departments are looking to establish their own DOC and look to us as the model or standard on how to operate an effective DOC.

Bureau of Capital Projects, Park Planning and Construction:

Mr. Delorme will be sending out an electronic copy of our LPPRP to the Board.

Mr. Delorme reported that the County is hosting the Ellicott City Commemoration Ceremony on July 29th for that flood that happened a year ago. The new Ellicott City clock and will be revealed during the ceremony.

Mr. Delorme stated that we received a \$30,000 Maryland Historic Trust Grant for the Barnard Fort house in Ellicott City. The Barnard Fort House will be used to house employees and programming.

Mr. Delorme stated that there are a lot of dead trees at Troy Park. Mr. Overstreet has visited the site and identified a lot of the dead trees. We are going to have to remove a lot of the trees and replace.

Mr. Tracy asked if there was a plan to reforest the trees that are going to be removed.

Mr. Marshall responded by stating that we will be replacing them with native trees and doing a soil test to make sure the new trees are able to survive there.

Mr. Delorme reported that we are still working on the roundabout at Blandair Park and we are looking to finish in September.

Mr. Delorme stated that we are still proceeding with the construction at Troy Park.

Mr. Delorme reported that there are 5 pedestrian bridges in our trail system that we did an assessment on and 3 of them are in bad shape. We had a meeting onsite today to look at the bridges to decide if we should repair or replace the bridges.

Bureau of Recreation- (given by Nicola Morgal):

Ms. Morgal mention that we had two successful events this month, including our July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration and Solar Fest. Both events were well attended.

Ms. Morgal reported that one of our Howard County Lacrosse team will be playing in a tournament in Sparks, Maryland in September.

Our concert series, Traveling Bands and Sunset Serenades, are still being held on Wednesday night's.

The Rockburn Car Show is scheduled to be held on August 19, 2017.

Recreational Licensed Childcare (RLC) is extremely well-attended. We have 4,187 registered in our RLC summer camps this season. 965 participants ahead this year compared to the end of summer last year.

We did two partnerships with the school system this year. The first partnership was called the Fun Zone. We got a lot of great feedback from parents with kids in the program. We are going to consider the same program next year.

Mr. Milani stated that this was also a great partnership between the Department and the Board of Education.

Ms. Morgal stated that our Therapeutic Recreation Division offers inclusion companions for kids in our summer camps. This is a service that offers personal assistance for participants with disabilities. So far, we have assisted 350 children in our camps.

Bureau of Administrative Services:

Mr. Milani reported that we signed a new 5-year lease with the building space next door to headquarters. The Recreational Licensed Childcare & Community Service Division and the Natural and Historic Resources Division will be moving

there for a bigger office space.

Mr. Milani stated that we are going to look at a comprehensive plan to see how much space we have and how much we can grow within the space.

Troy Park hosted the Shoot-Out for Soldiers event. It was a very successful event that raised over \$210,000 for the Wounded Warriors Program. This event proves why this department is so great. Everyone, including the Park Rangers, Park Maintenance Workers, and the Sports staff, came together to help put on a great event. A Black Hawk Helicopter came and landed on the overflow parking lot field.

Last week we hosted a major lacrosse tournament at Blandair Park and Oakland Mills High School. The best high school lacrosse teams in the nation participated in this tournament and all the top college coaches were in attendance. It was a great event that help boost business awareness in the area.

July 1st is the start of our new fiscal year and now everyone is happy again. We did a great job converting part time staff into full time staff. We are continuing to be supported by the Administration in helping us convert part time staff to full time staff.

Mr. Milani stated that one of the best things about the inclusion program is that we accommodate a lot of children. As those companion requests goes up, the cost to provide those services go up as well. When we are budgeting, we must make sure that we continue to get the tax dollars that we need to support this program. Mr. Milani stated that it will be his responsibility to make sure that we continue to get this funding. Unfortunately, our Recreation and Parks fund is not where it once was and we don't have the big surplus that we have had in the past. It looks like we will most likely go into a deficit again this year.

Old Business:

Mr. Byrd reported that he received a Certificate of Completion for the Open Meeting Training for Mr. Ed Coleman.

Mr. Byrd reported that the Savage Land Swap is still being reviewed by the Planning Board. They extended testimony until October. Mr. Byrd and Mr.

Delerme are continuing to be present at the meetings for this Land Swap.

Mr. Delerme reported that there is not big update on the North Laurel Pool Project.

Mr. Tracy asked how many people are on the committee.

Mr. Delerme responded by stating we have 15 people on the committee. The committee is made up of people in the North Laurel Community area and Recreation and Parks staff.

New Business:

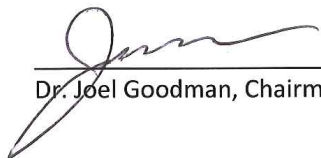
Mr. Brown stated that he played his first round of golf at the newly renovated Timbers of Troy Golf Course. He was extremely pleased at the work that was completed there.

Mr. Tracy also mention that the golf course was beautiful.

Mr. Byrd stated that we still have a couple of things left to do including the cart paths and the maintenance building.

Mr. Tracy invited the Board to the Rockburn Car Show at Rockburn Branch Park on August 19th. This is a free event and it is open to the public.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Coleman. The 2<sup>nd</sup> motion was made by Mr. Brown. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

  
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Dr. Joel Goodman, Chairman

  
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John R. Byrd, Executive Secretary