

CENTRE REGION PARKS AND RECREATION AUTHORITY BOARD
APPROVED REGULAR MEETING SUMMARY

#1

February 18, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Mascolo called the regular monthly meeting of the CRPR Authority Board to order at 12:15 PM at the Centre Region COG Building- Forum Room with the following individuals in attendance:

Board: Sue Mascolo, Ferguson Twp.; Diane Ishler, Harris Twp.; Jim Dunn, State College Borough; Chris Hurley, Patton Twp.; Kathy Matason, College Twp.
(Absent: Shannon Messick, SCASD)

Staff: Ron Woodhead, Director; Niki Tourscher, Program Manager; Jada Light, Office Manager; Melissa Freed, Nature Center Supervisor; Jeff Hall, Sports Supervisor; Todd Roth, Aquatics Supervisor; Beth Lee, Rec. Supervisor; Jim Carpenter, Parks Manager; Joe Viglione, COG Finance Director; James Steff, COG Director; Amanda Murtha, COG HR Officer

Others: Bill Keough & Dick Mascolo, residents

II. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC- There were no comments from the public.

III. RECOGNITION OF MRS. JUNE BROWN-

The staff invited Mrs. Brown to the Board meeting to be recognized for 60 years of service as the CRPR Arts and Crafts Coordinator for Kidventure Summer Day Camp (and originally the CRPR Supervised Playgrounds). Mrs. Brown chose not to return in 2016 and will enjoy retirement. Ms. Lee awarded her with a Certificate of Thanks for her service and dedication; the celebration included big cake. Mrs. Brown told the Board and staff what Parks & Recreation was like when she first started and how far it has come. She will be missed!

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY

Mr. Hurley made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the regular meeting held on 1/21/16, Ms. Matason seconded the motion; the motion then passed unanimously.

V. VOUCHER REPORTS

Ms. Ishler had a question as to why rental equipment wasn't being charged towards the Senior Center renovation account. Mr. Viglione & Mr. Carpenter are going to look into it. (*Mr. Viglione provided that info to Diane the next day*). Ms. Ishler made a motion to approve the January voucher reports and Mr. Hurley seconded the motion. The motion then passed unanimously.

VI. BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Ferguson Twp.- No report

Patton Twp.- No report

Harris Twp.- The Harris Township Parks and Rec. Committee asked the Supervisors to sign a Mayor's Monarch (Butterfly) Pledge. As part of the pledge, the Township has to meet certain requirements. The Supervisors agreed with this, and the Committee selected three requirements (out of a list of 25) to complete in 2016. The three chosen related to communication and educating residents about the process and getting gardeners together. This will be a volunteer-based program; it will not add more work to the Parks & Recreation Maintenance crew. There will be a blog to keep people up to date on the

project. The Township will be starting the bridge soon connecting Eugene Fasick Park and Elks View. Harris Township has the funds and is required to be completed by June. They will obtain Fee-in-Lieu funds from the Laurel Ridge development to replace playground equipment at Nittany View Park, as well as adding one piece of play equipment for the Fasick Tot Lot.

SCASD - No report

College Twp- No report

State College Borough – Mr. Dunn confirmed that he has been appointed by Borough Council for another 5-year term (the new term will expire on 31 Dec 2020).

VII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Director's Report- Presented by Ron Woodhead

1. Staff Activity Report for January (Attachment #3) - The photo on the January Activity Report shows Clint Rupeka working on the Senior Center renovations. Agency revenue numbers are approximately the same as last year. The climbing wall at Welch Pool has been purchased and will be introduced to patrons when the pools open for this summer. The Senior Center numbers are continuing to grow. The data from where the seniors reside are recorded daily; staff must run that report with the assistance of the CoPilot software staff.
2. 2014 & 2015 Active.Net Revenue Summary Report- (Attachment #4) Mr. Roth reviewed the report that demonstrated the success absorbing the convenience fee for self-service registrations on the Internet, along with making one of the front office Staff Assistant positions half-time. The net revenue for online registrations was approximately \$43,000. With adding the \$20,209 savings in reduced staffing costs, the total net value is \$63,317.
3. Visitor's Bureau Project to Update their 2006 Sports Field Study – Ms. Mascolo, Mr. Woodhead & Ms. Tourscher attended a recent presentation by the Visitor's Bureau as a result of the Authority's concerns in October about the Visitor's Bureau update to their 2006 sports field study. A new YMCA facility (with indoor and outdoor facilities) is proposed to be built near the Centre County Prison. There will essentially be two joined buildings, a YMCA and regional sports complex. The YMCA would manage it. Mr. Steff asked about the proposed indoor sports facility (by Mr. Michael Lee) that will be built across from Bernel Road Park. Mr. Woodhead answered that Bureau consultant reported no impacts from Mr. Lee's proposed facility; he thought there will be enough activity brought in to keep both facilities going. The consultant stated that Mr. Lee's facility will be for training and that the YMCA facility will be for tournaments. The Bureau is expecting to expand sports tourism. They have also engaged Delta Development Group to assist them in obtaining federal or state grant funds. Mr. Steff commented that he doesn't feel right about the Bureau using hotel tax money to advance a non-public sports center. Mr. Hurley is interested as to what their methodology is for how they pick and choose who they support since we have brought many worthwhile proposals to them in the past with no interest. The sole interest of the Visitor's Bureau is to assist with the cost of adding synthetic turf for two soccer fields at Whitehall Road. Mr. Keough voiced his concern and that he suspects they will eventually also look for federal or state funding, which will be match money so

anticipate them coming to COG or the Townships to ask for the local share. He advised the group to be alert and prepared to respond.

4. Promoting the 2016 Welch Pool Updates- Mr. Roth reported that there are two major topics for patrons:
 - (1) Patron parking for summer 2016. During the school year, the new lot will be open as well as some parking near the pool. At least for the next two summers nothing has changed from the project plans. The back entrance will be closed. The in and out entrance with a turn-around area will be available. There will be signs and emails going out to season pool pass holders.
 - (2) The second topic is the climbing wall at Welch Pool. It will be very visible from Westerly Parkway; which will be good publicity on its own. Mr. Hurley questioned if it increased our liability costs? Mr. Roth informed the Board that he spoke with the Borough Risk Manager before purchasing the wall and it will not increase insurance costs.
5. Nature Center "Book Bench" installation complete- Ms. Freed announced that a "Centre County Book Bench" has been installed at the Millbrook Marsh Nature Center. It was inspired by walking through the Marsh and created by a local artist. It is beautiful but not too cozy! Think of it as piece of art in the park.
6. Advertising for 2016 Food & Snack Concession Proposals- Ms. Tourscher informed the Board that a mailing went out to vendors in January inviting them to put in a proposal for the various park and pool concessions. An ad was also placed in the CDT and the Gazette. Ms. Tourscher and Mr. Hall met with a vendor who submitted a bid last year. He is interested but concerned that he can't do both Oak Hall and Hess Fields. The food vendor from 2014 and 2015 expressed interest in coming back this year, however, at this time he still owes money from the 2015 season. The proposal deadline is Feb. 26. Ms. Mascolo stated that at this time we should not focus on making money but rather getting someone in there to do the job.

B. Staff Highlights

- Todd Roth- Mr. Roth reported that swim lessons start next week. Starting to get ready for the summer and hiring summer staff. There are 100 days till the pools open!
- Niki Tourscher- Ms. Tourscher handed out a Senior Center Fundraising Brochure that will be given to potential donors. She is asking for feedback from the Board.
- Jim Carpenter- Winter sports are happening. Slab Cabin sledding isn't officially open today but there is still snow, so people continue to go. He is starting to get seasonal employment applications.
- Melissa Freed- Ms. Freed announced that the Millbrook Marsh was awarded the 2016 Green Parks Award by the PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources and the PA Recreation & Park Society. The award will be given at the PRPS Conference luncheon. Ms. Freed also invited the Board to attend the award banquet if they are available to come. There will also be a second ceremony celebrating the award at a later date at the Millbrook Marsh. Ms. Freed has been busy with field trips and getting ready for Earth Day Birthday.

- Beth Lee- Ms. Lee stated that all programs are underway and are running smoothly. Easter is in late-March, so she is getting ready for the Easter Egg Hunts. The 2016 Summer Youth Fair is on Sat. at Mt. Nittany Middle School. Ms. Lee and Ms. Freed are attending. Camp registration has also started on Feb. 1 and is going smoothly.
- Jeff Hall- Mr. Hall reported that volleyball is going well. He is starting to get the softball leagues up and running. We are trying to bring the women's softball league back this year. He is also trying to get the tournament schedule finished.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

A. The Proposed 2016 CRPR Work Plan (Attachment #5)

An updated 2016 Work Plan was distributed in the agenda packets. Mr. Woodhead is asking the Board to approve the 2016 Work Plan. Mr. Hurley made a motion to approve the 2016 Work Plan, Ms. Matason seconded the motion; it then passed unanimously.

B. 2017 Authority Board Priorities-

The General Form asked the Board to discuss to five questions as to what they think should be Parks & Recreation's priorities. This should be a Board discussion. The questions are:

1. **What does the Board believe its priorities should be?**
2. **How does the Board believe that those priorities should be ranked in terms of importance for the upcoming 2017 budget?**
3. **Does the board believe that there are services/projects that it may not be doing that it should be doing?**
4. **Does the Board believe that there are services/projects that is doing that it should stop doing or do at a reduced level?**
5. **Does the Board believe that there are services/projects that it should be differently?**

The Board's answers were compiled and distributed as *Attachment #1* to these minutes.

C. Senior Center Renovation/Relocation in the Nittany Mall

Mr. Woodhead updated the Board that the COG General Forum and the Centre County Board of Commissioners increased the 2016 Budget for the Senior Center renovations. Since those actions in late-January, the focus has been on discussions with the Mall owners (Namdar Realty Group in NY) about the lease amendment to permit the renovations to proceed. Currently they have offered a 15-year lease and repayment rather than our offer of a 10-year lease and repayment. (Update: On March 8 an agreement in principle was reached with the mall owners. Once they provide a draft lease amendment, it will be provided to the Board for consideration.)

Ms. Tourscher relayed to the Board a few ideas provided by senior center patrons for new names for the Senior Center. We would like to stay away from the word "Senior" in hopes of attracting younger, more active seniors. Some of the names the Senior Center patrons came up with are different, but their input was encouraged. Following an official voting process with written ballots, the results will be presented to the Board for consideration in April.

D. Fundraising Feasibility Study

Will be bringing back to the Board in March on which direction we should be going with fundraising, not including the Senior Center at this time. The Board agreed that we shouldn't put a limit on the amount of money raised. We will need help with Regional Parks.

E. Agency Director Transition- 2016

Ms. Murtha, COG HR Officer has been working on updating the Director's job description, which was distributed to the Board for endorsement and feedback. She recently emailed a survey to staff and other stakeholders about the position and the desired attributes of the new Director. Ms. Murtha and Mr. Steff reported that the survey revealed that good communication, personnel management & experience with budgets were the most important traits that a Director should have. We should be looking for long-term employee with a passion for the values of Parks and Recreation.

F. Whitehall Road Regional Park- Interim Driveway Project

A proposal has been obtained from Stahl-Sheaffer for a feasibility study about using the emergency access road for Whitehall Road Reg. Park as an interim park driveway. We are seeking permission to engage Stahl-Sheaffer, not to build the road, but to identify cost estimates and options with respect to utilities for the park. This plan will help us make a road map for a "Plan B" park construction process. The Board agreed to table action on the proposal until the Joint Parks Meeting on March 10. The Board felt that the elected officials should endorse the proposal before the Authority approves it. (Update: The proposal was unanimously-approved on March 10.)

G. Oak Hall Regional Park-Linden Hall Road Drainage Project

Since bids for the original curb + guiderail project were rejected since they far exceeded the project budget, Mr. Woodhead is proposing an alternate drainage plan. Working with Stahl-Sheaffer Engineering, they met with the Smith's and they approved the new approach – to use a slot drain across the park driveway to catch any stormwater before it crosses Linden Hall Road to the Smith residence. With a preliminary estimate of \$15,000, it is proposed that Stahl-Sheaffer be engaged to proceed with engineering this new approach, and then obtain approvals from College Twp., PennDOT, County Conservation District and the Smiths. Mr. Dunn made a motion to approve the engineering cost of up to \$2,900 with reimbursable expenses not to exceed \$200. The total Purchase Order will be up to \$3,100. Ms. Ishler seconded the motion; it then passed unanimously. If the project hits a roadblock as it is reviewed, the Authority will only be invoiced for services to date.

H. Millbrook Marsh Nature Center- Parking Area Project

Mr. Woodhead will keep the Board up-to-date on the progress of the parking area. There will be a change order for the extra labor and materials required. The details of this change order should be finalized for action at the March meeting. They are hoping to open the new parking area for the April 10 Earth Day Birthday event.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 2:28 PM, the meeting was adjourned. Ms. Matason made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Ishler seconded the motion; it then passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jada Light

This meeting summary was approved for distribution by Board action on 17 March 2016.

Attachment #1: Board Responses to “2017 Priority Questions”

ATTACHMENT #1

The 2017 Priorities of the CRPR Authority Board

as discussed at the Board meeting on February 18, 2016

On Jan. 25, 2016, the COG General Forum approved the following five questions for each COG-related Committee or Board. This report summarizes the responses from the CRPR Authority Board:

1) What does the Board believe that its priorities should be (for 2017)?

- a. The approved [2016 Work Plan](#) combined with the [CRPR Strategic Plan \(2015-2020\)](#) accurately reflect the current and future priorities of the Authority Board.
- b. Continue to (1) keep all parks and facilities well-maintained (clean, attractive and safe) and enjoyable for visitors and (2) offer a full menu of recreation programs to residents of all ages.
- c. 2017 priorities will depend on 2016 progress with respect to:
 - i. Resuming the process to construct Phase 1 of Whitehall Road Regional Park.
 - ii. Continued improvements to the Centre Region Senior Center (facilities & programs).
 - iii. Based upon the operational successes at Oak Hall Regional Park and Hess Softball Field Complex, those features and improvements not built in Phase 1, along with the planned Phase 2 items should again be a priority, combined with the fundraising initiatives. For example, at Oak Hall, add the playground / sprayground, pavilions, lighting of Ballfield #1, dog park, Tournament Building, etc. At Hess, proceed to finalize and implement the Phase 2 Master Plan.
- d. Focus on the continued improvement projects and the associated capital fundraising for Millbrook Marsh Nature Center. The Board tabled a 2016 grant application which would have been targeted to build Phase 2 of the Spring Creek Education Building, which would have required a fundraising initiative to raise funds to match the 2017 state grant. The grant application and capital fundraising were postponed due to the other fundraising projects before the Board (Senior Center and Regional Park improvements). In addition several other major projects are necessary at the nature center: the barn and Educ. Building should be re-stained, the barn sprinkler system replaced, and the marsh boardwalk should be reset as a result of damages from several floods.
- e. Based upon the framework provided in the pending *Fundraising Feasibility Study*, in 2017 the Board wishes to expand the focus on fundraising in order to supplement, not replace, the municipal investments for P&R projects across the region, including:
 - i. Corporate sponsorships, naming rights, capital vs. operational donations, non-traditional sources, recurring donations, community park funding, etc.
 - ii. Should the Board explore seeking the assistance of developing and working with a Park Partner group for future fundraising initiatives?

2) How does the Board believe that those priorities should be ranked in terms of importance for the upcoming 2017 budget?

The listing order above reflects the Board's priorities.

3) Does the Board believe that there are services/projects that it may not be doing that it should be doing?

- The main factors that limit addressing additional projects involve staff capacity (given regular operations combined with the other priority projects) and funding.
- With the recent focus on addressing the shortage of facilities for sports and active recreation, continuing to promote and provide for passive park uses should remain a priority (for example, providing better maintenance of park paths and trails).
- While the Board is pleased with resident support for the newer activities that have become very popular locally (dog park, community gardens, pickleball, etc.), we also need the resources to stay on the cutting edge of newer activities, such as:
 - a. An updated skatepark, including following-up on developing an Action Park as proposed by Jamie Bestwick,
 - b. Develop a Bicycle Pump Track as proposed by several local bicycle groups.
 - c. Programming at the disc golf courses,
 - d. Provide designated areas and educational programs for the proper use of drones and r/c aircraft,

4) Does the Board believe that there are services/projects that it is doing that it should stop doing or do at a reduced level?

- No. In fact, there are many new projects and initiatives that could be explored pending available resources.

5) Does the Board believe that there are services/projects that it should do differently?

- No, but the Authority is always open to new ideas and suggestions from many sources, including municipal officials, residents and other agencies.