



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Administrative Office Building located at 5841 Brookshire Blvd., Charlotte, NC at 6:00 p.m. on February 9, 2010

PRC MINUTES
February 9, 2010

ATTENDANCE

Present: Rob Brisley
Paul Bailey
Charlie McRee
Norman Mitchell
Brad Pearce, Chair
Brenda McMoore
John Barry, Executive Secretary
Jeff Tarte
Jim Garges
Dot Law

Absent Owen Furuseth (Business Travel)
Beverly Lawston
Scott McClure (Business Travel)
David Morgan (Business Travel)

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 Commissioner Bailey.

Welcome and Introductions:

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

Chair Pearce introduced **County Manager, Harry Jones**. Mr. Jones reported on the following regarding where the County is relative to the budget planning process.

- Next year's budget will be more difficult than FY10
- FY10 budget was reduced by \$70 million while keeping the tax rate at the same level
- Demand for services has increased by 35%
- Revenue Stream
 - Property taxes look good

- Optimistic that we will meet our sales tax budget target (sales tax budgeted at 25% less than FY09)
- Deed Stamp revenue is down from \$21 million two years ago to an estimated \$6 million this year
- Investment revenue is down
- State of NC – Additional Responsibilities
 - Mecklenburg County to take over the responsibility for Child Support enforcement for the State, adding approximately \$1.8 million going in to next year
 - The State Treasurer’s Office, responsible for administering the State Retirement System has raised the County’s contribution from 4.8% to 6.35% adding approximately \$4 million
 - The State will no longer reimburse for state prisoners housed in the County jail; an additional cost to the County of approximately \$3 million
 - The General Assembly will reconvene in May for short session and additional steps may be taken to help them meet the budgetary short fall.
 - All of the above considered, the County will probably go into next year with another deficit of \$20 to \$25 million
- The Department may have to make some difficult choices about services and service delivery next year; operation or construction; we will not be able to do both
- The County may not be in a position to issue debt as hoped because
 - Declining revenue
 - A new debt policy that limits the percent that the County will budget for debt service up to 20%
 - Environment not open to raising taxes
- Unemployment projected to be at 11.5% by 2011, twice what it was before we went into the economic downturn, creating more demand for services.
- This will be a very tough year, forcing the County to fund things that are required and not those that are not required.

Proclamations and Awards

Lee Autry, Park Watch Supervisor, announced the retirement of George McKenzie, Park Watch (not present). Mr. McKenzie was with the Department for 5 years.

Director Jim Garges, announced the retirement of Alan Beaver, Park and Recreation Manager. Mr. Beaver (not present) had been with the Department for 30 years and was recognized recently at a reception in his honor at Mahlon Adams.

Public Appearance

a. Trail of History Contract

Gwen Cook, Greenway Planner, shared that the purpose of the Trail of History presentation would be to receive endorsement from the PRC for the County to enter into a contract with the Trail of History, Inc. for the acceptance of 21 gifted artworks depicting characters significant to the history of Mecklenburg County. She reminded the PRC that the statue of Captain James Jack was presented to the PRC about a year ago. Since that time, Trail of History Inc., was formed to establish the Trail of History overlay on Little Sugar Creek. Gwen then introduced **Charles Jonas**, Vice Chair of Trail

of History, Inc. and Chair of the May 20th Society and **George Dewey**, Chair of Art and Implementation Committee, Trail of History, Inc.

Following a presentation by Charles Jonas and George Dewey in which they shared the Trail of History concept and plans to gift each of these statues to the County, along with a maintenance endowment and associated educational components, the following motion was made:

Motion was made by Commissioner Brisley to endorse staff's recommendation that the County enter into a contract with the Trail of History, Inc. allowing the group to begin its work to engage and excite the citizens of Mecklenburg County through the development of a trail of artwork that will tell the story of the history and development of Mecklenburg County which was seconded by Commissioner McRee and approved unanimously.

(**Note:** The draft contract and an art location master plan are included in the February, 2010 PRC Minute's Binder, **section 3a-2 and 3a-3**, housed in the Director's office.)

b. Lake Norman Regional Bicycle Plan

Julie Clark, Division Director of Greenway Planning and Development, introduced **Blair Israel**, Regional Planner, Centralina Council of Governments to share a presentation on the Lake Norman Regional Bicycle Plan (LNRBP) and to ask that the PRC recommend that the BOCC endorse this plan at their March 2, 2010 meeting.

Blair shared that NCDOT contracted with Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) in early 2009 to write a regional bicycle plan for the Lake Norman area creating a means for bicyclists to travel around Lake Norman through Mecklenburg, Iredell, Catawba and Lincoln Counties. As a first plan of this type in North Carolina, the LNRBP will serve as a model for the creation of similar plans in other portions of the state. The presentation covered the mission of the plan and vision for the route and included maps of proposed initial and ultimate routes. Following discussion:

Motion was made by Commissioner Tarte for the Park and Recreation Commission to recommend that the BOCC endorse the Lake Norman Regional Bicycle Plan at the March 2, 2010 BOCC meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved unanimously.

(**Note:** The LNRBP Executive Summary, PowerPoint presentation, route description and memo to the Greenway Advisory Council from the LNRBP are included in the February 2010 PRC Minute's Binder, **section 3b-2, 3b-3, 3b-4 and 3b-5**, housed in the Director's office.)

Program Presentation – Therapeutic Recreation – Miracle League

Karla Gray, Sr. Therapeutic Recreation Manager introduced **Bill Allen** to provide information on the Miracle League and a partnership between Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation and Mr. Allen's non-profit entity and the community as a whole to bring a Miracle League to Charlotte. Miracle League is an organization that makes playing baseball possible for children with disabilities. Karla prefaced the presentation by sharing that 14,502 children in the Mecklenburg County school system have a disability and 11,191 children in the surrounding Counties have a disability.

Bill Allen, a community advocate for Miracle League shared background information on Miracle League and how he became involved. He is working in partnership with Park and Recreation to bring Miracle League to Charlotte. Plans are for Park and Recreation to provide the location and funds for the project will be raised privately. Mr. Allen shared two videos, one from www.miracleleague.com and one from www.miracleleaguecharlotte.com. (**Note:** The history of Miracle League can be found on the website www.miracleleague.com and is included in the February 2010 PRC Minute's Binder, **section 4a**, housed in the Director's office.)

Appointments – Advisory Councils – Applicants

Aquatics: *Motion was made by Commissioner Bailey to appoint **Ginny Woolard** to an unexpired term on the Aquatics Advisory Council, expiring 6/2010 which was seconded by Commissioner McMoore and approved unanimously*

Sr. Citizens: *Motion was made by Commissioner Brisley to appoint **Sylvia Para** to the Sr. Citizen Advisory Council, term expiring 6/2012, which was seconded by Commissioner McMoore and approved unanimously.*

NEPD: In the absence of the Commissioner representing the Northeast Park District, appointments were deferred to the March 9, 2010 PRC meeting.

Director's Report – Jim Garges

Director Jim Garges Reported the following:

- a. **Balance Scorecard – Department Results FY09:** Director Garges asked Mike Dickey, Management Analyst to go over the FY09 Balance Scorecard Department results. Mike explained the new format that was put together this year to publicize our successes and challenges and our performance measures for our Balance Scorecard. The report, provided to each of the Commissioners, list the 15 primary performance measures and goals followed by the score from FY06, FY07, FY08 and FY09 and then comments regarding the FY09 results. (**Note:** This scorecard document is included in the February, 2010 PRC Minutes Binder, **section 8a**, housed in the Director's office.) Mike pointed out that from FY08 to FY09, the Department trended upward positively in 15 out of 15 performance measures. Director Garges also noted that the Department scorecard receives some of the highest ratings of any of the other departments.
- b. **Budget:** Mario Chang, Sr. Fiscal Administrator and Dot Law, Deputy Director, will begin the process of putting together the 5, 10 and 25 percent reduction scenerios. Director Garges said that he would keep the Board posted and send out the service models when complete for discussion at the March PRC meeting. The BOCC will have their retreat at the end of February and it will be mid to late March before hearing something on capital.

Jim stressed the importance of receiving money for land acquisition and for planning, particularly in order to keep planning staff that are bond funded.

PRC Chair Report

Chair Pearce added that the Commissioners should continue to reach out to their County Commissioner, friends and neighbors to raise awareness and support for funding park projects.

Staff Reports and Requests

Commissioner Brisley asked that the Board members please review the new chart of fees and charges. (February 2010 PRC Minute's Binder, **section 11c**, housed in the Director's office.)

Consent Items:

***Motion was made** by Commissioner McMoore to approve all consent items, including the January 12, 2010 PRC minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Bailey and approved unanimously.*

Park Commissioners Reports and Requests

Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.