

**DRAFT**

The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Bette Rae Thomas Recreation Center located at 2921 Tuckaseegee Rd., Charlotte, NC at 6 p.m. on Tuesday evening, September 14, 2010.

**PRC MINUTES  
September 14, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present:**

Rob Brisley , Chair  
Charlie McRee, Executive Secretary  
Beverly Lawston , Vice Chair  
Paul Bailey  
Norman Mitchell  
Joe Pata  
Philip Carey  
Ed Barnhart  
Kendel Bryant  
Elaine Powell  
Doug Burnett

Jim Garges  
Dot Law

**Absent**

Jeff Tarte  
Brenda McMoore (Sick)

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Rob Brisley, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

**Welcome and Introductions:**

**Introduction of Bette Rae Thomas Re creation Center Staff:** Lola Massad, Division Director of Community and Recreation Center Services, welcomed the PRC to the Bette Rae Thomas Recreation Center. Lola shared that the Center was dedicated in 2005 and named for Bette Rae Thomas; an esteemed resident of Enderly Park and longtime coordinator of the Enderly Park Neighborhood Association. The Bette Rae Thomas Recreation Center replaced the Enderly Recreation Center, built in 1948. Terri Stowers, Facility Manager II, introduced staff, who shared information about the programs and activities available at Bette Rae. (**Note:** A brochure was handed out on the programs and activities, which is contained in the PRC Minute's Binder, September, 2010, **Section 1a**, housed in the Director's office.)

Director Garges introduced and welcomed newly appointed PRC Members. Jim said they could not serve on another board that touches as many citizens and does as much for the County as Park and Recreation. He charged them with being the eyes and ears of the Board and the BOCC and to always be advocates for the Department.

- a. **Elaine Powell** – Appointed by the BOCC to a first term, 9/2010 – 6/2013, in the North Region (N1)
- b. **Doug Burnett** – Appointed by the BOCC to a first term, 9/2010 – 6/2013, in the South Region (S1)
- c. **Kendel Bryant** – Appointed by the BOCC to a first term, 9/2010 – 6/2013, in the North Region (N3)

Each Park and Recreation Commission member introduced themselves

### **Proclamations and Awards**

#### **Cooperative Extension Award:**

**Robbie Furr**, Cooperative Extension Director recognized **Susan Buckley**, 4-H Program Assistant, for receiving the NC Association of Extension Program Assistant, Associates and Technicians (NCAEPAAT) award. This is a 1 – 5 year early career award. Susan earned this recognition as a result of her work over the past several years working with the Department, some of which were: streamlining and expanding the 4H summer camp process which resulted in full camps and managing and training 4H volunteers.

**Director Garges** explained for the benefit of new PRC members that the Cooperative Extension and 4H Program are part of the Department, jointly funded by the State and the Department. Jim shared that Robbie also manages the Master Gardner Program. Robbie added that if any of the staff or PRC had a chance to visit the Armory Building they should take notice of the Master Gardner's water wise garden of draught tolerant plants.

**Robbie Furr** also shared that the Cooperative Extension had recently hired **Kristin Davis**, a family consumer science agent working in the area of local foods. She will be working with the Farmer's Markets in Mecklenburg County and providing education on use and preservation of local foods.

### **Public Appearance**

#### **Program Presentation: Nature Preserves and Natural Resources: Benefits of Open Space, Nature Preserve and Parks:**

**Michael Kirschman**, Division Director of Nature Preserves and Natural Resources, shared a video that he put together of facts on the benefits of public open space, nature preserves and parks.

Following the video, questions were answered. It was noted that some of the statistics stated in the video came from the recently completed and yet to be released Trust for Public Land study on the economic value of parks, open space and nature preserves in

Mecklenburg County. The study will be released by the end of the year through some type of press conference or news release.

Commissioner Mitchell asked if Jim would share where Mecklenburg County stands in comparison to other counties across the country. Jim said that when it comes to acres per thousand, Mecklenburg County is very good, but when it comes to per capita spending on parks and recreation, we are not nearly as good. However, the Department has provided a tremendous amount of service to the citizens for the investment.

Jim said he would get copies of the 2008 10-Year Master Plan, the Gold Medal Video and a Department promotion video to everyone at the next PRC meeting. Jim noted that these will be excellent information pieces to use at the advisory Council meetings

### **Appointments –Advisory Councils – Applicants**

**Aquatics:** *Motion was made by Commissioner Brisley to appoint **Natoya Harris** to a first full term on the Aquatics Advisory Council, expiring 6/2013, which was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved unanimously*

**North Region:** *Motion was made by Commissioner Brisley to appoint **Frederick Bond** to an unexpired term on the North Region Advisory Council, expiring 6/2012, which was seconded by Commissioner McRee and approved unanimously. **Motion was made** by Commissioner Pata to appoint **Steven Lawrence** to a first full term on the North Region Advisory Council, expiring 6/2013, which was seconded by Commissioner Carey and approved unanimously.*

**Senior Citizens:** *Motion was made by Commissioner Brisley to appoint **Patricia Love** to an unexpired term on the Senior Citizens Advisory Council, expiring 6/2012, which was seconded by Commissioner Pata and approved unanimously.*

**Therapeutic Recreation:** *Motion was made by Commissioner McRee to appoint **Valarie Reed and Veronica Jones** to first full terms, expiring 6/2013 on the Therapeutic Recreation Advisory Council, which was seconded by Commissioner Pata and approved unanimously.*

### **Director's Report – Jim Garges**

Director Garges reported the following information:

**Summer Camps and Programs:** In spite of the budget cuts, the Department decided to still offer every camp and program advertised in the Get Going Guide and did an outstanding job. Remaining staff stepped up to the plate and worked long and hard hours to provide these summer camps and programs for our citizens.

**Vision and Planning:** The vision remains the same and planning is critical in order to make the best use of the money and resources available. Last year the Department had their highest attendance ever, brought in more revenue than ever, and was recognized nationally for awards never received before. Now the Department will regroup and stick to the vision. We will not go into maintenance mode. With a lot of new projects on the table the Department has taken on new initiatives including the bringing together of 5 or 6 architectural firms to do design work pro-bono. We are utilizing more volunteers

now than ever with a goal of having every park property adopted by volunteers to help maintain our parks.

Advisory Councils: Jim encouraged board members to not only to educate and talk about advocacy with their council members, but to give them something to do; be a park champion, visit a park, check on a greenway, or communicate with a staff person on a particular issue and report back to the council. Jim said council members would have better attendance if they have a job. Jim also offered assistance with tours and presentations for advisory council meetings.

Soccer Advisory Council: Jim asked for the board members to think about and work with Commissioner Pata on how to expand the Soccer Advisory Council into more of an all inclusive athletic council. While soccer is a large program, the Department has many other athletic programs that do not have advisory council representation.

Land Design – LSC GW Pedestrian Bridge Dedication - Jim invited everyone to attend the Brad Davis dedication ceremony, Friday evening, September 17. Brad Davis, who passed away a year ago, was one of the main principals of LandDesign, was a Park and Recreation Commissioner, a major designer of the metropolitan section of Little Sugar Creek Greenway and helped in the organization of Partners for Parks, a non-profit organization for parks and the main fund raising source for the Department.

Partners for Parks Combined Meeting: Look for a date to have a combined meeting of the PRC and Partners for Parks. Possibly November or January, 2011.

Bonds: The Department has authorized but unsold bond money (\$36 million from 2004, \$30 million in land bond money passed in 2007 and \$250 million passed in 2008). While the County is not selling bonds, the Department will continue to look at ways to raise money to build smaller projects, but must be realist about raising money for large Romare Bearden types of projects.

### **PRC Chair Report**

### **Consent Items:**

*Motion was made by Commissioner Pata to approve all consent items, including the August 10, 2010 PRC Minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved unanimously.*

### **Staff Reports and Requests**

### **Park Commissioners Reports and Requests**

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.