



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at Reedy Creek Nature Center located at 2900 Rocky River Road, Charlotte, NC 28215 on November 9, 2010 at 6 p.m.

PRC MINUTES
November 9, 2010

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Beverly Cotton Lawston , Vice Chair
Charlie McRee, Executive Secretary
Norman Mitchell
Philip Carey
Ed Barnhart
Kendel Bryant
Elaine Powell
Doug Burnett
Brenda McMoore

Jim Garges

Absent

Rob Brisley
Paul Bailey
Joe Pata
Jeff Tarte

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Vice - Chair Beverly Lawston, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Welcome and Introductions:

Pepe Chavez, Nature Center Manager, welcomed the Park and Recreation Commission members and shared information on Reedy Creek Nature Center including the impact of the recently built Nature Play Area. Since this play area has been built, attendance is up 30% and it has been featured in the Charlotte Observer and Parent Magazine. Plans are to hopefully duplicate this type of play area in other parks/nature preserves.

Proclamations and Awards

Lori Saylor, Volunteer Coordinator for the Department, was recognized for being a recipient of the Governor's Medallion Award for Volunteer Service for 2010. Only 20 people in the State are recognized for this honor. Lori will be recognized on November

16 at the Governor's Mansion in Raleigh. (**Note:** A News Release with details of this award is included in the PRC Minute's Binder, November 2010, **Section 2a**, housed in the Director's Office.)

Public Appearance

Program Presentation: Community and Recreation Center Services – Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation's Fight on Childhood Obesity;

Lola Massad, Division Director of Community and Recreation Center Services gave a presentation on the Department's role in fighting childhood obesity. Lola shared how access to recreation facilities, access to recreation programs and the provision of education and awareness of benefits can make a significant impact on this growing problem. The Department is diligent in making sure program providers incorporate healthy eating and activity into all programs. (**NOTE:** For details and statistics, please refer to the PowerPoint presentation in the November PRC Minutes Binder, **Section 4a**, housed in the Director's office.)

Appointments –Advisory Councils – Applicants

- a. **Aquatics:** In the absence of the PRC liaison for Aquatics, appointments to the Aquatics Advisory Council were deferred to the January, 2011 PRC meeting.
- b. **South Region:** Commissioner Barnhart deferred appointments to the South Region to the January, 2011 PRC meeting.
- c. **North Region:** ***Motion was made** by Commissioner Kendel to appoint **Mike Dryman, Aleta Batts-Horton and Al Posadas** to expired terms **11/2010 – 6/2013**, which was seconded by Commissioner Powell and approved unanimously.*
- d. **Stewardship:** ***Motion was made** by Commissioner Powell to appoint **Tracy Allen** to an unexpired term, **11/2010 – 6/2011**, which was seconded by Commissioner McRee and approved unanimously.*

Director's Report – Jim Garges

4-Mile Creek Greenway: Director Garges gave an update on the November 8, 2010 Third Public Meeting regarding the proposed parking lot for Four Mile Creek Greenway at Rea Road and Bevington Place. There is a serious need for parking for the greenway users and the Department is currently going through the rezoning process to add up to 40 parking spaces at Rea Road and Bevington Place. There will be a City Council hearing regarding the rezoning on December 20, 2010 but the Council will not make a final decision until January 18, 2011. Main concerns from the citizens were traffic issues and funding. Jim recognized Commissioner Barnhart for the excellent job he did managing this meeting and reminded all of the Commissioners of how important it is to be aware of pending conflicts. He encouraged everyone to seek support from staff and from him at anytime. (**Note:** Details from this meeting are in the minutes from the public meeting and have been added to the November PRC Minute's Binder, **Section 8a**, housed in the Director's office.)

Center City 2020 Vision Plan Community Workshop #3: Director Garges said he would be attending this public meeting to hear the consultants present the DRAFT plan recommendations on the development of the urban core. This plan is important to the Department to verify and reaffirm the Department's 2008 Master Plan for Recreation and Facilities in the Region.

Presentation of "The Economic Benefits of the Park and Recreation System of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina": Director Garges reminded the board of the December 14, 2010 BOCC Budget Public Policy Meeting at which the above study will be presented by Peter Harnik. All Board members received a copy of the study and were encouraged to attend. The meeting will be at 3 p.m. in room 267 of the Government Center.

PRC Chair Report

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Commissioner Barnhart to approve all consent items, including the October 12, 2010 PRC Minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner McRee and approved unanimously.

(NOTE: RE Consent Item #'s 11b and 11c: The most critical changes in the revised BOCC Policy of Procedures for Advisory Board Appointments are that Advisory Council Members must attend 75% of all regular, special and assigned meetings from the beginning of one's term until the end of that calendar year, with no excused absences and that regardless of the length of the first term of appointment, advisory council members (PRC) shall only serve two consecutive terms. Members are required to be off the board for 1 year before being eligible to be appointed again by the BOCC.

Staff Reports and Requests

13 - Loblolly Pine Management: Chris Matthews, Natural Resources Manager, and Christa Rogers, Natural Resources Coordinator/Supervisor, presented a management plan for endorsement by the PRC to timber loblolly pine Trees at Cowan's Ford, Latta Plantation, Rural Hill and Haymarket Nature Preserves. After sharing information on the mission and primary responsibilities of the Natural Resources Section, Chris and Christa explained the timber management plan for harvesting approximately 265 acres of accessible planted loblolly pine. Hardwoods will not be cut and shortleaf pines will be planted in the place of loblolly. The sale of the timber should produce \$100K to \$150 K in revenue and would be deposited into a multi-year account to fund reforestation and other natural community management.

After questions and discussion the following motion was made.

Motion was made by Commissioner Norman Mitchell for the Park and Recreation Commission to endorse the proposed plan for the management of loblolly pine plantations at Cowan's Ford, Latta Plantation, Rural Hill, and Haymarket Nature Preserves with the condition that revenues generated from the sale of the timber are used exclusively for the restoration and management of natural communities. Revenues will be used to ensure sites are fully restored and invasive species do not become established with the ultimate goal of producing natural communities that protect native species and preserve natural

ecological processes, which was seconded by Commissioner McMoore and approved unanimously.

(**Note:** A copy of the PowerPoint presentation covering the details of this plan is included in the November PRC Minute's Binder, **Section 13**, housed in the Director's office.)

Park Commissioners Reports and Requests

Commissioner McMoore expressed concerns of engaging council members on the Central Advisory Council. Suggestions were made and included the following:

- Assign certain parks to members and have them report at the Advisory Council Meeting
- Have members assist with volunteer projects in their areas
- Arrange park tours and bike tours
- Have members responsible for certain parts of the meeting process
- Engage in recruitment
- Plan to share portions of the Master Plan or the Economic Impact Study at meetings
- Invite staff to meetings and take advantage of their expertise

Director Garges agreed that Advisory Council members need to be involved in order to make the meetings meaningful and to improve attendance. Everyone was encouraged to ask staff to help facilitate meetings.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.