

**Recreation and Parks Advisory Board
Online WebEx Meeting
June 23, 2022 – Work Session
Board Meeting Minutes**

PRESENT

Board Members: Jack Thirolf, Kirsten Kaplan, Tom Lynch, Chip Boylan
Kathleen Linehan, Dirk Whatley
Staff: Tim Chesnutt, Karla Sheehi
Absent: Elisabeth Fischer, Maryanne Kearns
Councilmember: Councilman Pierzchala

Meeting commencement: 7:02 pm

Re: Approval of April Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Re: Guest Forum

No guests in attendance

Re: Tree Appeal

The City of Rockville's Attorney discovered that there are no legal grounds for anyone within the city to hear a tree appeal. The only body who has the legal authority to hear appeals is the DNR which is the State Department of Natural Resources. Therefore, going forward the city Forester will make the determination on tree appeals submitted by City of Rockville tree appeals. This board will no longer hear tree appeals.

Chip expressed that the current tree appeal is not citizen friendly. Tree appeals presented to the board have been intended for the board's support, as the citizen has a strong reason to appeal the Forester's decision. Jack requested for the opportunity to have a discussion with the City Attorney on this matter. The city has taken the responsibility of enforcing the state law, and it would be good to discuss and understand the city's position in the overall process and authority given to the City Forester. The board took a vote, in which all six members in attendance wish to discuss with one of our city attorney's their interest to retain or establish the authority to have a voice in the tree appeal process – allowing the board to continue hearing tree appeals. Tim will arrange for a city attorney to attend the July 28 meeting.

Re: Operating Budget

The overarching direction for our Operating Budget are the Mayor & Council priorities. At our department level it is our Strategic Master Plan and is our roadmap to our future. All services and activities provided by our department need to be consistent with our values.

The operating budget is a business plan for the fiscal year which runs from July 1 through June 30. The approach is an incremental budget starting with a base amount with incremental amounts being added or subtracted, to include things such as minimum wage, utility costs, salary increases. Staff, who manage the department cost centers then provide cost/revenue updates to the budget such as supplies, materials, equipment replacement. Enhancements, which are new programs, contracts, activities, events, contract increases are also submitted by staff. Budgets are developed by division cost centers and are combined to form the department budget which is presented to the City Manager. The City Manager's budget usually goes to the M&C in late fall/early winter. M&C adopt the budget in May.

R&P Advisory Board Role and Opportunities:

-Able to influence the Department budget requests and submissions through advocacy up until the time it is submitted to the City Manager

-Able to influence the M&C budget decisions through advocacy up until the time that the budget is adopted

Kirsten suggests the board incorporate into the meeting schedule engaging in budget process to coincide with the department's seasonal budget schedule. Tim advised that discussions begin in September so October will be a good time to hold a preliminary discussion – for both Operating and Capital Budget.

Kathleen suggested establishing a new subcommittee to assist leading the effort of gathering figures and data for the board to review/discuss in preparation for the seasonal budget meetings.

Tim advised that for October meeting, R&P will prepare data to share with the board to review.

Re: RedGate Advocacy Position

The following survey results for the board's position on the RedGate amenities, were shared:

- Previous agreement supporting
 - Arboretum throughout the park
- 75% or more support completion within the first 0-3 years:
 - Riparian Plantings
 - Open Lawns
 - System of Trails
 - Amphitheatre with No Fixed Seating
 - Rectangular Fields (with No Lights)
 - Dog Park
- 75% or more support, but are divided between completion in 0-3 years or 4+ years:
 - Meadows
 - Nature-based playground
 - Additional entrance from 6 Taft Court
 - Some pervious paved parking
 - Picnic Pavilions
 - Community Gardens
 - Multigenerational Community Center
 - Bridge Connection with John Hayes Forest Park (Civic Center Park)
 - Trail Connection with Rock Creek Park Trail

It's important for the board to relay what it supports and recommends in the short term (0-3) years as well as the long term (4+years) with particular emphasis on amenities recommended that were not on the concept plan but of importance. Kirsten will take the survey results, add a narrative and will share with the board for feedback. The final memo will be presented by Kirsten at the July 18, 2022, M&C meeting.

**Re: HDC (Historic District Commission)
as it relates KFF PAM**

Chip shared that after having attended June's HDC meeting, he would like to commend Mayor and Counsel for coming up with a method to obtain a much-needed Homestead infrastructure improvement plan and having an external entity provide the funding. At the same time, Chip expressed his disappointment with the not having been informed about this initiative, as the HDC was searching for information that Chip by way of this board could have provided.

With the HDC meeting July 21st, Chip is volunteering to attend the meeting to express the support of the Advisory Board to proceed with the plan for the parking lot. The board expressed support of Chip's attendance to present at their July 21 meeting, on behalf of R&P Advisory Board.

Re: Board Member Onboarding

Chip would like to improve the onboarding process to begin with when an applicant submits their application. The board feels that sharing information on the board's goals and who they are in a more formal way, would be helpful. Kirsten agreed that the board will collectively work on formalizing an onboarding process.

Re: Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm

The next meeting: July 28, 2022, at 7:00 pm (virtual)