

**Recreation and Parks Advisory Board  
Online WebEx Meeting  
February 24, 2022  
Board Meeting Minutes**

**PRESENT**

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

**Meeting commencement:** 7:00 pm

**Re: Approval of January Minutes**

The minutes were approved as presented.

**Re: Guest Forum**

No guests in attendance

**Re: Council Report - Councilman Mark Pierzchala**

Mayor and Council had a robust discussion on the RedGate Park topic during ther. There has been a lot of community engagement based on the receipt of emails for a park with amenities and then there were those who want to keep RedGate a passive park.

**Re: Staff Reports**

**Vacancies Filled**

Charles Reed was selected to fill the Park Services Manager Position. Charles previously worked for the Parks and Facilities Division. Most recently he has been the Parks Maintenance Manager in Gaithersburg.

Kelly Brown was hired as the new Supervisor at Thomas Farm Community Center. Kelly has 30+ years of recreation and parks experience. For 15 years, she served the Montgomery County Department of Recreation

**Glenview Mansion Speaker Series**

The Peerless Rockville and the Glenview Mansion Speaker Series presents its March offering at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre. This is a free event.

**Program Registration**

Program registrations for Spring begin begins March 1<sup>st</sup> for Senior Programs, March 3<sup>rd</sup> for all recreation programs. Our busiest registration season, which is our Summer Camps begins March 10.

**Budget Public Hearings**

Community members will have the opportunity to speak and represent R&P budget initiatives on the following dates; March 7, March 21, April 4

**City Hall Re-Opening**

The re-opening of City Hall has been scheduled for Monday, March 28.

**Terrific Kids Bike Program**

This year we have 77 bikes to distribute to 77 kids. Planning is underway for the meeting in order to efficiently distribute certificates and bikes to this large of a group.

**Reimagining RedGate**

The consultant and project team presented three concepts to Mayor and Council at the February 7 meeting. Each concept included an amphitheater but with a different scope, size and style.

The message received from Mayor and Council they would like the park to be primarily passive, with trails and extensive landscaping, picnic tables and community gardens. The clubhouse would be renovated with a design providing access to the restrooms from outside while keeping in mind to keep the entire building safe. We will be looking to the consultant to apply these changes to these concepts and then going out to the community and boards and commissions for input. We are looking at June 6 as the next date to present the revised concepts to Mayor and Council.

Chip Boylan commented that he viewed the February 7 meeting and has a lot of questions as to how the direction determined is going from three concepts to one concept to be shared with the community. Therefore, Kirsten suggested a separate meeting for the board to further review and discuss the RedGate topic and give board members time to review the February 7 meeting. Karla Sheehi will follow up some dates to determine the dates that works for majority and will schedule and publish the meeting. Karla will also share the February 7 Mayor and Council meeting.

### **Re: Subcommittee Reports**

**a) Glenview Mansion (Tom & Dirk)**

Nothing new to report.

**b) Swim & Fitness Center (Jack)**

A second youth member applied to the swim center committee. Very impressive. One is a RM HS student and one from Rockville HS. It was discussed that both are good contributors, and the committee would like to create a role for the second applicant. The committee started to incorporate the attendance of a guest staff member to speak about their role at the RSFC, their experience and share their perspective on what they feel works well at the center.

Jack wanted to know if he needs to get the board's approval. The Advisory Board does not get involved in the way the Swim Center subcommittee is run. Nonetheless, Jack wanted to advise this board of what this approach that the approach being taken.

Chip made the motion: That the R&P Advisory Board encourage the RSFC subcommittee take appropriate measures to expand participation needed to continue to fill their role to help the swim center drive and grow. Kathleen made the second motion, followed by the consensus from board members in attendance. Motion was approved.

Swim lessons have ramped up and will continue to ramp up.

A discussion was tabled about the County Council's vaccination documentation requirements at public facilities like the swim center. As well as a discussion on the city level mask mandate and ensuring compliance.

The committee will also have some budget points to present to Mayor and Council at the upcoming budget hearings. This will be mostly around staff retention.

The topic of putting a bubble over the lower outdoor pool.

**c) Recreation and Parks Foundation (Chip)**

The foundation continues to work with students at Maryland University to help plan and improve our social media.

**d) Arts**

***Gateway Art Project (Jonathan):***

No new update.

***Swim Center Art Project (Jack):***

No new update.

***Skate Park Art Project (Jonathan):***

A call went out to local art groups and received four bids. Three of the bids will be invited back for consideration. Next steps will be to invite the three groups for a site visit to assess the space to complete their proposals. Two were murals and one a sculpture. or the Skat Park art Project.

- e) **RedGate Park (Kirsten)**  
Covered in the Staff Report discussion

### **Re: Old Business/New Business**

#### **New Business**

- Old Business
  - Street tree appeals.  
Chip wanted to point out that, while there will be a more in-depth discussion on this once the board has had the opportunity to read the documentation shared, based on the documentation shared by the Parks Division, its important for the board to understand city has a strong relationship with the state and that the state regulations are the minimum standard.  
As part of the process review, it's important to understand and clarify the board's role. Understanding what the city's legal rationale is for removing a tree would also be helpful to incorporate this into the review process and checklist the board wants to develop.  
Maryann suggested looking at templates used at other jurisdictions for some guidance. Kirsten suggested that maybe someone on the board may want to spearhead the tree appeal initiative and establish a subcommittee to focus on this.
- Old Business
  - Staff Breakfast at Senor Center  
Kirsten attended the drive thru breakfast put on by Tim's Leadership team and wanted to extend kudos to the department for being so cohesive. It was very impressive how warm and energetic it felt – something to be proud of.
- New Business
  - Maryland Recreation and Parks Association  
Maryland has a state level recreation and parks association. Our Senior Center Facility Manager, Terri Hilton has been representing Maryland as the President and her term ends April 5<sup>th</sup>. This has been a challenging term for Terri with the pandemic and running the Senior Center, but she did an outstanding job representing. Please extend a congratulations if you get the opportunity.

### **Re: Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm

**The next meeting:** March 24,2022 at 7:00 pm via WebEx