

**City of Fairfax
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)**

**MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, July 14, 2011
Senior Center at Green Acres
Joint Meeting with the City of Fairfax Senior Center**

PRAB Members Present

Joe Harmon Zinta Rodgers-Rickert
Esther Nasjleti Douglas Stewart
Brian Knapp Toby Sorensen
Paul Cunningham Don Lederer
Jane Albro Harry Wilbur
Gary Sidor

PRAB Members Absent

Mace Carpenter
Michael Slawski

Parks and Recreation Staff

Michael McCarty, Director
Karen Bixler, Senior Center Director

Guests

Frank Kelly, Senior Center Council Chair
Senior Center Members
 Gerri Buraker Ed Reinsel
 Gail Wade Dick Sher
David Bauer

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Joe Harmon at 7:00 p.m.

2. Senior Center Presentation

Frank Kelly presented an overview of the Senior Center and its activities – the Center currently has 1,000 members. Programs include a military history class. Their fund raising efforts have made \$5,000 over the past few years, Sadly, Karen Bixler, who for 21 years has managed and been instrumental in the growth and success of the Senior Center, will be retiring in November of this year. She will be missed! Frank also said that needs for the Center include the following:

- *A bus for Senior Center trips
- *Paving and lining the parking areas
- *Additional parking spaces – especially handicapped spaces
- *Ceiling fans – especially in the exercise room
- *Replacement of windows and blinds
- *Evaluation of the Green Acres electrical system
- *Refurbishment of the gym floor

Paul Cunningham asked if any of the Senior Center's desired CIP items have been formally suggested to PRAB or Public Works. Frank said they have not.

Harry Wilbur asked, and Mike McCarty responded that it would be best, generally, for the Center to petition Public Works for items inside the building and PRAB for outside, parks and rec-related items.

Brian Knapp suggested that the Senior Center prioritize their items and coordinate them with PRAB and to be pro-active in helping PRAB petition City Council for such items. Paul cautioned that the City budget is extremely tight but that with 1,000 members, the Senior Center can be a significant voice in budget deliberations.

David Bauer suggested other initiatives for the Senior Center.

- *Work toward certification by the National Institute of Senior Centers and see if GMU could furnish interns to assist.
- *Work to attract a wide range of ethnic groups.

3. City Parks and Rec National Gold Medal Competition Video

Mike McCarty showed the new video to be presented at the National Convention in Atlanta, Oct. 31 – Nov. 4, 2011. The City is again a Gold Medal finalist, as it was in 2010. The video was enthusiastically received by the meeting attendees.

After thanking and complimenting the Senior Center, PRAB proceeded with its regular business meeting

4. Matters of the Officers

Joe Harmon mentioned the following:

- *Work on the new bridge (our CIP item) is beginning. (See the current Staff PRAB report).
- *Fairfax Co. and D.O.T. are beginning development of a bicycle master plan and the Fairfax City bike group is advising.
- *Joe encouraged participation in the Legacy for Fairfax golf tournament at the Army-Navy CC, Mon., Aug. 29, 2011. It would be great if there could be a PRAB foursome

5. Park Stewards Report

Brian Knapp reported on two parks.

Thaiss

- A. Bleachers, fencing, and dugouts need refurbishing
- B. Significant erosion after heavy rains
- C. He hopes that the area between the pavilion and parking lot can be paved with asphalt
- D. The sign needs to be repositioned for better visibility

Willcoxon

- A. Signage is not adequate

- B. Bad smell from the City property yard (probably sewage)
- C. Dark and muddy
- D. A refuge for the homeless
- E. General comments: More of a trail than a park. For all its problems it's an important connection to other trails

6. Legacy Program Update

Mike McCarty said there are no new funds to report

7. Trails Subcommittee Update

Esther reported that an extensive trails survey is underway to result in recommendations for improving mapping and G.I.S.

8. Dog Park Subcommittee Update

Zinta had no new information. Brian asked where is the closest dog park to the City. It was thought to be the one at Nutley St. and Blake Lane.

Note: Brian reminded us that subcommittees are to provide written minutes of their activities to share with the full PRAB membership.

9. Election of Officers

Joe Harmon, Chair, and Esther Nasjleti, Vice Chair, were re-elected by acclamation

Note: Mike McCarty announced that Parks and Rec staff members will attend PRAB meetings on a rotational basis and will serve as secretary to take and distribute meeting minutes

10. Staff Report

Mike McCarty reported on the following:

- *Staff is re-evaluating the pricing policies for the City's parks and rec facilities.
- *Staff is studying policies for road races and the closing of North St. for events.
- *The bridge construction, mentioned earlier by Joe, is scheduled to be completed by this Labor Day.
- *Staff has the private funding from Lexus which is specified by them for new play equipment for Van Dyck Park. Staff will seek input from PRAB for what types of equipment to acquire.

Brian asked if PRAB will receive advance notice IF the City has to close a parks and rec facility.

Joe reported that the Mayor has agreed to have a column in "Leisure Times".

11. Commission on the Arts Update

Harry hopes the City can expedite their review of the COA's Public Art Policy guidelines so the Commission can move forward with recommendations for a

piece of public art, acceptable to Council, for the Sherwood Center Green.

12. Community Appearance Committee

Don Lederer said the Committee is pushing the "Adopt-A-Spot" program.

13. Fairfax Police Youth Club Update

Gary Sidor had nothing new to report

14. Northern Va. Regional Park Authority Update

Brian reported on the following:

- *NVRPA won an award at the City's July 4 parade
- *NVRPA will dedicate a new jungle gym at Cameron Run Park.

15. Planning Commission Update

Paul Cunningham said the Commission is working hard on updating the City's Comprehensive Plan and there are some "hiccups".

16. School Board Update

Toby Sorensen reported on the following:

- *She has been re-appointed as the School Board's representative to PRAB.
- *Roofing has had to be replaced at Fairfax High School.

17. Senior Center Update

Jane Albro had nothing further to report.

18. Approval of the June 9, 2011 Minutes

After a few typos were corrected, the minutes were approved as amended.

19. Matters of the Members

Brian mentioned the recent attack in Van Dyck Park and hoped this didn't indicate a trend. Mike McCarty didn't think so.

20. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

The next meeting will be Thursday, September 8, 2011. Location TBA