

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting  
Monday, April 20, 2015  
Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center

The regular monthly meeting of the Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation Commission was held on Monday, April 20, 2015 at the Gilkerson Community Activities Center. The following commission members were present: D.D. Dawson, Deanna Reed, Brent Holsinger, John Marr, Joe Riley, Ritchie Vaughan, and Anthony Hill. Also present were Lee Foerster and David Wigginton. Absent was Abe Shearer.

1. Welcome – D.D. Dawson opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. She introduced and welcomed our new commission member Deanna Reed.
2. Approval of the February minutes – Joe Riley motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Anthony Hill. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.
3. Re-opening of Parks April 15 – Lee reported that city parks are open from April 15 through November 1 – Riven Rock opens May 15. Water must be turned on and checked for leaks in toilets, bathrooms cleaned, shelters swept and picnic tables put back in place, and electricity must be reconnected. The open and closing dates have proven to be good considering freezing temperatures and the risk of frozen pipes. Picnic shelter reservations begin April 15 as well. Porta-potty's are placed at Hillandale and Purcell during the winter months. They are \$70 per month and subject to vandalism.
4. Superintendent of Parks Vacancy – Ted Pelikan has taken disability retirement. We hope to advertise for the vacancy very soon and complete the process in about 6 weeks. We have good leadership in the parks division and should be fine until the position is filled. Jeremy Harold will be the acting superintendent and Matt Muterspaugh will be the acting general supervisor until positions are filled.
5. Westover Pool Diving Board – The pool supervisor brought to our attention issues with the diving board and support structure. The support concrete that holds the diving board is cracking. We have received permission to use CDBG funds that were left over from other projects to put towards this diving board project. The board has been order and hopefully can be installed in May. A substantial portion of concrete will have to be removed and re-poured for the new diving board. The cost of the diving board and support structure platform will cost about \$20,000. The basis for the high price tag is that the support structure for the diving board is made of stainless steel and the length of the diving board requires a higher cost for shipping. The original board is what is being replaced and was installed in 1971.
6. Shrubbery Fire / New Mulch Ordinance – Fire Chief Shifflett has asked for a new ordinance regarding mulch and its proximity to buildings around the city. The ordinance states: The purpose of this proposed ordinance is to provide a buffer zone between combustible landscaping mulch and combustible siding on certain types of buildings, most notably multiple family dwellings. The proposed ordinance would not apply to single family dwellings unless used as child care or adult care facilities. Combustible landscape cover material (mulch) shall not be placed within 18 inches of buildings with combustible siding, including, but not limited to, vinyl siding, wood siding, or Masonite. The 18 inch space between the edge of the mulch and the structure shall be filled with a non-combustible material such as stone or gravel.

We experienced shrubbery/mulch fire on Monday, March 30 around the outside of the swimming pool dome near the blower and generator. The fire consumed 18 arborvitae bushes. We were able to knock down most of the flames until Harrisonburg Fire Department arrived to fully extinguish the mulch fire.

7. LWCF Grant Application Results – We applied for a \$300,000 grant to build additional soccer fields at Smithland Road. We had received LWCF funds to help construct the Blue Stone Trail at Purcell a couple years ago. We

received notification last week that we were not successful in having our grant request go further in the process. With the funds that the city has given us, we will be able to at least begin the construction of another field.

8. Smithland Road Dog Park – The dog park is getting a tremendous amount of use by not only city residents but also by JMU students and Rockingham county residents, even out of state users. About 2 weeks ago, some issues with dog attacks on other dogs and some owners getting bitten lead us to begin to randomly put a park attendant out there to check for proper registration and paperwork for the dogs. With help from the animal control warden and city police department, we were able to have the dog and its owner removed from the park by issuing a no trespassing notice. There is also the belief that underage children are in the park with their dogs.

9. Odds & Ends from Director –

New LED parking lot lights have been installed on both parking lots at Westover. Also, new motion sensor switches and new thermostats have been installed inside the Activities Center to save energy in the building.

Public Works is helping us identify storm water management areas of concern and storm water runoff areas that need attention.

We have put in for a CDBG application for renovating the Price Rotary Senior Building. We will get an architect to come up with plans for updating the facility. The parking lot is also an issue being too steep and not handicap compliant.

The new restaurant, Processo's is open at Heritage Oaks and apparently doing well for only being open a little over a month. They are trying to appeal to golfers and non golfers and offer pick up, takeout and delivery.

Blacks Run Clean up went well on April 11. There were about 400 volunteers that picked up approximately 3.5 tons of trash out of the stream

The football clinic held at Smithland Road on Saturday was a success. About 75 kids signed up and there were coaches, volunteers, some of the HHS football team, parents all helping to make the event successful. The clinic helped teach fundamental techniques to the kids.

10. Questions, comments from Commissioners – there was discussion as to having a field trip for the May meeting. Commissioners wanted to see the storm water areas, how we have met the mulch ordinance, visit the dog park and Smithland Road soccer fields and possibly Ramblewood
11. Adjourn – John Marr motioned for adjournment, seconded by Anthony Hill – meeting adjourned 7:50 pm.