

**Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting**  
**March 21, 2016**  
**Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center**

The regular monthly meeting of the Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation Commission was held on Monday, March 21, 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Community Activities Center. Chair D. D. Dawson called the meeting to order with the following commission members present: Abe Shearer, John Marr, Deanna Reed, Chris Pipkins, Joseph Riley and Ritchie Vaughan. Also present were Lee Foerster, David Wigginton, Lynn Hoy and Connie Lawson from Parks & Recreation. Absent was commission member: Brent Holsinger. Observing the meeting were two Spotswood High School students and two citizens.

1. Chair D. D. Dawson called meeting to order.
2. Approval of the February minutes – John Marr motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Chris Pipkins. Then minutes were approved by unanimous vote.
3. Fifty and Wiser – Lynn Hoy presented. Discussed the changes made to the program over the past two years to include more social activities for seniors in the area. Since moving to the Price Rotary Senior Center attendance for many activities has quadrupled. A grant has also been acquired for improvements to the Senior Center. Class and social activities for the program were discussed and include everything from Weight Room Circuit Training, Pickleball, Painting, AARP Driver Safety, Book Club and the Fifty and Wiser Social Club.
4. Discussion of Westover Park Tree Removal proposal- Lee Foerster discussed the problems caused by the current trees at Westover Park. Overgrowth of Red Cedars and Green Ash trees have caused erosion of the top soil due to lack of ground cover. Also the Ash trees are threatened with the Emerald Ash Borer, which is moving closer to our area. Proposal written by Jeremy Harold, the Park Superintendent, describes the need to thin out the Cedars and Ash trees and to plant grass to stop the soil erosion. Then new Red Buds, Oaks and Maples will be planted to help diversify the environment with more appropriate species. The tree cutting will hopefully start within the next couple weeks, at Shelters 2 and 3, with planting of grass then new trees to follow. Plan will stay within the current budget with hopes for future grants from the Forest Service. Downed trees will be ground into mulch to be used in the Parks. Entire plan will take approximately 10 years to complete. Proposal was approved by the Tree Policy Board which regulates the planting and removal of all trees and shrubs on public property.
5. Spring opening of park facilities-Lee Foerster discussed the opening of the park facilities set for April 15, 2016. Bathrooms and fountains that were winterized to prevent pipe breakage need to have water turned on and be cleaned for the new season. Facilities usually close end of October, some were left open longer due to warmer weather resulting in pipe breakage at A Dream Come True Playground's bathroom, repairs have been made. Several bathrooms, A Dream Come True Playground, Kid's Castle and Shelter #1 at Hillandale, have been opened earlier due to warmer weather and public demand.

6. Comments and Questions-David Wigginton discussed the Gymnastics Program suspension. The CAC has been requesting more space for the influx of older and middle school children who are using the gymnasium. To accommodate this need the Gymnastics program, which uses the gymnasium on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, has been suspended. A survey was distributed to the gymnastic parents asking about later times, but was met with disapproval. The Simms Center and the Armory were looked at as alternative sites for gymnastics but due to lack of storage space for the equipment and time constraints these locations were dismissed. The program is suspended until a possible solution can be found.
  - David Wigginton announced that Heritage Oaks has received 3 proposals for food and beverage service. They will be reviewing the proposals and conducting interviews soon. A decision should be made before the next meeting.
  - Ritchie Vaughan brought up that the city webpage states that the parks are reviewing the Master Plan. This was taken care of in 2013. City webpage needs to be updated.
7. Meeting Adjourned.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 18, 2016 at 7:00pm  
At the Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activity Center**