

**Recreation and Park Advisory Board  
Virtual Meeting via WebEx  
April 24, 2025  
Board Meeting Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Board Members: Jack Thirolf (chair), Elizabeth Fischer, Tom Lynch  
Chip Boylan, Natalie Vankos, Ken Scales, Dirk Whatley  
Absent: Kirsten Kaplan  
Staff: Karla Sheehi  
Council Liaison: Councilmember Adam Van Grack

**Meeting commencement:** 7:01

**Re: Approval of March Minutes**

The March minutes were approved as presented.

**Re: Guest Forum**

No guests are in attendance.

**Re: Council Report**

Thank you to everyone in Recreation & Parks who helped with the Taft Center transition! Reminder to all that, effective Monday, April 28, Recreation & Parks staff who previously worked at City Hall will be moving to 6 Taft Court in Rockville. The move will consolidate many recreation and parks staff at one location. The office will be open to the public from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Phone numbers will remain the same: 240-314-8620. The nearest bus stop is located at the corner of Gude Drive and Taft Court on bus #59.

April 23, 2025, the State the Board of Public Works approved **\$2 million in Program Open Space funding** for Red Gate Park. Thank you to all who worked on helping us get this funding!

**Re: Staff Reports**

- **Rec & Parks Move to 6 Taft Court**  
Rec & Parks staff will begin moving into the 6 Taft Ct. building on Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. The staff at the Rothgeb Maintenance facility will be moved on Friday. Rec & Parks staff currently at City Hall will begin moving Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. IT will have all hands-on deck to begin the network transition from Rothgeb to 6 Taft to ensure the network and all new technology are up and running by the weekend.
- **Kids to Parks Day**  
May 17, 2025, will be highlighted as **Kids to Parks Day** and celebrated at Croydon Creek Nature Center with the 24th annual Spring Festival family event from 10 a.m.-noon. Staff encourages families to spend the day outdoors exploring one of Rockville's many parks! This event is for all ages, at no cost, and registration is not required.
- **King Farm Farmstead Project Update**

- The next round of community engagement meetings has been scheduled for May 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and June 3<sup>rd</sup>. We invite the Recreation and Park Advisory Board to attend one of these upcoming meetings to share your thoughts on program concept recommendations that will be based on the community's initial feedback during the visioning sessions held in February, March, and April.
- May 28<sup>th</sup> at Saddle Ridge Community Center at King Farm
- May 29<sup>th</sup> at Glenview Mansion
- June 3<sup>rd</sup> will be a virtual meeting
- Board Members and the community can RSVP for these opportunities via the Engage Rockville website: <https://engagerockville.com/kingfarm>
- **Outdoor Recreation Pool Renovations**  
As Jack had mentioned during last month's meeting, the outdoor pool project had experienced some delays. An update will be provided to the community by May 1<sup>st</sup> regarding opening status for the **new outdoor recreation pool by Adam**. The outdoor fitness pool will open for Memorial Day Weekend.
- **Look out for Adopt a Duck Fundraising opportunities at City Events** for this year's Rockville Duck Derby. Karla will share the flyer for the upcoming Bon Chon fundraiser, and future opportunities for duck adoptions are City Events.
- **Senior Center Annual House and Plant sale**  
Rockville Senior Centers' greenhouse is run by Rockville Seniors Inc. volunteers, and they are **hosting their annual House and Plant sale on Saturday, April 26, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** There will be a diverse selection of houseplants, herbs, and vegetables for sale.
- **Boards & Commissions Annual Report**  
A reminder that the Rec & Parks Advisory Board annual report is due to the City Clerk's office by June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- **May and June board meetings**  
Discussed with the board that staff is okay with holding our May meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> as it will be virtual and will not interfere with preparations for Home Town Holiday. The board agreed to proceed with the May 22<sup>nd</sup> date.  
Our June meeting/Park Tour will begin at Taft Ct.  
I have reached out to Steve to recommend 3 parks for the board to Tour and what recent highlights we want to share with the board.

### **Re: Subcommittee Reports**

**a) Swim & Fitness Center (Ken)**

Ken attended the committee meeting at the Swim Center, while management does not want to quote a specific date for the completion of the outdoor recreation pool, but it will not make the Memorial Day opening. Nonetheless, the contractors working very hard to get everything into place.

The Swim Center has been so busy doing Lifeguard Certifications. The Swim Center just held an Open House for summer help, and they should not have any issues staffing for the pool.

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

The Duck Derby is on for July 18<sup>th</sup>. The Foundation is seeking sponsors and ducks are available for adoption. You can adopt as many ducks as you'd like on the website: [www.rockvilleduckderby.com](http://www.rockvilleduckderby.com) or on the Foundation website <https://www.rpf.org>

The Foundation will be manning a beverage booth at Hometown Holidays from 12 noon to 6pm, and will be looking for volunteers to assist for a couple of hours. Chip will send something out about volunteering.

c) **Arts**

- **College Gardens (Natalie):** City staff are presenting the art project to Mayor and Council this coming Monday. If approved, staff will be planning for an early June installation.
- **Twinbrook Annex Mural (Elizabeth)**  
No new updates.
- **Swim & Fitness Center (Jack)**  
The pool project needs to be completed before we can begin planning for the artwork.  
**RedGate – (Kirsten/Tara)**  
**Red Gate Park Master Plan design project**  
Procurement continues working on refining the final draft.

**Old Business/ New Business**

**New Business**

**\$2 million in Program Open Space funding for Red Gate Park**

Jack brought back up the councilmember's comment about the board having the opportunity to weigh in on the Federal Funding awarded to the city for Program Open Space, with serious and important restrictions related to the use.

Jack wanted to get the board's input, but wanted to have a more in-depth conversation with Kirsten present.

Chip expressed that the board may not be able to come to a consensus tonight. As it relates to RedGate, some wanted further development in the park, while others do not.

**Tiffany** shared that the point of a Park Service Fund is to protect its ECO system. So the development restriction of 100-plus years would not necessarily apply to RedGate. RedGate used to be a Golf Course, so this was already a developed area. So this fund may not be suited for RedGate.

**Tom** agrees with everyone's POV, this fund is meant for mangroves and the Everglades. If we tried to come to a consensus, we could likely only decide for the next ten years.

**Ken** also agreed, stating that 1.5 million dollars is not worth losing control of city parkland to the National Park Service.

**Chip** agreed with everyone, but also agreed with Jack that Kirsten needs to weigh in on this discussion.

Jack would like to discuss this further at next month's meeting, to allow for Kirsten, who is not present this evening, to weigh in.

**Re: Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm

**The next meeting:** May 22, 2025, at 7:00 PM (virtual)