

CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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AGENDA

PARKS CAPITAL COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 19, 2009, 12:15 PM
COG Building – Forum Room

1. CALL TO ORDER Mr. Klees will convene the meeting

College Township	Dan Klees, Chair
State College Borough	James Rosenberger, Vice-Chair
Harris Township	Cliff Warner
Ferguson Township	Richard Mascolo
Patton Township	Jeff Luck
Penn State University	Dan Sieminski
Centre Reg. Rec. Authority	Sue Mascolo (for Roy Harpster) non-voting

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Members of the public are invited to comment on any items not already on the agenda (three minutes per person time limit, please). Comments relating to specific items on the agenda should be deferred until that point in the meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY

The committee last met on Aug. 20. The draft summary from that meeting is enclosed. *(Attachment #1)* (ACTION)

4. HESS SOFTBALL FIELD COMPLEX

The Facility Evaluation Report was prepared by Pashek Associates and presented to the COG General Forum on Oct. 26. At that meeting the COG General Forum also approved the following motion:

...that the General Forum authorize the Parks Capital Committee to prepare recommendations on the following questions and other issues that may arise:

- 1. Should the Centre Region COG have a role in the acquisition and/or operation of Hess Field?*
- 2. If yes, what is the nature of that role?*
- 3. If yes, what are the potential financial options?*
- 4. What are potential advantages and disadvantages of the COG having this responsibility?*
- 5. Could the State College Area Softball Association operate the park?*
- 6. Is a second appraisal needed?*

7. *What is the total project cost (including land acquisition, closing, existing structures and immediate improvements needed to resolve priority hazards)?*
8. *What is the cost/benefit of acquiring the land and facilities compared to developing fields at a different or new park?*

The following attachments are provided for committee reference:

Reference Info	The Hess Field Facility Evaluation (funded by COG) is posted at http://www.cprp.org/parks/Regional-Pks/Hess/Hess_Eval.html
Attachment # 2	The Purchase Proposal presented by Harris Township
Attachment # 3	Nov. 1997 magazine article submitted by Harris Township

The committee is asked to review the questions above and below, then provide any additional questions that may be relevant to this process.

In order to discuss the issues, respond to the questions posed in the motion and to provide direction to staff for research, the following (inter-related) topics are provided:

Primary Questions:

- To what extent can the program/services at Hess Field be provided at the two regional park sites?
- What is the most cost-effective way to provide those services and also respond to the original mission of the regional parks?

Detailed Questions / Topics:

A. Acquisition (Proposed: 20.65 acres for \$200,000 = \$9,685 per acre)

1. Securing and funding a 2nd Appraisal.
The first appraisal (provided by the seller) placed the land value at \$418,000 (= \$20,242 per acre). Research by Ferguson Township staff has since suggested a comparable (agricultural) value of \$8,200 per acre. In 2004, the Oak Hall parklands were appraised at \$11,106 per acre. In 2005, the Whitehall Road parklands were appraised at \$15,000 per acre.
2. Timetable for discussions with owners;
3. The status of 2010 operations (if any).
4. Finalize the proposed deed restrictions.
5. Explore and recommend ownership options for the COG or Authority. It is likely that the Solicitor's advice may play a role in this topic.
6. Consider the municipal contributions for the other regional park acquisitions:
Oak Hall: \$156,627 College Twp. + \$5,000 Harris Twp.
Whitehall Road: \$90,506 Ferguson Twp.
7. Finalize the price, closing & legal costs plus... (see next item)
8. The current value/cost of improvements and equipment. The facility lease with Mr. Dreibelbis expires on May 1, 2010. Part of the proposal is to provide reimbursement for the difference between the "current value" of those items and \$100,000. For example, if it is determined that the facility value is \$10,000, the reimbursement amount would be \$90,000. It was not specified which party determines the current value of the improvements, fixtures and equipment.

B. Facility Improvements / Evaluation of the Options

1. Liability exposure, insurance costs and participant waiver requirements.

2. Prepare a Renovation Budget (per the Evaluation Report). If the proposal moves forward, staff recommends that the process include the development of a Master Site Plan to better guide and schedule those improvements.
3. Consider the feasibility of both sponsors and operational partners.
4. Softball Leagues (men's, women's, coed adult, youth): Past, present & future projections? (If desired, this report could be prepared by CRPR staff.)

C. Operations (Maintenance and Game Operations)

1. Prepare a multi-year Operations Budget (Revenue/Expenses for staff and materials). These two topics are very inter-related.
 - A. Facility Maintenance
 - B. League / Game Operations
2. To what extent is financial self-sufficiency (operational and/or capital costs) capable?

5. REVIEW PENDING AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE COMMITTEE

(Some of these items involve work with the Centre Regional Rec. Authority)

1. Hess Field Complex
2. Whitehall Road Regional Parklands – Master Site Plan (in progress)
3. Community Tennis Group / Indoor Facility (staff research has been directed)
4. Sportfield Lighting
5. Finalize the Funding Strategy for the Regional Park Developments – including partnering with SCASD and sport groups.
6. Oak Hall Regional Parklands – Master Site Plan Phasing Plan
7. Parks Maintenance Area / Supply Storage / COG Equipment Storage
8. The Spring Creek Education Building at Millbrook Marsh Nature Center
9. Interface with the proposed YMCA / Visitor's Bureau Sports Complex

6. MEETING SCHEDULE

- A. Regional Park Planning Committee Meeting for Whitehall Road Parklands
Monday, Dec. 7 c/o Mr. Pashek (12:15 – 2 PM, COG Forum Room)
The consultants will review prior inputs from the Whitehall Road Parkland process and present a Draft Concept Plan based upon the hearing comments. Pending committee comments, a second Public Forum will then be scheduled in late-Jan or early-Feb.
- B. Parks Capital Committee Regular Monthly Meeting:
Thursday, Dec. 17, 12:15 PM.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Attachments:

1. Meeting Summary from Aug. 20
2. Purchase Proposal from Harris Twp.
3. Magazine article from Harris Twp.