

CITY OF BURTON
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
AUGUST 5, 2003, 5:00 P.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Larry Brawner, Council President, called the Workshop to order at 5:00 P.M.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Brawner, Centilli, Cross, Martinbianco, Tinnin and Wells.

BURTON PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Paula Manzardo, Al Hindes and Robert Walls.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Bement.

OTHERS PRESENT: Amy McMillan, Director, Genesee County Parks & Recreation and C. Ladd, Deputy Clerk.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: Joint Workshop of the Burton City Council and Parks and Recreation Commission to discuss information regarding the Genesee County Parks and Recreation Millage Proposal.

PRESENTATION:

Amy McMillan gave a presentation concerning the proposed Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission Capital Improvement Millage. She presented the Council with a packet that consisted of information of the following items:

- Proposed capital improvement millage fact sheet
- Capital improvement millage local distribution charts (proposed)
- Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission Strategic Planning Survey Executive Summary

A copy of the information is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

The Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission will make its final recommendation regarding the capital improvement millage ballot language at its August 14, 2003 meeting at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission Headquarters. This recommendation will then be forwarded to the Genesee County Board of Commissioners for action August 20, 2003.

The millage facts are as follows:

1 mil

10 years

40% of total millage revenue to be available to local units of government

60% of total millage revenue to be used by Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission to fund Community Park improvements

The local communities portion will provide funding for capital improvements including, but not limited to the construction, expansion, development, acquisition or rehabilitation of recreational facilities and parkland, as well as the restoration of the natural environment.

Examples of projects eligible to receive funding include playgrounds, senior citizens centers, beaches, historic structures, aquatic facilities, pedestrian bridges, recreation centers, sports fields, trails, restoration of the natural environment, fishing piers, acquisition of park land and/or recreation facilities and matching funds for grants.

Ms. McMillan explained that the local communities portion of the proposed millage program would be administered as a grant program. Under the proposed program, the Genesee County Board of Commissioners will adopt rules that define the grant application, scoring, and award process. The Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission will review and score the grant applications. They will review staff recommendations, then forward its recommendations to the Genesee County Board of Commissioners, who will make the final decision on grant awards. When a grant is awarded, the Genesee County Board of Commissioners will enter into a project agreement with the local unit of government for the construction of the project.

The proposed millage is different and better than the current DNR grant program in the following ways:

- Local communities will not be required to provide matching funds
- DNR grant programs require communities to first expend grant funds, which are then reimbursed. The County will provide the grant funds in advance for engineering and construction.
- Local communities will have the opportunity to apply twice each year for both development and acquisition grants.
- Communities may apply individually or in partnership with other local units of government.
- Communities will “compete” for funding only against other applicants within their region, not the county as a whole.
- Communities can use millage funds as matching funds for State, federal and/or other grant programs.

Ms. McMillan said the county is split into different regions. The City of Burton is included in the Holloway Reservoir area, which consists of the following communities: Clio, Davison City, Davison Township, Forest Township, Genesee Township, Richfield Township, Thetford Township and Vienna Township.

Ms. McMillan stated that she is not asking for the Council’s support of the millage at this point in time.

COUNCIL/PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Mr. Walls commented that he supports Parks and Recreation and believes the people should decide the millage issue. He has a problem with the fact that the money would be lost to the City and we would not be able to get what our own Park and Recreation Commission is striving for in the city. Mr. Walls also commented about the maintenance of the Davison Roadside Park.

Ms. McMillan commented that the City of Burton could choose not to apply for any funding. She explained that by having the county millage pass, the City of Burton would generate more funds and would benefit more.

Mr. Cross commented that the City just ended an agreement with Genesee County Road Department and could be in the same situation as before. Why should we go back into partnership with Genesee County?

Ms. McMillan replied that this program has been successful at a statewide level. It’s a program that works and a program that would be a greater benefit to the city. Ms. McMillan spoke in regards to the failure of the city to receive grants because of people who are critical when the grants are requested.

Mr. Centilli suggested that each community receive the same amount and negotiate themselves. He has no problem with the County receiving the 60% but then we have to ask for our 40% and apply for it. He would rather see the funds coming in each year.

Mr. Martinbianco inquired about the options that were discussed concerning the Community Development Block Grant.

Ms. McMillan said this issue was discussed, but the committee recommended this proposal.
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Mr. Martinbianco inquired about how the Parks and Recreation Commission decided to ask for one mil.

Ms. McMillan said the Parks and Recreation Commission have been studying their options since 1999. They did a survey of the some of the county residents. She gave some of the statistics in regard to survey. Improvements cannot be made without the millage being approved.

Mr. Hindes asked why the City of Burton residents should be convinced to vote for the millage when there is no guarantee that the money would come back to Burton.

Ms. McMillan said there would be a guarantee that the funding would be there. There are facilities that would be available to the residents, regardless of where they live.

Further discussion continued regarding the funds being given to the individual communities.

Mr. Brawner clarified that Burton would have to compete for a grant with six townships and two other cities.

Ms. McMillan said this is correct.

Mrs. Manzardo commented that Burton's Park and Recreation Commission are comprised of lay people in the community. She has concerns about competing with others when writing and applying for a grant.

Ms. McMillan said the county offers technical assistants to help write grants.

A brief discussion was held concerning the Parks and Recreation Commission Strategic Planning Survey that was done in the county. The survey was done by an outside professional survey organization.

Mrs. Manzardo inquired about the plans for the Davison Roadside Park and plans to extend the pathway on Davison Road into For-Mar Nature Preserve. She also inquired about the communities having representation from each of the four quadrants.

Ms. McMillan gave a brief overview of what the plan is to extend the walkway. She also said the each of the communities are represented through the County Board of Commissioners.

A discussion was held concerning the amount of money that the Genesee County Parks and Recreation receives at the present time. Ms. McMillan gave a breakdown of the revenues.

Mr. Walls had concerns about the other communities operating on more mills than Burton, who operates on 5 mills. Burton couldn't afford what some of the other communities would. He said we have some good ideas and great people working for us. We have fought for everything we have, and that is why he doesn't think the county's plan works for the City of Burton.

Ms. McMillan commented that she believes the City of Burton would benefit from the millage. She said there would not be a grudge held against Burton if no support were given toward the millage proposal, when it comes time to apply for a grant. All grants should be given fairly and equitably.

Mr. Cross commented that we want Burton to move forward and they don't believe tax dollars going into other communities is good for the city.

Mr. Centilli inquired about the feedback that the county is getting from the other communities.

Ms. McMillan said they are receiving a mix of positive and negative feedback.

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Mr. Centilli said that \$280,000 is a lot of money in Burton and we could build quite a building if we have the guarantee that the money would be coming to this community. He said he thinks it would benefit the communities better if each community received their share and then decide what to spend it as they please.

Ms. McMillan said the county has a very different philosophy and is asking that Burton realize the county is not trying to be a big brother.

Mr. Brawner reiterated that there would be a meeting on August 14, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. to approve the final ballot language and rules of how the dollars would be spent. The County Commissioners would be voting on the issue on August 20th. He thanked Ms. McMillan for the information and her time.

Meeting adjourned at 6:14 P.M.

Cheryl M. Ladd, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

CML