

(revised – final)

**PARK AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL**

SUBJECT: FY/2007 Contribution Groups Budget Review

BACKGROUND: PRAB reviewed Contribution and Recognition Group Budget Requests received as part of its annual evaluation held at the regular meeting of April 19, 2006. Arts organizations were reviewed in a separate report by the Arts Advisory Board.

One new organization was reviewed requesting Recognition Group status. A recommendation to accept the Beaverdam Creek Watershed Watch Group was unanimous 8 – 1.

A total of 21 groups submitted applications for PRAB this year. 5 were for Contribution Group status and 16 applications for Recognition Group Status.

FINDINGS:

A. PRAB met with the following Groups:

1. **Greenbelt Pride:** Representatives noted the current activities of the group. In response to a question, they noted that they are seeking 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt status, and that status precludes them from advocating for political causes or candidates. A motion to add a recommendation that they make greater assurances they would not advocate for political purposes was voted down 1 - 8. Board then voted to accept their application as presented, 8 - 1.
2. **Astronomical Society of Greenbelt:** Representatives noted current activities and stressed their commitment to being open to all citizens of Greenbelt for various star and moon-gazing events. They are getting ready for the placement of the observatory. Board voted unanimously to accept their application as presented, 9 – 0.
3. **Beaverdam Creek Watershed Watch Group:** Representatives talked about their efforts to maintain the environment in the Beaverdam area. They noted they have to get permission from BARC for some of their activities on BARC land. In answer to a question about advocating for particular issues, one of the representatives noted that advocacy is part of their mission, but that they are seeking 501(c)(3) status and would not be advocating under a political party or candidate. A motion to recommend that

they provide more specific assurances that they would not advocate for political causes was voted down 3 - 6. PRAB members also inquired as to the possibility of this new Recognition Group meeting jointly with the existing environmental groups of CCRIC & Still Creek to conserve room space required of the Recreation Department. They said they occasionally meet with these other groups, but that their mission was really separate and not the same. Board voted to accept their application as presented as well as to recommend acceptance of them as a new Recognition Group, 8 - 1.

4. **Greenbelt Baseball League:** - Representatives noted that they are asking for an increase of \$1,000 over last year, mostly to cover the cost of T-Ball, inherited from St. Hugh's CYO. One PRAB member noted that may not be enough because umpires have been requiring surcharges to their standard fees to pay for the increase in gas prices. The representatives said that perhaps they should ask for an additional \$1,000 for that and some other unforeseen needs. The acting chair explained that they would vote on the application as presented, but that the group was free to change their request before final presentation to Council. Members asked about the cost of uniforms and the Group explained that each child gets a shirt and a hat, as well as a trophy at year's end. In later discussion, a recommendation that the Group raise its fundraising activities to help offset the increase in funds asked from Council was voted down 2 - 7, mostly because it was noted that this group already raises considerable funds. A second recommendation that the Group increase the fees it charges each child was voted down 3 - 5 with one abstention. The Group had admitted that its fee per child was lower than several surrounding jurisdictions, but several PRAB members noted that some children could not participate if fees were raised too much. Board voted unanimously that the application be accepted (as presented) with the recommendation that the Group review its budget worksheet and make sure that it balances (some figures were missing). 9 - 0.

Total requested: \$9,000 (increase of \$2000 from last year).

Request accepted by PRAB with the following recommendations:

- a. Review the budget worksheet to ensure it balances and that all requested figures are included including increase request since original submittal.
- b. Be prepared to justify requested increase to City Council in detail.

5. **Greenbelt Boys & Girls League:** A large group of representatives talked about the various sports and programs. The Club is expanding its cheerleading program and working to consolidate the efforts of various coaches and Board members. The Club was complimented on its overall presentation package. However, discrepancies were still noted in the budget worksheet. In particular, a large decrease (-\$9,354, -36%) was noted in membership dues. The Club said membership was down, yet they forecast that membership and dues would rebound and even exceed the level in 2005. The club also projected \$5,000 in corporate donations although the totals for the last two years have been zero and \$418.95, respectively. Fundraising was also predicted at \$5,000 for the coming year, although last year's total was (-\$159.30). The Club stated that these figures were optimistic and just projections. A question was also raised about the high balances the Club is maintaining in checking and savings (\$39,157.53 total as of 1/1/06 & projected to be \$46, 222.53 total by 6/30/07). The Club responded that these funds were for contingencies but did not elaborate. The Board voted unanimously to approve the Club's application with recommendations that the Board explain more specifically the basis for its fundraising and corporate income projections, and that the Club explain why it needs \$15,000 from the City when it is carrying such high checking and savings account balances. 9 – 0.

Total requested - \$15,000 (no change from last year). Request accepted by PRAB with the following recommendations:

- a. Explain in more detail how the Club intends to increase fundraising from (-\$159.30) this year to \$5,000 next year, and how they intend to increase company donations from \$418.95 this year to \$5,000 next year.
- b. Explain in detail how they can justify their request for \$15,000 next year when they expect to end the year with \$46,222.53 in checking and saving accounts combined.

6. **Greenbelt Senior Softball:** The President of the Team noted that they now have six members who are City residents, up from 1 - 3 reported in previous years. The Board was duly impressed, but noted a majority of the players still are non-residents. The Team President stated that the club buys uniforms every year and also buys its members jackets with a "Greenbelt" emblem emblazoned across the back. Board discussion highlighted, in contrast, that the Swim Team members must buy their swim suits every year with Greenbelt stitching. The high cost per capita was cited (City contribution

asked = \$1,000 divided by 6 = \$166.00 each per resident) and the Club President was asked about fundraising to help defray costs. He stated that they had raised their fees by \$10 but that it was hard to get team members to man a booth all day. There are 42 games in a season and he said the roster varies according to who is sick and injured, etc. The Board commented that perhaps the members could pay \$2.00 per game and thus raises nearly all their funds, but the Club President responded that probably only six or seven members could afford higher dues. He said that he is on a fixed income and many of the others are as well. Board voted down a motion to require team members to pay more in individual fees, 2-7. Board voted unanimously to accept the Team's application as presented.

Total requested \$1,000. (No change from last year). Resident membership has increased. Request accepted by PRAB as presented, 9 – 0.

- B. Requests were accepted as presented for the following Contribution Groups with whom PRAB did not meet. Each of these groups is rated "very good".

Aquatic Boosters – Total requested \$7,600 (no change from last year).

Babe Ruth Baseball - Total requested \$9,000 year. There was a brief discussion concerning the high cost to the City per participant in the Greenbelt Babe Ruth League. Kelly Ivy noted he welcomed any comments, but explained that most of that cost was determined by the high cost to the team of membership on the regional and national organization. Application was then accepted as presented 8 – 0, 1 abstention.

Greenbelt Golden Age Club – (no change from last year)

- C. The Board also reviewed applications from the following Recognition Group not requesting budgeted funds. Each group was rated "very good". Requests were approved as presented for:

Brownie Girl Scout Troop #2329
Brownie Girl Scout Troop #4816
Citizens to Conserve and Preserve Indian Creek
Friends of the Resource Advocate
Great Greenbelt Volksmarchers
Greenbelt Community Fund
Greenbelt Dog Park Association
Greenbelt Garden Club
Greenbelt Labor Day Festival
Greenbelt Running Club
GIVES

Greenbelt Mamas and the Papas – Accepted as presented with one recommendation: that the request for a toddler gym be removed from the application and re-submitted as a new capital project request.

- D. The following groups did not resubmit applications:

Girl Scout Troop #2142
Girl Scout Troop #2307
Girl Scout Troop #4128
Girl Scout Troop #5004
Greenbelt Bike Coalition

Double Dutch League – A submittal was not received either by the requested City deadline or subsequent to a phone call reminder from the Recreation Department Business Office.

Greenbelt Tennis Association – They are in the process of reorganizing and is expected to submit an application prior to the City Council May 10 Work Session for recognition status.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick D. Ransom, Acting Chairman
Richard T. Ransom, Secretary
PRAB