

# Bond issue discussions continue for Anderson Parks

Sheila Vilvens, [svilvens@communitypress.com](mailto:svilvens@communitypress.com) 2:51 p.m. EDT May 13, 2015



The Anderson Park District Board of Commissioners put off a vote to place a bond issue on the November ballot.

“We agreed to wait to make the final decision,” Board President Nadine Gelter said. The board continues to weigh its options and possible millage amounts ranging from .7 up to 1-mill for 20 years, she said.

The board has officially notified Beech Acres Parenting Center of its intent to place a bond issue on the ballot in order to finance the purchase of the RecPlex and property.

In April, at two separate meetings, the board approved two bond issue amounts to potentially place before voters – a 1-mill bond and 0.7-mill bond.

The 1-mill, 20-year bond issue would raise nearly \$24.5 million. The additional cost to homeowners would be \$35 for every \$100,000 market value. Levy passage would enable the park district to buy the RecPlex, the park district’s only indoor recreation facility, and land along Beechmont Avenue for \$5.4 million. The park district leases the RecPlex from Beech Acres Parenting Center. Additionally, if approved, the bond levy would provide enough funds to make upgrades and improvements to the RecPlex and the district’s other parks and facilities.

The 0.7-mill, 15-year bond issue would raise more than \$12.8 and cost the owner of a \$100,000 home \$24.50 per year. This would provide enough money to buy and renovate the RecPlex and purchase the 28 acres.

Another millage amount discussed is 0.8-mills for possibly 15 years. This would raise more than \$14.6 million per year and cost the owner of a \$100,000 home \$28 per year. This bond amount would allow for the same as the 0.7-mill plus allow for a little extra money for unforeseen issues that frequently arise during renovation projects.

The decision to postpone the vote on a millage amount was out of respect for ongoing discussions with the Anderson Township Board of Trustees and the Forest Hills Board of Education, Gelter said. The discussion continues between all three entities about what could be done with the property for the benefit of the community.

“We decided to wait a little longer until we have all facts and figures in order to make the best decision possible,” Gelter said.

This said, board members acknowledged that they will likely take action at the regular meeting scheduled for June 23 or at a special meeting.

“To run a campaign, we need to make a decision sooner rather than later,” Board Member Angie Stocker said.

During its May 13 meeting, the Board heard a presentation from John Fox of John Fox Consulting. He outlined highlights from the recent park district survey. Based on results, 63 percent of those surveyed are in favor of the purchase of Beech Acres property, the RecPlex and additional park improvements. The survey analysis presented by Fox is available on the park district’s website - [www.andersonparks.com](http://www.andersonparks.com) (<http://www.andersonparks.com/uploads/SurveyAnalysis.pdf>)

“This is as clear cut positive survey of this type that I’ve seen,” Fox said. “I think it should be put on the ballot.” The community should have the opportunity to have a say, he said.

The board has until Aug. 5 to file its bond issue with the Hamilton County Board of Elections in order to appear on the November ballot.

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