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Park district gives stables a little more rope

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Bridle Run Stables can stay at Johnson Hills Park until Feb. 15, but no later.

The stable operation is moving to Clermont County, but construction of the new barn and surrounding facilities is taking longer than expected, said owner Larry Waltz.

"A lot of it is weather-related ... (and) we're running behind," he said.

"We're trying to get as much done as we can, as fast as we can."

At a recent Anderson Township Park District meeting, Executive Director Ken Kushner said he visited the new facility on Bauer Road and it appeared the barn would not be finished by Jan. 1 when the current lease extension expires.

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Kushner said Bridle Run Stables pays the park district approximately \$1,300 per month for the lease.

Park Commission President Duffy Beischel said he would consider another lease extension until mid-February, but not beyond that date.

The Park District is in the midst of planning for future development of Johnson Hills Park, near the intersection of Bridle and Little Dry Run roads.

Beischel said Feb. 15 is the absolute latest date Bridle Run Stables can stay on the property because the park district needs to begin demolition on the barn to keep development plans on schedule.

Park Commissioner Nadine Gelter said she is tired of the Park District's plans being compromised because of the horse operation, noting this is the fourth extension.

"I don't want to impede a small business, but this is taxpayer property," she said.

Waltz said all his clients are moving with Bridle Run Stables to the new location, roughly 12 miles away.

The stables have been on the Johnson Hills Park property for 16 years and Waltz said he has about 30 horses at Bridle Run, along with dozens more at other facilities.

"They've been real understanding and I appreciate that," Waltz said of Park District officials.

"I know they have plans that they need to move forward with."

Waltz said the indoor riding arena and the barn frame are constructed, and he hopes it will be complete by the Feb. 15 deadline.

If the barn is not finished before deadline, Waltz said he isn't sure where he will board the horses.

"All my eggs are in this one basket," he said.

Beischel said this two-month extension should give Waltz enough time to make alternate arrangements for the horses should there be additional delays in the barn construction.

Beischel and new Park Commissioner Josh Gerth voted to authorize the extension and Gelter voted against the measure.

Park Commission Vice President Dale Bartholomew was not present at the meeting.

Additional Facts

Lease extensions

The Anderson Township Park District has extended the lease for Bridle Run Stables multiple times in the past year.

* Bridle Run Stables was told it needed to vacate the premises in Johnson Hills Park by July 1.

* Park commissioners later extended the lease, on a month-to-month basis, through Jan. 1.

Bridle Run Stables owner Larry Waltz said he was having issues with property acquisition and the new barn construction on Bauer Road in Clermont County.

* Park commissioners recently suggested the horse stables may continue to operate at Johnson Hills Park until Feb. 15, 2010, with no further extensions to allow the park district to continue with park development plans.
