

Crowd possible as Anderson trustees discuss park levy

Sheila Vilvens, svilvens@communitypress.com 9:05 a.m. EDT April 16, 2015



A large crowd might be in attendance at tonight's Anderson Township Board of Trustees meeting to hear details and react to a bond issue request from the Anderson Township Park District.

Representatives from the Anderson Township Park District are scheduled to appear before the trustees at the April 16 meeting to present their case for a 1-mill, 20-year bond issue that is needed to, in part, buy the RecPlex and 29 acres from Beech Acres Parenting Center.

Anderson Park District Executive Director Ken Kushner said Anderson Township Board of Park Commissioners President Dale Bartholomew and John Fox, John Fox Consulting, have 10 minutes to present details of a recent survey and explain how the bond levy money would be used.

A 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 survey, conducted by John Fox Consulting, included 269 completed random telephone surveys of residents and over 900 online responses. Preliminary results indicate more than 60 percent of the survey participants in the sample group support the purchase of the RecPlex, the land and additional improvements/upgrades throughout the park district.

Final survey results are expected to be made available on the park district's website today, April 15 – www.andersonparks.com (<http://www.andersonparks.com/>).

For some, the timing of the ask couldn't come at a worse time with property taxes already increased this year as a result of the Forest Hills School District bond levy. Last year voters approved a \$103 million bond issue for FHSD facility improvements which cost taxpayers an additional \$173.28 per year on a \$100,000 house. The average price of a home in Anderson Township is \$212,000.

The FHSD and park district's tax boundaries are not exactly the same. For example, FHSD includes the Village of Newtown but the park district does not.

The Anderson Tea Party has taken notice. [It is encouraging residents to attend the township trustees' meeting and voice their opinion.](http://www.andersonteatparty.org/stop-the-plunder-in-the-park-attend-trustee-meeting-416-at-6-pm/) (<http://www.andersonteatparty.org/stop-the-plunder-in-the-park-attend-trustee-meeting-416-at-6-pm/>) This message was shared via email and was posted on the tea party's website and social media with the headline "Stop the Plunder in the Park."

If you're planning to attend, the trustees meet at 6 p.m. in Anderson Center, 7850 Five Mile Road.

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