

MRPA Programming Section Meeting

September 18, 2009

Shoreview Community Center, Shoreview

Attendance:

Becky Sola	Shoreview	Jim Rask	Intern Roseville
Reed Smidt	Woodbury	Lisa Abernathy	Falcon Heights
Tom Godfrey	Blaine	Kari Hemp	Bloomington
Jerome Krieger	Blaine	Sarah Molnau	Waconia
Pat Tuma	New Brighton	Ann Mosack	Bloomington
Gerry Turnberg	MRPA	Andy Soltvedt	Golden Valley
Deb Weinreis	MRPA	Jared Flewollen	Hastings
Roxann Maxey	Roseville	Sara Grant	Arden Hills
Eric Boettcher	Roseville	Steve Skinner	Apple Valley
Michelle Snider	MRPA	Teresa Gangelhoff	Mendota Heights

Agenda:

Meeting was called to order by Roxanne Maxey at 10:00am

Welcome and Introductions

Additions to Agenda

Approval of Minutes

- Motion made by Andy Soltvedt
- Seconded by Reed Smith

Professional Connections:

Program Section travels to Universities that have Park and Recreation Tracs and talk about the profession to students.

- MSU – on September 9, no report
- U of M – October 1
- St. Cloud – Kelley Mertes setting up, date TBD
- Winona – Jared Flewollen, Hastings, will be attending

Speaker: The section is looking for people throughout the year to come and speak at the program section meetings on hot topics such as how to survive the economy, low cost marketing, Older Adult Programming, Wellness programming for teens and outdoors, Outdoor Recreation opportunities, Grant writing, etc..

MRPA Staff – Michelle, Deb, Gerry & Bethany

Michelle Snider, MRPA Executive Director, spoke about the network of 1000 members state wide in MRPA. The majority of members come from the East and West followed by the South and North Central. The main focuses of MRPA are education and Recreational Sports.

Educational training is provided in all subsets and MRPA tries to provide a variety of workshops to meet the needs of members, ranging from half day trainings to the Annual Conference. A variety of other educational opportunities are available for members including Emerging Recreation Leaders Institute and Leadership Academy.

Michelle emphasized that networking is another important aspect to MRPA. Members should take advantage of the opportunity to network with colleagues from other cities as well as other organizations. Legislative is another part of MRPA, Michelle spoke about lobbying at the capital and the Constitutional Amendment that will provide funding for Park and Recreation. Finally she stated that MRPA is an additional resource to assist with grants, and communication on state and national levels.

Bethani Gerhard, MRPA Administrative Assistant, was unable to attend the meeting. Michelle spoke about Bethani's role with MRPA. She works Monday through Wednesday and her main priorities are maintaining the website as well as writing and coordinating for the quarterly magazine put out by MPRA.

Gerry Turnberg, USSSA Program Director, indicated that if there are any questions regarding the softball association call him. We are part of the largest softball program in the country with 6300 sanctioned teams this past year. He will send out reminders for registering for upcoming tournaments and reminded everyone that participation helps the overall budget, so encourage teams to play. Some upcoming tournaments are the Co-Rec and Men's tournaments in October.

Deb Weinreis, Recreational Sports Manager, told us about some of the Rec sports that are offered through MRPA including, but not limited to, sand volleyball, boot hockey, broomball, flag football, volleyball and basketball. She indicated that she is always open to new ideas and to let her know if you have any. She needs continued assistance from programmers for access to fields and facilities. She spoke about Ultimate Frisbee and a recent tourney that included 70 participants. Also stated that Ultimate Frisbee is a growing sport with Carleton College being #1 in the sport, as well as that many high schools now have club teams.

Steve Skinner of Apple Valley inquired if MRPA has done any type of evaluations, focus groups, or surveys to determine why there has been a decline in enrollment of numerous sports. At this point no surveys have been completed.

Roxann stated that many people in her age group want to get out of leagues because of the time commitment but would like to be involved in competitive tournaments that require less time commitment.

Michelle then discussed the MPRA trips that they have been trying to kick-off, explaining that the Golf trip to Brainerd was cancelled due to lack of enrollment. They will continue to coordinate future trips and ask that any feedback on ideas is welcomed.

Topic Discussion

Summer Reflections – Unique Stories

A few cities shared unique stories about summer programs and some discussion around the expectations that parents and adult participants have for programs.

Winter Leagues

- Jared Flewellen, Hastings, indicated that his Dodgeball league has been quite a success and that the variety of teams are more focused on recreation than competition. He offers it as a intergenerational opportunity for older teens and parents.
- Eric Boettcher, Roseville, stated that the Broomball league in Roseville is bouncing back after a bad weather season two years ago. Boot hockey has not been successful for Roseville.
- A suggestion that educational classes on how to play broomball would be a great offering to educate those that do not know much about the sport. Many in the group thought this was a good idea.
- Jerome Krieger, Blaine, reported that the Super Rink offers varying levels of adult Hockey leagues through USA Hockey.
- Andy Soltvedt, Golden Valley, shared that they partner with Brooklyn Park to form a adult hockey league.
- Steve Skinner, Apple Valley, questioned if anyone knew of any leagues that were offering child care. No one in the group seemed to be aware of any, but there was discussion surrounding the advantage of this.
- Roxann Maxey, Roseville, reminded everyone that the Program Section is a great place to bring any concerns or ideas you have for overcoming any program obstacles you may be having.

Non-School Day Programming

- Numerous cities reported that they do offer field trips and programs on non-school days, however the cost of transportation has gotten so high that it is difficult to keep the cost reasonable
- Steve Skinner, Apple Valley, reported that they are no longer allowed to send information home through the schools and thus have seen a drop in youth enrollments but they will be trying a Jr. High and Sr. High Dodgeball tournament on non-school days
- Jerome Krieger, Blaine, shared that Blaine struggles with non-school day programming because they serve three different school districts with varying school breaks
- Roxann Maxey, indicated that Roseville has offered Middle-school ski trips that have been quite successful. She then addressed the issue of check-in and out procedures for non-school day programs and inquired what procedures cities use.
- Becky Sola, Shoreview, stressed that they do require parents to sign their child in and out of program and id's are checked for pick-up authorization
- Other non-school day programs mentioned included New Brighton bringing in REI for camping skills; adventure programming in Roseville that includes camping, geocaching and rock climbing; many in the group felt geocaching was a popular program choice.

Training

Ways for the section to raise revenue as well as a great opportunity to have in depth education offered. The next meeting a sheet will be passed around for people to sign up for topics they would like to spearhead.

- The group discussed the Farmers Market training that was supposed to happen and determined that perhaps this fall would be a good time to try it again.
- Steve Skinner, Apple Valley, reported that a Grant Writing/Funding Opportunities training that was a part of the Bike and Walk Conference in Mpls was very popular

- Lisa Abernathy reported on the Summer Leadership workshop. It was held in Eagan with 80-90 participants. This training is a great networking opportunity for seasonal staff to gain ideas from other community seasonal staff. Budget for 2010 Leadership Workshop held Saturday June 5. Even if you can send a few staff that then can bring the information back to the rest of your seasonal staff at the full training.

MRPA Updates

Michelle Snider

- MRPA is in full conference mode for the Annual conference September 22-25
- They are working hard on the Do Campaign – keep an eye out for updates possibly at the conference
- The LCCR Grant had their first demo project in Anoka County where they planted seeds. A portion of the conference will be dedicated to Native Prairie Impacts.
- The Exhibit Hall at the Conference will have nearly 70 vendors, nearly 20 of which are new. If your maintenance staff that are not attending would like to attend the Exhibit Hall, email Michelle or Bethani to get them a free pass.

Board Update

No one from the board was present. Michelle Snider indicated that the board would be meeting at the conference.

Michelle also brought up the 2010 conference, the theme is Energize, which is scheduled to be held March 24-25 at Mystic Lake. She inquired if March or April would be a better time to hold the conference. The majority of the group felt that either would be acceptable but that March was slightly preferred.

The next Programming Section meeting will be held October 23, note the change in date, it was pushed back a week due to non-school days.