

determine, and it is further authorized to adopt all necessary rules and regulations for the conduct of its business and for the protection and administration of properties under its control. The Board shall hold such regular and special meetings as it may deem necessary. It shall have the power to appoint advisory committees or panels to assist in the exercise of its powers and functions. The Board is authorized to determine all questions of general policy relating to parks, open spaces and watershed conservation in the County, insofar as these policies do not conflict with the adopted master, general or comprehensive plan for the physical development of the County, and to provide, maintain and conduct a comprehensive program of public recreation, parks and watershed conservation in the County. All plans for the acquisition, disposition, control, conveyance or lease of properties for park areas and watershed conservation shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for approval as to location, character and extent of the proposed acquisition or disposition and shall thereafter be subject to the approval of the County Commissioners who shall, before reaching their decision, hold a public hearing, notice of which has appeared at least three times immediately prior to the hearing in a newspaper published at least weekly in Howard County.

(d) The acquisition of interests or rights in real and personal property for the preservation of open spaces and areas for public recreation and enjoyment and watershed conservation constitutes a public purpose for which public funds may be expended or advanced. The Park Board may acquire, after approval by the Board of County Commissioners as set forth in subsection (c) herein, by purchase, condemnation, grant, gift, bequest, devise or lease of the fee or any lesser interest, development right, easement, covenant or other contractual right necessary to achieve this public purpose. Title to property so acquired shall be in the Board of County Commissioners of Howard County for the use and benefit of the Park Board. The Board, with the approval of the County Commissioners, shall have the power to sell, convey, or in any other manner to dispose of the said park and watershed properties, including the power to lease back to the original property owners or other persons for such time not exceeding five years, and to renew said leases, under such covenants or other contractual arrangements as will limit the uses of the property in accordance with the purposes of this section. The County Commissioners may dedicate and set apart for use as park areas any water, land, buildings or other improvements thereon, owned or leased by the County. The Board is authorized to supervise the expenditure of such funds in carrying out the public policy of this section as may, from time to time, be designated by the County Commissioners or by public local law for that purpose. The County Commissioners shall direct the Treasurer of the County to deposit in an account to the benefit of the Park Board all funds held by the County for the purpose of acquisition of park lands, including those funds which were acquired from the sale of bonds designated for such purpose or funds which were designated as the Park and Watershed Facilities Fund.

(e) The Board, subject to budgetary policies and appropriations of the County Commissioners, is authorized to administer, develop, equip, operate, maintain and issue permits for the use of any land or facilities made available to the Board for park programs and watershed conservation.