

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Thursday, February 5, 2015
MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Buckler, Chairperson; Tom Nelson, Vice-Chairperson; Jake Heibel, Teresa Howard, Caroline King, Patrick Murphy, James Swift and Ashley Varner,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Douglas Bellis.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Loewe, Director; David Guyther, Parks Division Manager; Tyrone Harris, Facilities Coordinator; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Dick Buckler, Chairperson, at 5:30 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Richard Buckler, Chairperson, welcomed new members Jake Heibel, Teresa Howard and Caroline King to the Board.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Member Ashley Varner presented a proposed slate of officers for 2015. **Ashley Varner motioned, seconded by Patrick Murphy, to nominate Tom Nelson as Chairperson and Dick Buckler as Vice-Chairperson for calendar year 2015; motion carried 8-0.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Patrick Murphy moved, seconded Jim Swift, to approve the minutes of December 4, 2014; motion carried 8-0.

PARKS DIVISION REPORT

Director Brian Loewe introduced David Guyther, Parks Manager, and Tyrone Harris, Facilities Coordinator, who provided a report on activities of the Parks Division. Highlights included projects and maintenance performed by the Parks Division during calendar 2014.

- New pier at Piney Point Public Landing
- Three tennis courts were renovated (Jarboesville, Fifth District and Chancellor's Run)
- New sidewalks were installed at the USCT Memorial Interpretive Center
- New restrooms were constructed at the Wicomico Shores Public Landing
- Stormwater management facility upgrades at Chancellor's Run Park
- Home Grown Farmers' Market multi-purpose field renovated for soccer and lacrosse league practice
- Snow removal at County facilities and parking areas
- Tulagi Place tree maintenance and trash removal
- Repairs at the Margaret Brent Recreation Center gymnasium
- Renovations to restrooms at Chancellor's Run Park
- Repairs at Nicolet Park skatepark

ANNUAL UPDATE OF PARK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Parks Manager David Guyther and Facilities Coordinator Tyrone Harris reviewed changes proposed for the Park Policies and Procedures Manual. Most were “housekeeping” type changes to correct typos or to further clarify rules and policies. A new heading was added regarding fireworks and explosives: It is unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to engage in the retail sale of, or to sell, possess, use, transfer, discharge or explode any fireworks or explosive devices of any kind within the County parks or trails.

Dick Buckler moved, seconded by Tom Nelson, to approve the proposed changes to the Park Policies and Procedures Manual as presented by staff. Motion carried 8-0.

FY2016 BUDGET UPDATES

Director Loewe provided FY2016 Operating and Capital Budget handouts to the Board. Items discussed included:

- Revenues are flat; no new positions or initiatives being requested
- Staff has developed a preliminary plan to address the deficit at the Wicomico Shores Golf Course. This includes requesting a subsidy for FY16, increasing some fees, and reducing expenses were feasible. Mr. Murphy asked about the plan to address the deficit into the future. Staff is doing some research into what other municipal courses in the region are experiencing. Ms. King asked about the number of additional hours for the banquet coordinator; Mr. Loewe will get back to her on that.
- The draft CIP sheets were reviewed. New projects included: Park Planning Grant (Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan) and Shannon Farm Park Property.
- Mr. Murphy asked if the public would have access to the Shannon Farm property before the master plan is completed. Mr. Loewe stated that will be taken under advisement; appropriate access and parking need to be taken into consideration.
- Mr. Murphy asked about the phasing plan for ballfield lighting; he wanted to know if it's feasible to move up the plans to light the new athletic fields at Fifth District Park. Mr. Loewe will look into that; considerations include number of users for the fields, field use and length of time some leagues have been waiting for lighted fields.

PROJECT UPDATES

Director Brian Loewe provided an update on the status of several park and facility improvement projects.

Charlotte Hall Athletic Fields - The project is nearly complete. The new fields are anticipated to be ready for use in spring 2015. Staff anticipates that a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new fields will be held in April.

Three Notch Trail Phase VI - Construction on this phase will begin in late February or in March. Staff anticipates that a ground breaking ceremony will be held in late March. This Phase will run from MD Route 5 in Mechanicsville to MD Route 236 in New Market for a distance of about five miles. This section will link already completed sections in Laurel Grove and Charlotte Hall and will provide 11 miles of trail in the north county area.

OTHER BUSINESS

Director Loewe reminded the Board that Annual Reports are due from Boards and Committees in the near future. The Board will review a draft of the Recreation and Parks Board Annual

Report during the March 2015 meeting.

NEXT MEETING OF R&P BOARD

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, March 5, 2015.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on May 7, 2015.