

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Meeting of Thursday, August 4, 2011
MINUTES**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa Wainger-Rush, Chairperson; Richard Buckler, Vice-Chairperson; Sabrina Hecht, Robert Hicks, Julie Lemmon, David Phalen and Tom Nelson.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Patrick Dugan and Al Harrison.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Rollins, Director; Kyle Kebaugh, Sports Coordinator; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Clive Graham, Environmental Resources Management (ERM) was in attendance to present the draft Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP).

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Lisa Wainger-Rush, Chairperson, at 5:30 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

David Phalen moved, seconded by Robert Hicks, to approve the minutes of June 16, 2011; motion carried 7- 0.

RAISING COMMUNITY STANDARDS UPDATE

Concussion Awareness - Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation and Parks, introduced Kyle Kebaugh, Sports Coordinator for the Department. Mr. Kebaugh provided an overview of a new Department initiative to promote concussion awareness. He showed the Board and viewing public where concussion information could be found on the R&P website; showed a sample of a poster that will be prominently placed in Recreation Centers and facilities; and provided a draft addendum to the Raising Community Standards manual on concussion awareness. The Department hopes to implement the concussion awareness initiatives this fall to help prevent concussions and provide information on what to do if concussions occur. The Department is proposing that league administrators undergo training on concussion awareness in addition to the training already required for administrators and coaches.

Robert Hicks asked if statistics were available on concussions in St. Mary's County. Mr. Kebaugh didn't think so; however he will check with the leagues on this and ask them to report future concussion to R&P. Mr. Rollins noted that he has met with Dr. Andrew Roper, Supervisor of Instruction for Physical Education, Health, and Athletics, for SMCPS, on this and they plan to coordinate efforts on concussion awareness and prevention.

Spring Community Standards Report – Mr. Kebaugh provided an overview of the Spring Community Standards report (as of May 31, 2011) for the Board. Mr. Kebaugh informed the Board that, for the first time, the program has over 90% compliance.

There were 380 teams; 760 potential coaches; 727 actual coaches; 470 background checks completed; 4 disqualified checks; 73 coaches who completed the NYSCA training; and 344 teams in compliance. The Department is very proud of the 90%+ rate this year. R&P currently certifies about 200 new coaches per year under the program in twelve different sports. The Department averages about 1,200 background checks per year with only 10 to 15 per year disqualified.

Mr. Kebaugh also reported on a new fall partnership program with Girl Scouts for a Junior Coaches' training for high school students. R&P and high school coaches will serve as mentors for Junior Coaches.

LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS & RECREATION PLAN

Mr. Rollins provided a brief update on the status of the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan update. The update is required by the State every six years and is a prerequisite to using Program Open Space funds for parkland acquisition and park development. The plan will include three defined elements of land preservation and recreation planning: recreation and parks, agricultural land preservation, and natural resource conservation. The draft plan is due to the State by January 1, 2012 and the final plan is due by July 1, 2012. The plan becomes part of the County's Comprehensive Plan by amendment.

Mr. Rollins introduced Mr. Clive Graham, ERM, Inc., the consultant currently developing the plan. Mr. Graham showed a PowerPoint presentation on the update that focused on the context, content and process for the plan.

An overview of the draft Chapters 1-3 was provided and included:

- Major achievements since the 2005 LPPRP
- 2005 Plan 2020 Priorities
- 2022 Needs Identification
- 2022 Priorities
- Other projects
- Program costs
- Next steps

The on-line Recreation survey was discussed and included the following facts:

- 366 citizen responses were received
- Representative of interested citizens, but not full county demographic
- Chancellor's Run Park, Dorsey Park, Leonard Hall Rec Center and Lancaster Park were the most visited by respondents
- 88% reported feeling safe visiting a county park
- 63% reported visiting recreation facilities in neighboring counties
- Open ended questions allowed respondents to cite issues such as maintenance needs, conditions at parks, and the need for expanded services in the northern part of the county
- Requests were noted for turf fields, indoor facilities for field sports, expanded recreation programs, and an ice skating rink
- The entire survey is included in the appendix of the plan

A full copy of the presentation and draft plan can be obtained from the Department or accessed via the County website.

Chairperson Lisa Rush asked how the list of needs was developed. Mr. Graham stated that the list is based on a study of the supply analysis, demand, on facility usage, on needs identified in the Capital Program, and feedback from the Board and the public. Primary and secondary needs were identified and it was noted if they've changed since the last plan update.

Julie Lemmon noted that participation in youth baseball is declining and perhaps the demand charts should be modified to reflect that. Mr. Graham will take that into account when revising the draft. She noted there is a need for turf fields in the county.

Bob Hicks noted that the need for another pool doesn't take into account where the pool should be located. The draft shows five existing pools with a surplus of one for 2010 and at equilibrium in 2022. The thinking is there would be a need for another pool within the next few years.

He also noted that additional access to the shoreline / waterfront can only be accomplished by land acquisition and that has been a challenge.

Dick Buckler asked about the feedback received from the survey for indoor tennis facilities. Comments showed 17.8% stated no need for indoor tennis facilities; 19.8% percent stated there is moderate need; 41.3% stated there is a strong need; and 21.1% were unsure.

Mr. Hicks asked about the need for future trails and asked if future phases of the Three Notch Trail were included in the demand. Mr. Graham stated that yes, that is included in the demand number.

Chairperson Rush asked for comments from the audience.

Mr. Tim Dyson, President of the Southern Maryland Trail Riders (SMTR) group and member of the Maryland Horse Council – Mr. Dyson expressed support for additional equestrian trails in Southern Maryland. The SMTR would like to assist in developing trails and volunteered their services at Chaptico Park, as they have done in Charles and Calvert counties. There is a shortage of riding places in the region; private property riding opportunities are disappearing. The SMTR has about 150 members. Trail riding is a low-impact activity. One to two acres are needed for parking; gravel or firm grass will work. Mr. Rollins stated that perhaps R&P can facilitate some discussion with the State regarding trail riding opportunities at Newtowne Neck and St. Ingoes State Forest.

Jackie Marini, SMTR member and other equestrian affiliations – Stated that she remembers the original master plan for Chaptico Park which included equestrian trails and a riding ring; she would like to see the facilities move forward. The inventory shows riding trails at St. Mary's River State Park and one ring at the Fairgrounds. There are limited trail riding opportunities at Greenwell. Mr. Rollins stated the plans for the equestrian trails, rings and parking is still part of the Chaptico Park master plan. The

equestrian facilities were listed in the County's Capital Program; however, those plans have not moved forward due to funding constraints. Mr. Rollins stated he would be happy to meet with SMTR regarding a partnership to implement cost effective trails at Chaptico Park.

Susan Jackson, Charles County resident – She's a member of several different horse clubs and stated that Charles County is appreciative of the revenue generated in Charles County from St. Mary's County residents using their horse facilities. She expressed support for developing equestrian facilities at Chaptico Park. She's certain the horse community would help out with developing the trails. She provided a letter to Mr. Rollins expressing this.

Jane Elliott – Ms. Elliott is a parent of a child with disabilities; she expressed the need for enhanced playground amenities for children with disabilities, especially for the blind. She asked if all County playgrounds were accessible; Mr. Rollins stated they all meet ADA standards, but at different degrees. Lancaster Park features the County's first Boundless Program for children with disabilities. The County has a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist who can answer additional questions; staff took her contact information and will follow up with her.

The next steps for the plan include incorporating feedback from tonight's meeting into the plan and getting a revised draft back to the Board in time for an endorsement at the September Board meeting.

PROJECT UPDATES

- Three Notch Trail Kiosks and Interpretive Signage – This project is moving forward and the final specifications for bidding the fabrication are expected shortly. The project should be out to bid this fall.
- Phase VI Design & Engineering – The kick-off meeting for the design and engineering of Phase VI of the trail, from MD Route 5 to MD Route 236 in New Market, was held yesterday, August 3, 2011.
- Charlotte Hall Athletic Fields - The County expects to award a contract for the Charlotte Hall athletic fields in the near future; there have been some delays with the Procurement process on this project.
- Lancaster Park Design – The County will be advertising for the design and engineering for additional parking and multi-purpose fields for youth sports at Lancaster Park in FY12.
- Leonardtown Park Design – The County will also be advertising in FY12 for the design and engineering for a new community park at the Hayden Farm property. The park is envisioned to include multi-purpose athletic fields, a playground, parking and restroom facilities.
- UCAC Civil War Memorial Project – The County continues to work with the Unified Committee on African American Contributions on the Civil War Memorial project at Lancaster Park. The Bond Bill was revised to name the UCAC and County as co-grantees of the Bond Bill funding. It is anticipated that construction will begin in late fall 2011 and that the memorial will be completed in spring 2012.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Recreation Division Manager Position – Mr. Rollins informed the Board that the interviews were recently held for the Recreation Division Manager position. He thanked members Sabrina Hecht and Julie Lemmon for volunteering to serve on the selection committee. It is expected that a selection will be announced in the near future.
- Chairperson Rush asked about the possibility of developing a list of projects that volunteers, Scouts, and others could assist the Department with when they come forward to volunteer. Mr. Rollins stated that's something he will refer to the Parks Division.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, September 1, 2011, at 5:30 p.m., in Chesapeake Building in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder, (from video recording)

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on September 1, 2011.