

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD  
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY  
Thursday, September 1, 2016**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tom Nelson, Chairperson; Doug Bellis, Vice-Chairperson; Dick Buckler, Jake Heibel, Caroline King and Fred Parker.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Patrick Murphy and Ashley Varner.

**RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT:** Brian Loewe, R&P Director, and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Also in attendance was Adam Bossi, Project Manager, GreenPlay LLC, the consulting firm working on the update of the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Three citizens were also in attendance for the LPPRP discussion.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Dick Buckler moved, seconded by Doug Bellis, to approve the minutes of August 4, 2016; motion with all in favor.**

**LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS & RECREATION PLAN UPDATE**

Director Brian Loewe introduced Adam Bossi, Project Manager, of GreenPlay LLC, the firm that has been contracted to update the County's Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Presentation highlights included:

- Plan updated every five years
- Prerequisite for participation in Program Open Space local side program
- The LPPRP is a tool for the County that provides information for decision making
- Planning process includes review of existing County and State plans and documents; public stakeholder input; new and updated data; and analysis and visioning.
- Provides updated goals and recommendations for recreation, agriculture preservation, and natural resource conservation for the next 5 – 15 years
- Assists the State with preparation of the 2019 statewide Land Preservation and Recreation Plan
- Web based survey to be activated by 9/9/16
- Stakeholders meetings 8/21 – 9/2; public input meeting with R&P Board today
- Draft recommendations presented to R&P Board on 10/6/16
- Draft plan presented to Planning Commission on 11/14/16
- Draft plan presented to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County on 12/13/16
- Feedback from the State anticipated in spring 2017
- Final plan due to the state by 7/1/17

Comments from Recreation and Parks Board members:

- Caroline King – She is hearing from the public that there is a lack of indoor recreation space in the County.
- Tom Nelson – There is a need for tournament quality athletic fields.
- Jake Heibel – Expressed support for indoor facilities for year-round recreation. Citizens have come to expect these facilities in communities today.

Comments from citizens:

- Chris Bologna – recommended the draft plan be reviewed by the Emergency Services and

Technology Department; Director Loewe stated the draft will be provided to that Department for review through the planning process.

- Marisa Mansueti – stated the County needs a year-round tennis facility; lights on more outdoor courts; and additional restrooms.

Mr. Bossi stated that from the five stakeholder meetings held earlier today, staff is hearing that citizens are pleased with what is being provided, but would like additional and enhanced amenities. Also noted were issues with aging public facilities (old school buildings with operational challenges). Other challenges/needs noted today include:

- Desire for increased access to the waterfront
- Trail enhancements and ways to make connections in communities
- Arts and cultural center
- Mountain biking options
- Museum enhancements and funding to sustain operation over time
- League sports needs – sports running year-round so fields don't get a rest
- Pickle ball growing in popularity; need courts
- Rugby group needs a dedicated field
- Need to coordinate efforts with Tourism and Hospitality master plan

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

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

- Lancaster Park – Construction is underway to add additional multi-purpose athletic fields, parking and an entrance road within John G. Lancaster Park at Willows Road.
- Three Notch Trail Phase VI – Ribbon cutting ceremony was held on July 26, 2016.
- Three Notch Trail Phase VII – Concept plan approved by the CSMC on August 30, 2016.
- Snow Hill Farm – CSMC signed a contract of sale on August 2, 2016. The property consists of 158± acres of property located along the Patuxent River in the Sandgates area of the County.
- Park Improvements – various parks are receiving ADA upgrades and asphalt overlay.
- Great Mills Pool – staff is researching options for upcoming bubble replacement for the pool.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

**St. Mary's Century Bike Ride** - Fred Parker noted that the St. Mary's Century bike ride will take place in the County on Saturday, September 13, 2016 from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm. The charity is partnering with the Semper Fi Fund to provide support to injured Marines and their families. Riders have options of rides of about 100 miles, 50 miles and 25 miles. One stop is at Baggett Park; all rest stops have portable restrooms.

## **NEXT MEETING OF R&P BOARD**

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, October 6, 2016.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on October 6, 2016.