

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Thursday, October 2, 2014
MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Buckler, Chairperson; Phil Cranford, Sabrina Hecht, Tom Nelson, David Phalen, James Swift, Ashley Varner and Lisa Wainger-Rush

MEMBERS ABSENT: Patrick Murphy.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Loewe, Director; David Guyther, Parks Division Manager; Jessica Hale, Recreation Division Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Nelson moved, seconded by Lisa Wainger-Rush, to approve the minutes of September 4, 2014, with two changes; motion carried 8-0.

PARKS DIVISION REPORT

Director Brian Loewe introduced David Guyther, Parks Manager, who provided a report on the Parks Division projects and activities. Mr. Guyther also provided a Power Point presentation with pictures of: Piney Point pier replacement project to be complete by end of November; new Bocce ball court at Chancellor's Run Regional Park; athletic field areas at Chaptico Park and Chancellor's Run; and the new BMX Strider track at Chaptico Park. Tennis court maintenance work was done at various parks. There is a need to address parking issues at Dorsey Park and Hollywood Soccer Fields for spring and fall soccer seasons. Set-up and break-down for various County and other events continues to take a considerable amount of staff time.

RECREATION ENTERPRISE FUND REPORT

Director Brian Loewe introduced Jessica Hale, Recreation Division Manager, who provided a report on the Recreation Division Enterprise Fund. She provided handouts titled: Recreation Division Organizational Chart; Revenue and Expense Actuals Report FY09-FY14; Year to Date Report as of September 9, 2014; Revenue/Expense Program Summary Report FY14 Budget/Actual; and Summary of Utility Costs FY13 - FY14.

Ms. Hale noted the challenges for the Enterprise Fund including funding new programs (such as Paralympics); maintaining and managing aging facilities (Carver, Hollywood and Margaret Brent Recreation Centers); and the costs associated with maintaining the Great Mills Pool and Gymnastics Center facilities.

David Phalen asked if there are any programs that R&P can't offer because of not being able to be in the schools. Ms. Hale stated it's not that the programs aren't being offered; just that there are fewer options due to location of available R&P sites and associated costs to run programs.

Fees and charges for all programs are examined during the budget cycle. The Department

strives to maintain a balance in having programs pay for themselves, while not pricing customers out of activities.

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 now 95% complete. It is hoped that conversion of the storm water management facilities and over seeding of the fields can take place this fall, weather permitting. The work on the asphalt pathway is now complete. The new fields are anticipated to be ready for use in spring 2015.

Civil War Interpretive Center at Lancaster Park

Work is nearing completion on the interior renovation of the former "Flat Tops" house at Lancaster Park. The project is anticipated to be complete in fall 2014; a ribbon cutting ceremony will likely be held in November or December.

Leonardtwn Park Design and Engineering Project

The park's draft concept plan includes multi-purpose fields, baseball/softball fields, a playground, dog park, restroom building, and parking. A Phase II archeology study is required on specific areas of the site and that work is underway. The concept planning is on hold until the results of the survey are received.

Three Notch Trail Phase VI

It is anticipated that the Concurrence in Award package will be sent to the Maryland State Highway Administration in the near future for approval to award a contract. Phase VI will run from MD Route 5, at Gospel Light Baptist Church, to MD Route 236, Thompson's Corner Road. When this section of the trail is complete the trail in the northern area of the County will be 11 miles long (one way).

Property Acquisition – Former Shannon Farms Property

The County executed a contract for sale of real estate for the Best Industries, Inc. (former Shannon Farm) property on September 16, 2014. The purchase of this 212± acre property is a partnership between the Navy, MD DNR and St. Mary's County. The purchase will provide space for additional passive recreational and waterfront activities for citizens and help to buffer the PAX River Naval Air Station from encroachments in the future.

Property Acquisition – Dennison Property

The County executed a contract of purchase and sale for the acquisition of a ½ acre property along the path of the Three Notch Trail on September 30, 2014. The acquisition will provide green/open space to buffer the trail and improve site distance and safety for trail users near the intersection of Mechanicsville Road and Church Lane.

Lisa Wainger-Rush asked if the Board might discuss trends and goals as they pertain to the approved Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan; Mr. Loewe stated that can be scheduled.

NEXT MEETING OF R&P BOARD

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, November 6, 2014. Board members will visit the recently improved Jarboesville Park Tennis Courts and the USCT Memorial Interpretive Center at Lancaster Park. There will be no minutes taken for the

site visits.

Members thanked Sabrina Hecht for her service on the Board as this will be her last Board meeting. She is a reservist in the United States Marine Corps and will be mobilizing for approximately one year overseas.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on December 4, 2014.