

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY**

Meeting of Thursday, January 6, 2005

MINUTES

Board members present: Dr. Andrew Roper, Chairperson, Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chairperson, Chris Brugman, Dorothy Gass, Jody Payne and Robert Richardson.

Board members absent: Sam Brown, Greg Hambright and Robert Harper.

Recreation, Parks and Community Services staff present: Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation, Parks & Community Services (RP&CS), Sue Veith, Environmental Planner, Land Use & Growth Management (LU&GM); and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Elliot Rhodeside, of Rhodeside and Harwell, Inc. attended to provide an overview of the proposed Myrtle Point Park planning process.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Dr. Andrew Roper, Chairperson, at 5:30 P.M. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown. Chairperson Roper welcomed new member Chris Brugman to the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Robert Richardson motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, to approve the minutes of December 2, 2004; motion carried 5-0 (Mr. Brugman abstained from voting since he did not attend the December Board meeting).

MYRTLE POINT PARK MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

Director Phil Rollins referred to the background information on the Myrtle Point Park master planning process that was provided to Board members during the last meeting. Handouts included the draft scope of work for the project, the previously approved and later rescinded master plan for the park, a Report and Recommendations developed by a Myrtle Point Task Force in March 1995 and a Proposed Plan for Myrtle Point Park submitted by the Friends of Myrtle Point Park group. He added that the County acquired the 192-acre waterfront property on the Patuxent River in the mid 1990's and since that time it has been used by the public for hiking, nature study, bird watching, picnics, wading along the two miles of shoreline and fishing.

Mr. Rollins introduced Elliot Rhodeside, of the park planning firm of Rhodeside and Harwell. Inc., who will be developing the master plan for the park. Mr. Rhodeside, Sue Veith, Environmental Planner, LU&CM, and two representatives from the Friends of Myrtle Point Park met today to plan the "kick-off" for the master planning process. Rhodeside and Harwell developed a master plan for the park in 1998 that was adopted by the BOCC and later rescinded. A revised concept plan was presented to the R&P Board in June 1999 and a presentation by the consultant to the Planning Commission was scheduled for July 1999, but was subsequently cancelled when the Commissioners at that time decided to place the master planning process on hold until they could devote the necessary time to properly address the project.

Mr. Rhodeside stated that he is pleased to begin work on this master planning project again for this very special park property. He outlined a draft scope of work of how the master planning project would progress. Items included review and update of maps of the property, the plan for the proposed half-day public workshop, development of the illustrative draft master plan, meetings with staff to incorporate comments from the R&P Board, Planning Commission and the BOCC and preparation of the final master plan document.

He recommended that a public workshop be held on a Saturday or Sunday morning in late February or early March. He thinks the workshop should be held on a weekend instead of an evening to obtain input from a larger number of citizens. The public workshop would provide a brief history of the project, presentation of the background maps and information, and then focus on an interactive series of discussions with breakout groups to generate ideas about the vision and

possible program for the park. Breakout groups would then present their findings to the entire group of attendees. Staff plans to video tape the meeting to broadcast on Channel 12 in hopes of obtaining additional public input after the workshop. Several Board members expressed preference for either Saturday or Sunday for the workshop; Mr. Rollins noted that scheduling of the workshop will also depend on availability of the meeting place. Only one workshop is planned due to the consultant's schedule and project budget constraints.

Mr. Rollins introduced Mary Piatrowski, the interim President of the Friends of Myrtle Point Park group, who was present to provide information on the group's work and mission as requested by a Board member last month. Ms. Piatrowski stated that the members of the Friends of Myrtle Point Park come from diverse backgrounds. They regularly assist Parks staff in maintaining and caring for the park. They work closely with Bill Ball, the Parks Manager, with clean up and trail placement, development and maintenance. They are very interested in bringing others into their group that have varied interests to help promote the park and its educational opportunities. The Friends group has offered to help look for grants to help with park projects and to market the park as a tourist attraction. Mr. Rollins thanked the Friends and others for their assistance with the network of trails in the park and for their work on the project to eliminate invasive plant species from the park.

After input and consideration from the public, R&P Board, Planning Commission and the BOCC, staff expects the master plan will be adopted by summer 2005.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, provided a status report on Recreation Division programs and activities.

- Registration is now open for RP&CS Leisure classes, self defense and trips and tours.
- The Winter 2005 program guide also includes a summer camp preview.
- The Great Mills Swimming Pool is offering early bird lap swimming through January on a trial basis; admission is \$3 per person and staff must have 18 enrolled for the program to continue.
- The High School swim program is off to a great start at Great Mills Swimming Pool; several successful meets have been held at the site.
- Indoor soccer begins at the Carver Recreation Center this weekend; the program has over 40 teams enrolled.
- Leonard Hall Recreation Center has over 100 teams registered for indoor winter recreation; registered are 66 soccer teams and 17 lacrosse teams.
- The Youth Basketball program begins this week at seven public school sites; the league has over 1,000 participants on 108 teams.
- Before and After School centers conducted field trips to the White House, Great Mills Pool and to the Calvert Marine Museum during Christmas break.

Coleman Hillman inquired about the new trips and tours being offered. Mr. Shepherd stated that the Department has decided to offer trips and tours this spring as a result of requests from citizens. Planned trips include the Medieval Dinner Theater at Arundel Mills Mall, National Cherry Blossom Festival and Parade, a day on your own in New York City and a trip to the National Zoo in Washington. He noted that a minimum number of registrations must be received in order to conduct the trips and tours.

YOUTH SPORTS PRESENTATION

Mr. Rollins stated that as a result of a previous Board discussion, over the next several months youth sports leagues will be invited to make presentations to the Board about their operation, successes, challenges and plans for the future. Mr. Rollins introduced Sports Coordinator Kenny Sothoron who oversees the Department's sports programs at RP&CS locations and at various St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS) sites. Mr. Sothoron stated that the Youth Basketball program is off to a great start this season. Teams range from Biddy Basketball (First and Second grade), Third and Fourth grade, Fifth and Sixth grade, Seventh and Eighth grade and a Co-ed Ninth and Tenth grade league. This year, a select boys Seventh and Eighth league has been established with great support from SMCPS. Games are held at seven schools and practices are held at several others. Gym supervisors and score keepers are present at each site and two referees are provided for each game (except for the Third and Fourth graders who have one referee per game). One of

the biggest challenges he's encountered with youth sports is finding referees for programs; he thinks this will become more difficult in the years to come.

PROJECT UPDATES

Three Notch Trail – The pre-bid meeting for phase I of the Three Notch Trail was held today with four contractors in attendance. Bids are due on February 3, 2005 and staff hopes to begin construction in March with completion by June 2005.

Chaptico Park – The park is now complete and a ribbon cutting ceremony will be held in the spring. Staff has been meeting with the Northern Soccer League regarding relocating their program to Chaptico Park. Some have expressed concern about the additional drive time to Chaptico Park from northern areas of the County. Hopefully, most games will be played at Chaptico with some practices still being held at Fifth District Park.

Nicolet Park – Phase II of Nicolet Park is now complete which includes basketball courts, a baseball field and a multipurpose field. Staff hopes to hold the ribbon cutting for Phase II, on a Tuesday afternoon, later this spring. Also, a citizen approached the Department about installing a flag pole and commemorative plaque in memory of Joe Shepherd to recognize his dedication to youth baseball in Lexington Park in the 1970's. It is envisioned that the flag pole and plaque would be dedicated during the ribbon cutting ceremony for Phase II of the park.

Charlotte Hall Community Recreation Center/Park Master Plan

Interviews with architectural/engineering firms for site analysis and master planning for the 40 acre Northern Senior Center property and design and engineering for the community recreation center were held on December 21st. The selected A/E team consists of Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani; Crozier and Associates; and Colimore Gallow Architects. A price will be negotiated for this work and a contract offered in the near future.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board of St. Mary's County will be held at 5:30 P.M. on Thursday, February 3, 2005 in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on February 3, 2005.