

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Meeting of Thursday, November 5, 2009**

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Patrick Dugan, Chairperson; Robert Richardson, Vice-Chairperson; Richard Buckler, Al Harrison, Sabrina Hecht, Robert Hicks, Tom Nelson and David Phalen.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lisa Wainger-Rush.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Rollins, Director; Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder; all from Recreation and Parks. Chris Pixton, President, Pax River Raiders; and Virginia Terhune, County Times newspaper; also attended the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Patrick Dugan, Chairperson, at 5:35 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Robert Hicks moved, seconded by David Phalen, to approve the minutes of October 1, 2009; motion carried 7-0.

PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Rollins provided a handout with pictures of several capital projects in various stages of development.

Three Notch Trail Phase IVA – The project is now approximately 90% complete. This phase is about ¼ mile and is located between Wal-Mart and Chancellor's Run Road. The last few feet of trail construction is being coordinated with SHA contractors to provide the connection to Chancellor's Run Road. Phase IV of the trail is intended to be approximately three miles in length and run from Wal-Mart to Pegg Road (Gate one of the Naval Air Station). Phase IV of the trail will be constructed in two sections. The section of the trail from Chancellor's Run Road to Pegg Road (B) will be designed and constructed by the County in coordination with FDR Blvd.

Mr. Rollins noted that he recently attended the dedication of the Indian Head Rail Trail in Charles County. The County took advantage of the opportunity to purchase the old railroad bed from the federal government. They had very few issues and were able to develop the entire 13 miles at a very reasonable cost using County resources.

Disc Golf Course – Mr. Rollins reported that the installation of the disc golf course is now complete. A ribbon cutting ceremony with local volunteers and the R&P Board and staff was held on October 20, 2009. He thanked Sabrina Hecht, Al Harrison and David

Phalen for attending the ceremony on behalf of the Board. He also reported that the fitness trail around the perimeter of the park is open for use.

Charlotte Hall Athletic Fields - This project will construct athletic fields on undeveloped land adjacent to Fifth District Park and Lettie M. Dent Elementary School. The fields are needed for youth soccer, football and lacrosse practice to meet the growing demand in New Market, Charlotte Hall and Golden Beach. Mr. Rollins showed four concept sketches for the fields; concept 2 presents the best scenario for the project. An engineering firm has been selected to design and engineer the athletic fields and it is anticipated that the site plan will be submitted for the January 2010 TEC review cycle. Staff anticipates the project will be under construction by fall/winter 2010.

Carver Heights Community Park - The installation of the playground is anticipated to begin on or before November 30th; upgrades and repairs to the walkways will be done after the playground is installed. The parking areas will be repaired and seal coated in the next few weeks.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, provided an update on Recreation Division programs and activities.

- Youth Basketball – Registration will begin on November 9th at the R&P main office and at various gym locations.
- Leonard Hall Recreation Center – Registrations begin on November 11th for programs at the LHRC.
- Swim Lessons – Registration will begin on November 14th.
- On-line Registration – This new option will be available beginning December 2, 2009. This includes classes, lessons and trips and tours.
- Middle School Basketball – The Middle School Basketball program started the week of October 26th with 8 teams and 85 young people participating.
- Cheerleading Program – The Cheerleading program is off to a great start with 3 teams and 51 girls participating.
- Carver After School Program – The program currently has an average daily attendance of 25. This program is being offered in cooperation with SMC Public Schools, Recreation and Parks and the 21st Century grant program.
- Fall Fitness Festival – Despite the inclement weather, the Fall Fitness Festival was a success; the Department looks forwarding to hosting this event again next year.
- Gymnastics Program – The Gymnastics program is currently a \$308,000 self-supporting operation. Salaries make up 62% of the budget; 23% goes to rent (including taxes); and the remaining amount goes to utilities, equipment and other operating expenses and staff development. Session 2 just registered 462 youth; this is 77 above last year at this time. The competitive team registered 62; last year saw 59.

Robert Hicks asked if additional staff would be hired to enable class sizes for younger children to be smaller; Mr. Shepherd stated that while the Department wants to fully maximize the facility, we want to provide the best recreational experience possible. He will discuss this with staff.

YOUTH FOOTBALL DISCUSSION

Mr. Rollins referred to a memo that was previously provided to the Board that outlined the status of youth football administration in St. Mary's County. Staff is recommending a football "club model" where the R&P Sports Coordinator serves as the League Commissioner. In this scenario, youth football clubs would be established in various communities to handle player registration, fundraising, recruitment of coaches and the formation of teams. Each club would enter their teams into age/weight divisions within the League. Each individual club would be responsible for providing their own equipment. League operations would be managed by R&P with the assistance of a Board of Directors which would consist of the presidents of each club. R&P would handle functions such as scheduling of games, contracting with officials, game supervision, conducting player weigh-ins, addressing inappropriate behavior and determining disciplinary action.

Staff has been meeting on this with the two local football leagues over the past several weeks. The Southern Maryland Youth Football League (SMYFL) has now indicated that it supports the proposed club model. However, the Pax River Raiders would like to continue participating in the Calvert County League. R&P recommends that this model be offered for the 2010 season, with participation completely voluntarily.

In order to ensure an adequate number of teams in the lower age and weight divisions (i.e. having enough teams to play an in-County schedule), the size of the Raiders organization would need to be capped. Beginning with the 2010 season, Mr. Pixton has agreed to limit the Raiders tackle football organization as follows:

Pee Wee Division	Max of 3 teams
70 lb. Division	Max of 3 teams
80 lb. Division	Max of 3 teams
90 lb. Division	Max of 1 team
100 lb. Division	Max of 1 team
120 lb. Division	Max of 1 team
Unlimited Division	Max of 1 team

This total of 13 teams would be a reduction of 5 teams from the current 18 team Pax River Raider organization.

This proposed plan needs to be formalized with the SMYFL and the Pax River Raiders by December 31, 2009 in order to begin planning for the 2010 season. Staff is confident that no additional County funds will be required for this. If the club football program is established, any new inquiries regarding youth football would be limited to establishing a club within the R&P administered league. The Pax River Raiders Club would be grandfathered and could continue to participate in the Calvert County league as long as they don't exceed the agreed upon number of teams per age/weight division. The door would remain open for the Raiders to enter their teams into the new St. Mary's League in the future. Fields for practice and games would be assigned equitably by R&P based upon the needs of both programs.

If club football is established for the 2010 season, there are some areas of program management that will need to be addressed in the near future with club input; they include:

1. Determining age and weight divisions
2. Determining guidelines for establishing clubs
3. Determining whether to establish geographic boundaries for clubs
4. Establishing guidelines for weigh-ins, game day procedures, and league administration
5. Determining league fees (including field supervision)
6. Coaches' background checks and training (recommend for next year that all coaches be trained and certified); how that is paid for will need to be worked out.

Robert Richardson asked about field scheduling between the two leagues; Mr. Rollins stated that staff is committed to working that out with the St. Mary's County league and the Pax River Raiders.

Sabrina Hecht asked if Pax River Raiders would be playing any St. Mary's County teams; Mr. Shepherd stated that there is potential to play St. Mary's County teams in the upper weight/older divisions.

Chairman Dugan thanked Mr. Pixton for his cooperation and asked him why the Raiders wouldn't be joining the new league. Mr. Pixton stated that Calvert County has welcomed them and why leave now; down the road they may want to join the St. Mary's League. They want to see how the organization moves forward; they are happy where they are. He added that the Raiders are supportive of what R&P is recommending for youth football.

Robert Hicks moved, seconded by Sabrina Hecht, to endorse the proposal presented by staff for the club football model in St. Mary's County and to send a letter to the Board of County Commissioners expressing support for the proposal. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mr. Rollins provided a brief summary of the recommended R&P Capital Project budget submission. Existing projects include:

- Chaptico Park Phased Development – FY2011 through FY2013
- Parkland and Facility Acquisition – FY2011 through FY2016 (it should be noted that the POS acquisition funding amounts are rough estimates).
- Park Roads, Parking and Access – FY2012 & FY2013 (Cecil Park is the next park proposed for these upgrades).
- Piney Point Lighthouse Museum – FY2011 through FY2014 (continuation of an ongoing project to improve visitor access, parking, landscaping and stormwater management).
- Recreation Facilities and Parks Improvements – FY2011 through FY2015 (painting, flooring for LHRC, fencing, etc.).
- Tennis Court Improvements – FY2011 through FY2013

- Three Notch Trail Phases Six through Nine - FY2011 through FY202015 and beyond (phase six runs from MD Route 5 to New Market; design and engineering is complete for phase five from Baggett Park to MD Route 5).

New projects include:

- Elms Beach Park (reinstatement) - FY2013 & FY2014 (this project is being proposed again due to increased usage at the park; parking, restrooms, pavilion, etc).
- Basketball Court renovations - FY2015 (to renovate some existing courts).
- Drayden African American Schoolhouse - FY2015 & FY2016
- Indian Bridge Road Park – FY2014 through FY2016 (planning and construction for this new park on land acquired last year).
- Lancaster Park Parking Addition – FY2013 & FY2014
- LPPRP Planning Grant – FY2011 (requirement to update the 2005 plan).
- St. Clement’s Island Museum – FY2012 through FY2015 (facility modernization and other improvements).
- Wicomico Shores Waterfront Park Restroom Building Replacement – FY2012 (State WWI funds to replace this restroom)
- River Springs Pier Replacement – FY2011 (WWI funds to replace aging pier).

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that consideration may need to be given to having the County complete several small sections of the trail in the California area that were previously expected to be built by developers. Sections in question include parts of Wildewood, First Colony, Kmart and St. Mary’s Marketplace. These may become priorities over phases seven through nine. Bob Hicks asked for an overall map of the trail for the next meeting.

Another update on Capital Projects will be provided during the next Board meeting. Mr. Rollins noted that the County has a balance of state POS funds that are not currently earmarked for projects. This funding could be lost due to the state’s fiscal crisis.

He also noted that the state is expected to make another round of budget cuts in the near future, which may affect the operating budget.

OTHER BUSINESS

Alcohol Consumption Permit - Mr. Rollins presented a request from the Friends of the Museum Division for an alcohol consumption permit for the annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner to be held on December 8, 2009.

David Phalen moved, seconded by Robert Richardson, to approve the Alcohol Consumption Permit for the Friends of the Museum for the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. Motion carried 7-0.

Nominating Committee – David Phalen and Sabrina Hecht volunteered to serve on the nominating committee for the election of officers to be held during the next Board meeting.

Punt, Pass and Kick - Mr. Richardson informed the Board that the Punt, Pass and Kick Sectional Competition will be held on Sunday, November 8th. Sectional winners will have the chance to compete at a FedEx Field on December 6th.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 5:30 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on December 3, 2009.