

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Meeting of Thursday, January 5, 2006**

MINUTES

Board members present: Andrew Roper, Chairperson, Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chairperson, Dorothy Gass, Robert Harper, Robert Richardson, Jody Payne and Lisa Wainger Rush.

Board members absent: Sam Brown and Patrick Dugan.

Recreation, Parks and Community Services staff and others present: Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation, Parks & Community Services (RP&CS) and Kathy Bailey, Recorder.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Andrew Roper, Chairperson, at 5:30 p.m. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jody Payne motioned, seconded by Robert Richardson, to approve the minutes of December 1, 2005. Motion carried with all in favor.

PROJECT UPDATES

Charlotte Hall Property Master Plan – The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) previously provided direction to staff to move forward with the Charlotte Hall property master plan. Amenities being considered for the site include senior housing, an indoor recreation/multi-generational center and a swimming pool. All of these are compatible with and complimentary to the existing Senior Center. Staff met with representatives from Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani on December 12, 2005 to resume discussions on developing a draft master plan. The St. Mary's County Housing Authority and the Department of Aging are taking the lead on the senior housing aspect of the planning project. A preliminary plan is expected to be presented to the R&P Board in March.

Wicomico Shores Golf Course Clubhouse Renovation/Expansion – A Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) is being used to request basic information from interested general contractors. An evaluation process will then be used to pre-select a qualified general contractor to work with the County to complete the project through a design/build process. The REOI was advertised the week of December 4th. A site visit/walk through with general contractors was held on December 21st. Expressions of interest are due by January 20, 2006.

The project will expand the square footage under roof on the ground level of the existing building and it will relocate the golf shop and food and beverage operation upstairs near the existing banquet room. The lower level of the building will be renovated to accommodate golf carts and storage. The Clubhouse renovation is anticipated to cost between \$1 million and \$1.5 million and will be paid for entirely from golf revenues. Some of the funding for the project will come from existing revenues in the Golf Enterprise Fund. The balance will be borrowed through a County initiated exempt financing process and the loan will be re-paid from annual golf course revenues.

Robert Harper asked if the building has been determined to be structurally sound. Mr. Rollins stated that the Clubhouse building was evaluated in 2004. The structural engineer concluded that the existing structure doesn't meet current building codes for load capacity for the lower level ceiling/upper level banquet room flooring, but this could be corrected by constructing additional beams and support columns during the renovation.

Great Mills Canoe/Kayak Launch – The County acquired approximately 2 acres of property in Great Mills at the head

waters of the St. Mary's River (former Mansfield property). The project was approved for funding in FY06 in the amount of \$25,000 to provide a walkway to the stream and a step-down platform to the water for canoe and kayak launching. Plans and specifications from a similar project in Leonardtown may be used for this project. The Parks Division has cleaned up the area and expects to receive assistance from the Maryland Conservation Corps in the spring to remove some fallen trees that are blocking the waterway. A ribbon cutting of the launch site will be done in spring 2006.

DRAFT FY07-12 RP&CS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

Mr. Rollins provided the Board with a draft FY2007-2012 Capital Improvements Program handout outlining proposed capital projects and funding sources. The draft will be forwarded to the BOCC within the next few weeks. Members were asked to refer to project detail sheets for specific project details.

Project recommendations include:

- **Piney Point Lighthouse Museum Renovation** – prior approval, FY07-08
 - Work will continue to complete the museum complex and grounds.
- **Three Notch Trail** – prior approval, FY07-12
 - Project will continue development of the Three Notch Trail, a ten-foot wide asphalt, multi-use recreational trail being constructed on the County-owned railroad right-of-way.
- **Tennis Court Replacement** – FY07-11
 - Replace surfacing on tennis courts in County parks through FY11.
- **Piney Point Lighthouse Museum Shore Erosion** – prior approval, FY07-08
 - The project will utilize two State loans to correct a serious erosion problem threatening the Piney Point Lighthouse.
- **Myrtle Point Park** – prior approval, FY10-12
 - Funding is being requested to begin implementation of the master plan which includes amenities such as a visitor/nature center, a canoe and kayak launch, picnic area, trails, restrooms, boardwalks, a small amphitheatre, parking and shoreline access.
- **Central County Park** – FY07 & FY12
 - The Department is proposing to combine what previously had been two separate park acquisition projects into one project. The proposed waterfront park would serve a regional purpose and possibly include athletic fields, a playground, picnic shelters, pathways, water access, etc.
- **Gymnastics Center** – FY11-12
 - This project would construct a 15,000 s.f. gymnastics center in FY11-12.
- **St. Mary's College Amphitheater** – FY07-08
 - This project is a partnership between St. Mary's College of Maryland, the County and the State for a permanent stage and covering, support building, and infrastructure for the successful River Concert Series.
- **Leonard Hall Recreation Center improvements** – FY07
 - The project will provide air circulation in the gymnasium and shower facilities for this heavily used indoor recreation center.
- **Lancaster Park Improvements** – FY07
 - The project will utilize a State grant to construct an off-leash dog park and hard surface pathway around the park.
- **Park ADA Improvements (Playground Replacements)** – FY07
 - The project will enable the replacement of old playgrounds at Elms Beach Park and Cecil Park
- **Lacrosse Fields** – FY07
 - The project will construct a small, gravel parking lot for informal playing fields being established for the St. Mary's Girls lacrosse league.
- **Derelict Boat Removal** – prior approval, FY07-12
 - The County generally receives this grant from the State to remove derelict boats and obstructions from the waterways of the State within St. Mary's County.
- **Patuxent River Public Landing** – prior approval, FY07-09
 - Proposed to acquire 2-3 acres of property and develop a public landing including a boat ramp, pier and parking area for public access to the Patuxent River in the central part of the County.

- **Clarke's Landing Boat Ramp** – FY08-09
 - The County will request funds in FY08-09 for design, engineering and construction of a replacement boat ramp on the Patuxent River in Hollywood.
- **Forest Landing** – FY07
 - For design, engineering and replacement of approximately 140 ft. of existing bulkhead that is badly deteriorated.
- **Wicomico Shores Public Landing** – FY07
 - Replace 330 ft. of pier that is badly deteriorated; the first 770 ft. of the pier was replaced as a result of damage from Hurricane Isabel.
- **Wicomico Shores Public Landing Parking** – FY09
 - Acquire approximately 1.25 acres of property adjacent to the Wicomico Shores Public Landing for parking.

Chairperson Andy Roper asked if the Department has a priority list of projects in the event that cuts need to be made. Mr. Rollins stated that has not been done at this point; he is hopeful that each of these projects will move forward as recommended.

Chairperson Roper stated that he has heard that there is a concern that the Gymnastics participants are expected to pay for their facility. Mr. Rollins stated that is a valid concern, but they have exclusive use of the facility and that was part of the original agreement. Mr. Harper suggested that as the capital project moves forward the Board could continue to have discussions on whether user fees should fund the project.

Coleman Hillman stated that he would like to see the Gymnastics program move into a larger facility; he suggested that the leased location could be used for another activity and another home could be found for Gymnastics. He indicated a more centrally located facility may draw users from the north end of the County who now travel to Waldorf for gymnastics.

The Board discussed the St. Mary's College Amphitheatre project at length. The BOCC received a request from the College to partner in funding a permanent stage, cover and related infrastructure for the popular River Concert Series. The value of having such a facility in the County was noted; however, the Board expressed concern over the precedent of earmarking funds for a project that is not on County-owned property. Mr. Rollins stated that it's his understanding this project would provide tourism and economic benefits to the County. This would enhance cultural opportunities for all citizens. Lisa Rush stated that there is a need for a covered amphitheatre in the County.

Mr. Harper asked how this request would be different from a similar request from another group. Would a Memorandum of Understanding be developed? Is there an expectation that the general public would have access to the facility? Chairman Roper questioned if this project belongs in the RP&CS budget. Are we setting a precedent for similar requests? Chairman Roper expressed concern that if the BOCC were to look at the budget as a whole, then other RP&CS projects could suffer if cuts were needed to be made. Mr. Harper noted that the Department's previous request for a portable stage was not funded. Chairman Roper agreed to draft a letter to the BOCC asking for clarification as to why this project was introduced in this manner and ask that funds for this project will not be at the expense of other priorities previously identified by the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Robert Harper, motioned, seconded by Jody Payne, to meet in Executive Session to discuss matters of property acquisition as provided for in Article 24, Section 4-210(a)11. Motion carried 7-0.

Present: Andrew Roper, Chairman; Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chairman; Dorothy Gass, Robert Harper, Robert Richardson, Jody Payne, Lisa Wainger Rush, Phillip Rollins and Kathy Bailey.

Authority: Article 24, Sections 4-210(a)11.

Time held: 7:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

SELECTION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Jody Payne and Dorothy Gass agreed to serve as the nominating committee for the Election of Officers which will be held during the next meeting.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board of St. Mary's County will be held on Thursday, February 2, 2006, at 5:30 p.m., in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on February 2, 2006.