

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Meeting of Thursday, September 7, 2006**

MINUTES

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

Board members absent: Robert Harper and Patrick Dugan.

Recreation, Parks and Community Services staff and others present: Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation, Parks & Community Services (RP&CS); David Guyther, Parks Manager; Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; Kenny Sothoron, Sports Coordinator; and Zelma Pugh, Care Coordinator, Family Access Center.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Andrew Roper, Chairperson, at 5:35 p.m. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lisa Wainger-Rush motioned, seconded by Robert Richardson, to approve the minutes of July 6, 2006. Motion carried with all in favor.

OVERVIEW OF SERVICES PROVIDED TO CITIZENS BY THE FAMILY ACCESS CENTER

Zelma Pugh, Care Coordinator, Family Access Center, briefed the Board and those watching cable channel 95 on the services provided by the State-mandated Family Access Center. The Center's goal is to provide improved community based services for children and their families who are not served or who are underserved in the community. The specific goals of the program are:

- To improve access to services for children with intensive needs
- Develop community based resources for children with intensive needs and children at risk of residential placement
- Reduce the number of children in placement outside their home community

The Center provides:

- Information and referral
- Assessment of family and child needs
- Advocacy
- Care coordination

The Center is open for business and ready to accept referrals. Those interested should contact Ms. Pugh at (301) 863-6644 during the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

PARKS DIVISION REPORT

Director Phil Rollins introduced David Guyther, Parks Manager, who provided a Parks Division update for the Board. Mr. Rollins thanked Mr. Guyther, Parks Division employees and Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, for their help with the tropical storm Ernesto response effort. Mr. Guyther reported that only minor damage was experienced at parks and public landings from the storm. Most of the damage consisted of downed tree limbs, scattered trash cans and other debris. Staff also helped distribute dry ice to citizens who were without electricity.

- Mr. Guyther reported that Bermuda grass has been installed on two soccer fields at Chancellor's Run Regional Park. This grass should be more heat and drought resistant

- and should be ready for use by October 1st. The St. Mary's Soccer League provided funding to assist with this project.
- New playgrounds will be installed in October at Elms Beach Park and Cecil Park; they should be ready for use in November.
 - The marine contractor began work on the Wicomico Shores Public Landing pier to replace the remaining 300 ft. section which was not replaced after Hurricane Isabel due to fiscal constraints.
 - Mr. Guyther noted that requests for assistance with set-up and break-down for special events have increased significantly over the past few years. About 5 years ago, the Parks Division assisted with 18-20 events per year; they have assisted with 23 already this year, with an estimated 8 more remaining.

Robert Richardson stated that there are 3 lights out at Fifth District Park; Mr. Guyther will check into getting those fixed.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, provided an update on the following items.

- The Great Mills Pool is closed for two weeks (September 5 – 17th) for seasonal maintenance, staff training and to install the air-supported "bubble" structure. The pool facility was without electricity from Friday, September 1st through Tuesday, September 5th due to tropical storm Ernesto.
- Mr. Shepherd met with Gymnastics Center Booster Club parents last week to talk about programming and where fees and charges are used.
- Leisure program registration opened on Wednesday, August 30th.
- The Division opened nine school age centers on the first day of school for before and after school care.
- Several Korean cultural exchange students worked in St. Mary's County for four weeks this summer; three of the students worked with the RP&CS summer camps.
- With the assistance of Christi Bishop, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, the Public Information Office and IT, the County government ADA webpage is now up and running.
- Fall sports registration is in full swing; this includes field hockey, lacrosse, roller hockey and lacrosse.

STATUS REPORT ON RAISING COMMUNITY STANDARDS IN YOUTH SPORTS

Mr. Rollins, Mr. Shepherd and Kenny Sothoron, Sports Coordinator, provided an update to the Board on the status of implementing the Raising Community Standards in Youth Sports Initiative.

Interviews are scheduled next week for the Sports Specialist position who will assist with implementing the initiative. The position was advertised locally and nationally; thirty-six applications were received and seven candidates will be interviewed.

Mr. Rollins stated that BOCC adoption of the initiative has brought some nationwide attention to St. Mary's County. The National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) included an article about St. Mary's County's initiative in its summer newsletter. Later, Fred Eng, President, National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) invited Mr. Rollins to participate in a panel discussion on Sirius radio on the issues faced today in youth sports. Mr. Rollins has also been asked to be a presenter at the Fifth Annual National Youth Sports Congress in Washington, D.C. later this month. This past week, he was contacted by USA Today which published an article in reaction to an incident at a youth football game that occurred in California; a second article in that paper focused on what is being done to help prevent these types of incidents and mentioned St. Mary's County.

Mr. Shepherd provided the following report on the status of implementing the initiative as of August 30, 2006.

- All the volunteer youth sports leagues have the Parent's Code of Ethics forms signed and on file.
- All leagues attended the Administrator Training on August 8, 2006; Pigskin Football League provided verbal documentation that the training had been provided (Trude Kemp, league Treasurer, is certified by NAYS to provide this training).
- All leagues have had the NAYS Coaches Training or comparable training; staff is waiting for documentation from Pigskin Football and Southern County Football.
- Background check information is in the process of being received from leagues. Several leagues still need to send in additional information; Pigskin Football has promised to send in their information next week.

Mr. Shepherd stated he feels this is a good start for the first season of the program. Only one background check to date has come back with a disqualifier. A status report on the initiative will be provided to the Board each season. In the future, the goal will be to have all training and background checks done before actual playing seasons begin.

PROJECT UPDATES

- Chaptico Park - Mechanicsville Volunteer Fire Department (MVFD) Request for Land Donation – Mr. Rollins informed the Board that he continues to have discussions with MVFD regarding their request for land at Chaptico Park for a substation. Mr. Rollins provided the Board with a copy of a letter he sent to the MVFD regarding the BOCC's agreement in concept to an alternative site on undeveloped park property northwest of the Farrell residence. The conveyance will depend upon getting a perk test for the facility, an agreement with the owners of a small parcel of land in front of the park for an easement needed for the substation entrance road, and state and federal government approval of the conversion of park land to another use.
- Charlotte Hall Property Master Plan – Staff expects the committee working on the master plan for the 35-acre Charlotte Hall Property will meet again in October to finalize the plan. The issue of septic disposal has been a challenge with regard to the senior housing portion of the project. A letter was sent to the Veteran's Home to see if it is feasible to tie into that facility's treatment plant; a response is expected within the next few weeks from the Maryland Environmental Service which manages the Veteran's Home sewage treatment facility. Lisa Rush volunteered her assistance with the process, as she has a professional background in waste treatment.
- Three Notch Trail – The 100% design drawings for Phase II of the Three Notch Trail were received on July 25th and included all previous agency comments. They were sent back out for final agency review and approval; additional comments were received from agencies in August and September and are currently being incorporated. Staff hopes to receive final County approvals within the next few weeks. The plans will be sent to SHA for approval of the project solicitation package. The solicitation will be out to bid this fall/winter; construction is expected to begin on Phase II in spring 2007 and be completed in summer 2007. Phase II of the trail will run from the Northern Senior Center to Deborah Drive in Charles County, just north of the County line in Charlotte Hall. Phase III, from California to Wildewood (2 miles) will be constructed by private developers in FY07/08. Phase IVa, from Wal-Mart to Chancellor's Run road is currently in the design stage; Phase IVb, Chancellor's Run Road to Pegg Road (Gate 1 NAS) will be coordinated with design and construction of FDR Blvd. Phases V, VI, VII, VIII & IX - from Wildewood to New Market; are planned for FY08 through FY14 as funding permits.
- Seventh District Park Improvements – Construction on the basketball court, additional parking and drain fields is anticipated to be underway later this year; construction of the restroom building may be delayed until spring 2007. The new playground was installed at the park last spring.
- Golf Course Clubhouse Project – The 50% design for the renovated/expanded

Clubhouse was received in August. The architect is incorporating comments from staff and the Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board and it is anticipated that the 95% design and engineering and final cost estimate will be completed in October.

- Great Mills Canoe & Kayak Launch – Board members and the public are invited to the Great Mills Canoe & Kayak Launch Ribbon Cutting, on Tuesday, October 3, 2006 at 3:30 p.m.
- Lancaster Park Improvements – The County received a Community Parks and Playgrounds grant to place an off-leash dog park area and hard surface pathway around the perimeter of the park. Work on the dog park will begin this fall; the pathway will be done in FY08 in anticipation of receiving another grant to assist with the project.
- Tennis Court Replacement – Two small grants totaling \$7,500 have been submitted to the United States Tennis Association and the USTA Maryland Association for renovation of the tennis courts at Dorsey Park. Also, staff and the St. Mary's County Tennis Association are working on the timeline for future tennis court replacements. Cecil Park is being explored as the site for two additional courts for a total of four courts available at the site.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Richardson reminded those watching of the Punt, Pass and Kick Competition to be held on Saturday, September 9th, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. at Fifth District Park. The competition is open for boys and girls from ages 8-15.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the R&P Board of St. Mary's County will be held on Thursday, October 5, 2006 at 5:30 p.m., in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on October 5, 2006.