

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Thursday, March 6, 2014
MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Buckler, Chairperson; Sabrina Hecht, Robert Hicks, Tom Nelson, David Phalen, Lisa Wainger-Rush, and Ashley Varner.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Phil Cranford and Patrick Murphy.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Loewe, Director; Patricia Meyers, Golf Course 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 Sabrina Hecht, to approve the minutes of February 6, 2014; motion carried 7-0.

GOLF COURSE DIVISION REPORT

Director Brian Loewe introduced Patricia Meyers, Golf Course Manager, who provided an overview and update on activities taking place at the Wicomico Shores Golf Course.

- The golf course includes approximately 146 acres; includes the clubhouse, tennis courts, golf course, maintenance shop and waterfront public landing.
- \$1.4 million operating budget; the golf course is funded via a self-supporting enterprise fund.
- The golf course has six full-time merit employees and up to 28 part-time seasonal employees
- The past year saw about 30,000 rounds of golf; this is down from previous years; the economy is an issue and competition from other sports.
- The course offers season passes and daily fees; season passes are currently being renewed. Individual; household, senior, senior household, and junior passes are offered.
- Special events – Reservations for tournaments and special events are underway. So far, twenty-seven tournaments have been booked; club events include: crab feast, breakfast with Santa, Thanksgiving food drive, Mother's Day and New Year's Day brunch events.
- The Riverview Restaurant/banquet room is becoming a popular destination for weddings, receptions and parties.

FY15 R&P OPERATING & CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS

Mr. Loewe provided a brief report on the status of the FY15 budget request. Highlighted items included:

- The requested Operating Budget is .5% over last fiscal year's budget.
- Equipment requested – The Parks Division has requested a new mower to be used on the Bermuda grass fields at Chancellor's Run Regional Park.
- Seasonal Groundskeeper – Funds for a seasonal groundskeeper position have also been requested.
- Additional \$300,000 has been requested for the Lancaster Park Improvement Project.
- Additional \$750,000 is proposed for development of Leonardtown Park.
- New projects requested in FY15: TNT Phase VIII; Myrtle Point Park Improvements; and Central County Park.

Robert Hicks asked if there has been any further discussion on a future recreation center in St. Mary's County; Mr. Loewe noted that has been identified a need for some time. However, funding constraints have prevented this to move forward on the county level.

Mr. Hicks also asked about the status of the 41 acre north parcel of Lexington Manor; the 50 acre south parcel has been incorporated into Lancaster Park for passive/low impact recreation. Robin Finnacom, then the President/CEO of the Community Development Corporation and now the Acting Director of the Department of Economic Development, gave a presentation to the Board on the redevelopment of the overall site in 2005. Previous plans for commercial redevelopment of the north parcel did not move forward. The vision for the north parcel will be further defined through the Lexington Park Development District Plan which is currently under development.

Lisa Wainger-Rush requested the link to the approved 2012 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Staff will also send the Board an email with the date and time of the Budget Public hearing.

PROJECT UPDATES

Director Brian Loewe provided an update on the status of several park and facility improvement projects.

Three Notch Trail Phase VI

All local approvals have been received for the project. Staff continues to work with the Maryland SHA on the final approvals needed to advertise the project.

Charlotte Hall Athletic Fields

Final seeding will be done in the spring; wet weather has delayed the permanent seeding until the next growing season. Over seeding of the fields will take place in fall 2014; the fields are anticipated to be ready for use in spring 2015.

Lancaster Park

Design and engineering continues to move forward on this project to construct two additional multi-purpose fields, parking and an entrance road at this park off Willows Road.

Civil War Interpretive Center at Lancaster Park

Staff is currently working with the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) to address the agency's final comments related to the project as there is an exterior preservation easement on the former "Flat Tops" house.

Leonardtwn Park Design and Engineering Project

The engineering firm continues to work with county staff on the concept planning for this new county park. The park's concept plan includes multi-purpose fields, baseball/softball fields, a playground, dog park, restroom building, and parking. Additional information on the Phase I archeological study and the evaluation of the barns and other buildings on the site was submitted on February 24th.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Mr. Loewe reminded the Board that the Will Smith Youth Basketball Awards will be held on Saturday, March 8, 2014 at LHS.
- He also informed the Board that Recreation Division staff will receive a MRPA marketing showcase award for the department's program guide during the upcoming MRPA conference in Ocean City; the e-Newsletter also won a marketing award.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, April 3, 2014, at 5:30 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on April 3, 2014.