

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD  
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY  
Meeting of Tuesday, January 5, 2010**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Lisa Wainger Rush, Chairperson; Patrick Dugan, Al Harrison, Sabrina Hecht, Robert Hicks, Julie Lemmon, Tom Nelson, and David Phalen.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Richard Buckler.

**RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT:** Phil Rollins, Director; Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. David Zylak, Director, Department of Public Safety, was also present. Bob Richardson, former R&P Board member, and winners of this year's Punt, Pass and Kick competition were also in attendance.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER**

Chairperson Lisa Rush introduced Julie Lemmon, new Recreation and Parks Board member. Ms. Lemmon presently is the Event Coordinator for the Town of Leonardtown, has lived in St. Mary's for about four years and has children who participate in various youth sports programs.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Sabrina Hecht moved, seconded by David Phalen, to approve the minutes of December 3, 2009; motion carried 8-0.**

**David Phalen moved, seconded by Tom Nelson, to approve the Executive Session minutes of December 3, 2009; motion carried 8-0.**

**RECREATION DIVISION REPORT**

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

- On-line Registration – This new option became available on December 2, 2009. Reservations for leisure classes and lessons, sports programs and trips and tours can now be done on-line. First time patrons will need to sign-up for a password before registration. So far, 358 registrations have been done on-line and citizens are saying they like the new feature. However, staff will need to monitor the costs for this new service.
- Football – Staff held a public information meeting on youth football for next season on December 9<sup>th</sup> at Hollywood Recreation Center. Approximately forty

- parents, coaches and administrators attended the meeting. Staff will hold a meeting next week with the Club Presidents.
- Leonard Hall Recreation Center – Programs at LHRC are in full swing. Approximately 180 youth and adult teams are currently utilizing the facility for winter programs.

## **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

Mr. Rollins stated that the Department and the Recreation and Parks Board are pleased to congratulate Mr. Robert Richardson for nearly eight years of dedicated service on the R&P Board. He served from March 2002 through December 2009. The R&P Board formally thanked Bob and presented him with a plaque to commemorate the occasion.

The Department also thanked Bob for his assistance with the Punt, Pass and Kick program. They also congratulated the St. Mary's County sectional winners: Sarah Carty, Chris Palmer, Ryan Bowles, Kaitlyn Beasley-Polko and Makayla Kuhnnow who were each presented with a certificate of achievement from Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, and Kenny Sothoron, Sports Coordinator.

This year's local competition was held in September at Fifth District Park, located on Route 6, New Market Turner Road in Charlotte Hall. Local first place winners advanced to the Sectional Competition which was held in November. Sectional winners were invited to compete in the Redskins Team Championship held at FedEx Field in Prince George's County on December 6, 2009.

The top four Team Championship scorers from all the first place finalists in each age group (from all over the country) will now advance to the National Finals. These winners and their families will travel to the Finals at an NFL playoff game later this month.

## **PROPOSED COMMUNICATIONS TOWER AT CECIL PARK**

Mr. Rollins introduced Mr. David Zylak, Director, St. Mary's County Department of Public Safety, to the Board. Mr. Zylak provided an overview on the proposed communications tower for Cecil Park and a Power Point presentation with details on the current system, coverage factors, system description, site order of preference, Governor's Executive Order, Statewide 700 MHz radio system, proposed location of the Cecil Park tower and pictures of existing towers. The proposal would locate the tower in a wooded area just off the park entrance road. He also provided copies of a letter from Tower Innovations, the tower designer, regarding the design criteria, failure mode and fall zone radius.

This tower, along with three others, is being proposed to enhance mobile communications, particularly for emergency response operations. The current system includes four towers but there are areas of poor reception and there is a need for an additional four towers (Bethune School, Valley Lee, Golden Beach and North Sandgates Road). The State has directed that all agencies and departments engage and support the migration to a statewide 700 MHz communications system. These would be State towers and the advantage to the County is we could co-locate systems on the tower.

Mr. Zylak stated the risk of the tower collapsing is minimal. Chairperson Lisa Rush asked if there would be high voltage electricity dangers if the tower collapsed; Mr. Zylak stated that he would check into that, but he didn't think so. Chairperson Rush asked about visual screening for the tower and equipment; Mr. Zylak stated that it is highly possible that a buffer could be maintained around the perimeter of the facility.

David Phalen asked if this is an area of the park that doesn't see much use. Mr. Rollins stated that it doesn't; the site is wooded, has a stream, and is not planned for future development at this time.

Al Harrison asked about the impact on the park and park operations. Mr. Zylak stated that the construction of the tower should have minimal impact on the park. Minimal impacts on the park, operations and programs could be stipulated as a condition of the project's recommendation and approval. Robert Hicks asked about the timeline for the project. Mr. Zylak stated the original timeline calls for the tower to be completed in 2010.

**Patrick Dugan moved, seconded by Tom Nelson, to have staff draft a letter to Mr. Zylak based on the Board's concerns and recommendations expressed tonight and e-mail the letter to the Board for concurrence and final approval by the Chairperson. The motion carried 8-0.**

## **BUDGET DISCUSSION**

Mr. Rollins referred to the updated FY11 draft Capital Improvement Budget handout provided to the Board. The only change since last month's update was that design and engineering funding for Three Notch Trail phase VII was moved from FY15 to FY16. Mr. Rollins will keep the Board informed as the budget process moves forward.

The next budget work session is scheduled for January 12, 2010. Mr. Rollins will keep the Board informed as the recommended budget continues to be developed.

Patrick Dugan asked if staff had looked into advertising on ball field fencing as a way to generate revenue. R&P currently allows this on a limited basis. Mr. Rollins stated that he discussed this with Parks staff and staff needs to weight the benefits of this against the costs and time associated with the effort.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

Mr. Rollins provided updates on several R&P projects.

- Three Notch Trail Phase V – Staff sent a request for approval to advertise to the State Highway Administration in October and it is hoped that the County will receive notice to proceed within the next few weeks; the project should be under construction by summer 2010. This three-mile section will run from John V. Baggett Park in Laurel Grove to MD Route 5 in Mechanicsville.
- Carver Heights Community Park – The installation of the new playground is now complete. Some work to repair the parking areas has been done; the remaining repair work and seal coating will be done when the weather warms in the spring.

- Charlotte Hall Athletic Fields – The design plans and related reports and information were submitted for the January 2010 TEC review cycle. It is anticipated that the fields will be under construction by summer 2010.

## **ELMS BEACH PARK HUNTING ISSUE**

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that he plans to make a presentation to the BOCC in early February on the Elms Beach Park hunting proposal. The hunting community is still pursuing having some of the County lease area opened up for bow hunting. The Board of Education has offered up 85 acres in the County lease area. This is an area that will not be used by the BOE if the proposal moves forward. The proposal would be for the R&P Parks Division to manage hunting on this area, with assistance from volunteers. This would involve marking the area for hunting, establishing a reservation system, posting a sign-in sheet, limiting the number of hunters on site at one time; and monitoring the area as needed. All hunters will be required to obtain a valid hunting license. The Department of Natural Resources has said that it will not manage hunting on the County lease area. DNR will enforce hunting regulations; Mr. Rollins has talked to Sheriff Cameron about enforcement of other issues (such as trespassing, safety issues, etc.). The County's liability insurance carrier will insure this and the County Risk Management staff will provide their opinion on the matter to the BOCC. This would be proposed for a one-year trial basis.

Chairperson Rush asked if it's feasible to create a new system for managing hunting for 85 acres when there are 4,000 ± acres in the County already available for hunting. However, managing the deer population is a plus if done safely. Mr. Hicks expressed concern for safety and noted the limited number of DNR staff available to respond to reports.

## **SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, February 4, 2010, at 5:30 p.m., in Chesapeake Building in Leonardtown.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

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Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on February 4, 2010.