

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD  
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY  
Meeting of Thursday, October 6, 2011  
MINUTES**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lisa Wainger-Rush, Patrick Dugan and Julie Lemmon.

**RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT:** Phil Rollins, Director; Jessica Hale, Recreation Division Manager; David Guyther, Parks Division Manager; Tyrone Harris; Park Operations Coordinator; BJ Waldron, Childcare Coordinator; Mark Gillingham, Parks Division; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Members of the Boy Scout Troop 303 were also present.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board meeting was called to order by Richard Buckler, Vice-Chairperson, at 5:30 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Robert Hicks moved, seconded by Tom Nelson, to approve the minutes of September 1, 2011; motion carried 6- 0.**

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW RECREATION DIVISION MANAGER**

Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation and Parks, introduced Ms. Jessica Hale, the new Recreation Division Manager, to the Board. Ms. Hale was most recently a Program Coordinator with the Loudoun County, VA Parks and Recreation Department and has previously worked for the National Recreation and Parks Association; the Town of Leesburg, VA Parks and Recreation Department; and Frederick County Parks and Recreation.

**CHILDCARE SECTION OVERVIEW AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Mr. Rollins introduced Ms. BJ Waldron, Childcare Coordinator to the Board. Ms. Waldron provided an overview of the Childcare Section's programs and community partnerships. Some of the section's partners include: the Judy Center, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant Program, SMC Library, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service. She provided a short video which the division collaborated on with the SMC Sheriff's Office and the SMC Public Schools.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION**

SMC Recreation and Parks Board and staff presented Parks Division employee Mark Gillingham with a plaque and other items of appreciation marking his 35 years of dedicated service to St Mary's County.

**RECOGNITION OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 303**

Mr. Guyther introduced Ken and Chris Gill, from Boy Scout Troop 303. These scouts and others volunteered to replace a bridge at the Carver Heights Community Park for Ken's Eagle Scout project. A slide show was provided showing the various steps in the project. R&P staff provided certificates of appreciation to the scouts for their hard work on the project.

## PROJECT UPDATES

- Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan - Mr. Rollins informed the Board that the LPPRP will be presented to the Planning Commission on Tuesday, October 11, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in the Chesapeake Building. The draft plan will then be presented to the BOCC this fall and then on to state agencies by January 1, 2012.
- Three Notch Trail Phase V Ribbon Cutting – Mr. Rollins thanked Board members Tom Nelson, Sabrina Hecht and Dick Buckler for attending the ribbon cutting held on Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. The trail signage and kiosk project continues to move forward; it's anticipated that the project will be completed by spring 2012.
- Three Notch Trail Phase VI - The engineering firm of A. Morton Thomas, Inc. is currently working on the 30% design drawings; it's anticipated that will be completed in time for the December TEC meeting.

## WATERFRONT PARKS – REPORT ON FEES AND CHARGES

Mr. Rollins, Mr. Guyther and Mr. Harris provided a report on fees and charges at Elms Beach and Myrtle Point Parks. The report covered the following items.

- Fee policy adopted by the BOCC in spring 2011
- Implemented at MP and EB 5/31 – 9/5/11
- 1,860 vehicles – both parks
- 1,223 out-of-county vehicles
- 61 season passes sold
- 20 season passes sold to county residents
- 9,855 people used the parks on weekends and holidays
- \$21,196 in revenue collected
- \$19,060 in expenses

### Recommendations for 2012

- Continue fees at current rates (except as proposed below)
- Begin first weekend in May; end Labor Day
- Extend hours to 8:00 a.m. until dusk
- Eliminate large vehicle fee (only 16 last season)
- Include non-county season pass of \$40

### MP & EB Park Issues

- Turn arounds (did not want to pay fee) – MP 135; EB 13
- Need no parking signs outside MP
- Need more picnic tables and grills at both parks
- Trail maintenance at MP
- Better signage for beach at MP; entrance signs in Spanish
- Need to update trail maps at MP
- Trash at EB on July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend

Mr. Hicks asked when the MP Master plan would be reviewed again. Mr. Rollins stated that can reviewed at anytime. Mr. Hicks noted the need for more open space and parking; Mr. Rollins stated the parking was expanded last year; however, more is needed. Improvements for MP and EB parks were shown in the capital program a few years back; however, due to financial constraints, those projects did not move forward.

There is also an issue with large numbers of young people “hanging out” in Myrtle Point Park in afternoons in May. Staff may need to be hired to monitor this situation.

Mr. Guyther noted that a group of volunteers has done a great job of picking up trash at MP and EB parks. The Cub Scouts have also helped with that. He noted that a gator or golf cart may be needed in the future for staff to efficiently travel in MP park.

**Sabrina Hecht moved, seconded by Robert Hicks, to endorse the recommendations from R&P staff regarding the Myrtle Point and Elms Beach Parks fee schedule for 2012; motion carried 6-0.**

### **Wicomico Shores Waterfront Park**

The Board discussed the idea of implementing a similar fee at the Wicomico Shores Public Landing waterfront area. This is being discussed as a result of the drownings that happened at this waterfront area this year. The park gets considerable use on the weekends.

Some options include: placing ladders on the pier, however, that may encourage swimming from the pier; installing life rings; charging a fee to enter the park area and having staff available on weekends. The boat ramp would not require a fee.

Ms. Hecht didn't think having a park attendant available would prevent drowning accidents; it may provide a false sense of security.

The consensus was not to support charging a fee at this small waterfront area and not to provide staff supervision. Some members expressed support for installing life rings. Mr. Rollins will also discuss this with the County's Risk Manager.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Lancaster Park - Mr. Rollins referred to a recent article in the Enterprise newspaper regarding an incident at the football fields at Lancaster Park. Mr. Rollins reminded the Board that the County is not managing youth football this year; however, because of this incident, the league may be required to hire security for future games.

### **SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, November 6, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. The Board will meet at Chancellor's Run Regional Park for a tour of the renovated Activity Center and several parks and nearby facilities.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

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Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on December 1, 2011.