

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Meeting of Thursday, February 4, 2010**

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa Rush, Chairperson; Richard Buckler, Al Harrison, Sabrina Hecht, Robert Hicks, Julie Lemmon and Tom Nelson.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Patrick Dugan and David Phalen.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Rollins, Director; Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; David Guyther, Parks Division Manager; Tyrone Harris, Park Operations Coordinator; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Don DeGraves, American Legion Baseball was also present to outline a proposal for volunteer funding of new dugouts for the 90' baseball field at Chancellor's Run Park.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Robert Hicks moved, seconded by Julie Lemmon, to approve the minutes of January 5, 2010; motion carried 6-0.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, provided information on the status of youth football. As previously reported, the Southern Maryland Youth Football League agreed to enter into a partnership with Recreation and Parks (R&P); this new St. Mary's County Youth Football League will be administered by R&P. The Pax River Raiders indicated the desire to continue as a club in Calvert County. A meeting was recently held with representatives from the SMYFL to work out details for the new club model league in St. Mary's. Within the last few days, R&P staff learned that the Pax River Raiders will not be able to participate in Calvert County's league for the upcoming football season. Calvert County made this decision because they thought they had enough in-County teams for their league, and since St. Mary's was in the process of forming a strong foundation, that now would be a good time to make the change.

Mr. Shepherd stated that options for the Pax River Raiders would be:

- The Raiders organization, as it currently exists, could participate in the new St. Mary's County league.
- The Raiders could join as a club, without Mr. Pixton as President.
- The Raiders could join the new league as a non-profit club. The goal is that all the clubs will work toward non-profit status by 2012, with no individual owning league equipment or assets.
- Staff is open to any of these options and is waiting to hear what the Raiders

would like to do for the upcoming season.

Items and options that are being discussed and worked on now include:

- Draft MOU to outline duties and expectations
- Field usage and scheduling
- Registration dates; March 1 is the target for online registration

Chairperson Lisa Rush thanked Mr. Rollins and staff for working to make the new program work for youth and their families.

Mr. Shepherd also provided an update on the Gymnastics Center.

- The Session II gymnastics recreational registration period enrolled 548 participants; the same session last year registered 488.
- He noted the Gymnastics Center is a \$300,000± activity fund operation. Fees cover the cost of operation, coaching staff and supplies and materials.

BUDGET UPDATE

Mr. Rollins provided a budget update for the Board. The County is wrapping up the preliminary stages of the Capital Budget discussion; there have been no changes since the last report to the Board. The Operating Budget is due to the Department of Finance by February 12. Mr. Rollins reported that this will be a challenging year due to State budget cuts and economic conditions. Departments prepared baseline budgets and have also been asked to prepare a budget reflecting a 7% reduction. Further cuts will depend on any additional State cuts that may be forthcoming. Most of the cuts have come from the Parks Division and some will need to be absorbed by the Museum Division.

Another option being considered is making the Great Mills Pool a summer only operation. As originally anticipated, the pool is not self supporting; but is being subsidized primarily by other Recreation Enterprise Fund programs. The BOCC provided a \$50,000 subsidy for the pool for the past two years; however, with the current fiscal situation, that can no longer be done. Public indoor pool needs may be met with the College of Southern Maryland pool opening later this year. Staff is recommending that the pool be open year-round for at least another year; after that, the public need and options will be studied to determine if changes to the operation should be made.

PROJECT UPDATES

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

- Tennis Courts Lights at Dorsey Park – The tennis court lights have been installed at Dorsey Park; they will be tested shortly and should be operational for spring use.
- Geocaching – Mr. Rollins referred to a recent article in the County Times noting the increasing popularity of geocaching. The R&P website, and Parks Policies and Procedures manual, both have information on the County's policy for geocaching in County parks. The article also describes the Star

Spangled Banner geocaching trail; the Myrtle Point Park and the Piney Point Lighthouse are listed on that trail. Mr. Rollins thanked Board member Bob Hicks for his help in getting the County geocaching policy developed.

- Elms Hunting Issue – The BOCC approved a County hunting management plan for 85± acres of the County leased area of the Elms property and the request has been sent to DNR for concurrence. The plans calls for: bow hunting only in this area; R&P Parks Division to be the managing agency; volunteers will assist with marking the property, maintaining an information board, and monitoring the sign-in sheet; access will be from the Elms Beach Park entrance only; number of hunters is limited to six at any given time; DNR will enforce hunting regulations; Sheriff's Department will enforce County rules related to trespassing, etc; and this would be done on a one-year trail basis. Mr. Rollins will update the Board on the status of DNR's approval of the plan.

VOLUNTEER EFFORTS TO CONSTRUCT DUGOUTS FOR 90' BASEBALL FIELD AT CHANCELLOR'S RUN PARK

Mr. Rollins introduced Mr. Don DeGraves, American Legion Baseball, who presented information on a proposal to conduct fundraising to construct dugouts at the 90' baseball field at Chancellor's Run Regional Park. Mr. DeGraves spoke to the Board about a year ago about improvements needed at the 90' field, which have now been completed.

Mr. DeGraves thanked R&P staff and the community for supporting the recent improvements to the 90' field at the park. Improvements included: new fencing, walkways, correction of a drainage problem, installation of a bullpen and a batter's box, sod for the grass infield and an irrigation system. The new proposal is to add masonry type dugouts at the field; fencing will stay in front of the dugout area. Assistance is anticipated with the carpentry and masonry students from the Technical Center. The project is ready to move forward, depending upon the weather. Staff has endorsed this proposal and will assist volunteers with the project. It is hoped the project can be completed by April 1st for the upcoming baseball season. The Board concurred with the plan for American Legion Baseball to conduct fundraising and solicit volunteers to construct the new dugouts for the 90' baseball field at CRRP.

PARK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

David Guyther, Parks Division Manager, and Tyrone Harris, Park Operations Coordinator, were present to discuss several updates to the R&P Park Policies and Procedures manual. The previous manual was adopted August 2, 2007. Proposed updates included the following items.

The statement was added to page two: Consumption of alcohol in county parks is prohibited except by permit at designated areas. In addition, the following parks are designated as alcohol free areas: Nicolet, Laurel Ridge, Lancaster, Chaptico, Chancellors Run, Seventh District, Cardinal Gibbons, Elms Beach, Myrtle Point and Wicomico Shores parks.

The listing of Pavilions and Pavilion fees on page five was changed to show amenities at pavilions and to show minor increases in rental fees. The fee to rent large pavilions is proposed to be \$150 (Fifth District, Cecil, Dorsey and Elms Beach parks) and the fee to rent smaller pavilions is proposed to be \$100 (Nicolet #1&2, Dorsey 2, Chancellor's Run, Baggett Park and Lancaster Park 1 & 2). There is a mandatory \$10 per hour staffing fee for groups of over 200 or more; optional staffing fee of \$10 per hour for groups under 200 people. Alcohol permit is \$50 (not permitted at Elms, Nicolet, Chancellor's or Lancaster Park pavilions).

The Merchandise Sale Policy on page 9 was updated to say: All private vendors must have a St. Mary's County Health Department license and Liability insurance on file with Recreation and Parks.

The new fee schedule is proposed as follows: Sponsored/volunteer league = \$150; league vendor contracted by the league = \$250. Tournaments - \$100 per day; Youth tournaments = \$75 per day

A new policy was inserted to establish operating standards and rules for geocaching in County parks; please see the website <http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/recreate/facilities/geocaching.asp> for more information. A new policy was also added for using lighted tennis courts. Several spelling errors were corrected and some minor editing was done for clarification purposes.

Mr. Harrison asked about the procedure for turning on and off the athletic field lights. Mr. Rollins stated that the Department implemented a control link system a few years ago; that system allows staff to turn on or off the lights from remote locations. The lights can be programmed to come on at certain times and can be turned off in the event of cancellations.

Mr. Rollins stated that staff is also working on a policy regarding ownership of equipment with regard to County field use. Also, Sabrina Hecht asked if there was a policy on calling games when lightning is sited. Staff noted that most leagues do have lightening policies, but that's something staff can research and draft also.

Tom Nelson moved, seconded by Robert Hicks, to approve the updates to the Park Policies and Procedures Manual recommended by staff and directed staff to develop new policies on lightning and league equipment/ownership as it pertains to use of County fields; motion carried 6-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Alcohol Consumption Permits

Mr. Rollins presented four requests for Alcohol Consumption Permits from the Friends of the St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums for events to be held at Museum Division facilities to the Board for consideration. Events include:

- Annual meeting of the Friends of the St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums to be held on February 21, 2010 at the St. Clement's Island Museum (SCIM).

- Jazz and Seafood Festival to be held on July 10, 2010 at SCIM.
- Chamber of Commerce After Hours event to be held on July 28, 2010 at either SCIM or the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum.
- Friends of the Museum Volunteer Pot Luck dinner to be held on December 14 at St. Clement's Island Museum.

Tom Nelson moved, seconded by Richard Buckler, to approve the Alcohol Consumption Permits for the Friends of St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums. Motion carried with all in favor.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

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