

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD  
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY**

**Meeting of Thursday, April 24, 2003**

**Minutes**

**Board members present:** Robert Harper, Chairperson; Coleman Hillman, Jody Payne, Robert Richardson and Kaki Burruss.

**Board members absent:** Cheryl Blazer, Andrew Roper, and Richard Smith.

**Recreation and Parks staff present:** Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation and Parks (R&P); Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manger; Bill Ball, Parks Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board meeting was called to order by Robert Harper, Chairperson, at 5:35 P.M. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Jody Payne motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, to approve the minutes of March 12, 2003. Motion carried 5-0.

**BMX BICYCLE TRACK**

Director Phil Rollins informed the Board that on Tuesday, March 11, 2003, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved siting the BMX Track at Chaptico Park. Mr. Rollins provided copies of the draft lease agreement for the Board to review. The lease will be between the County and Southern Maryland BMX Incorporated (SMBI) for approximately three acres of land at Chaptico Park. The County will provide the land for the track and the SMBI will design, construct, operate and maintain the facility. SMBI and the Assistant County Attorney have reviewed the preliminary agreement; after final approval by the County and SMBI, staff will present the lease agreement to the BOCC for consideration and approval.

Some highlights of the lease agreement include: the term of the lease is proposed to be for five years, facility site plans and fee schedules will be approved by Recreation and Parks, insurance will be provided by SMBI, and ADA compliance is required. The group will construct a concession facility; install utilities; install vinyl coated fencing around the track; and construct a parking lot for the activity. Once the lease is executed and the Chaptico Park construction project is underway, the BMX group should be able to begin construction on the BMX track.

**Robert Richardson motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, to recommend the draft lease agreement be presented to the BOCC for consideration and approval. Motion carried 5-0.**

**FY2004 R&P BUDGET**

**Great Mills Swimming Pool**

Mr. Rollins referred to the memo and spreadsheet of April 23, 2003, which was previously e-mailed to Board members. As reported in earlier meetings, the proposed annual Great Mills Swimming Pool operating budget is approximately \$280,000. Staff originally proposed a budget that would have generated approximately \$140,000 in revenue from pool user fees. Another \$30,000 was proposed to be used from the Recreation Enterprise Fund from projected surplus program revenues. The balance of \$110,000 was requested from the General Fund (tax support).

During its budget deliberations, the BOCC directed staff to consider other alternatives for funding the \$110,000 shortfall. After consideration of various alternatives, staff recommended increasing the proposed pool fees by 40% to generate an additional \$55,630 – about half of the short fall. The other \$55,600 is recommended to be covered by a reduction in the Parks Maintenance budget. Specifically, the frequency of grasscutting will be reduced, saving \$29,000, and portable toilets will no longer be provided at parks and athletic fields without restrooms, which will save \$26,000.

Staff considered the possibility of limiting the hours of pool operation or to operate the pool as a summer only facility to reduce costs. Those options were ruled out by staff since a significant expenditure is being made on the bubble infrastructure and the public expects the pool to be a year round operation. Staff considered increasing pool fees to cover the entire cost of operation; that too was ruled out by staff since higher fees would likely price much of the public out of programs at the facility. An across the board recreational program surcharge was also considered and ruled out, as was the option of taking the entire \$110,000 from the Parks budget.

The total Parks Division budget is about \$1.3 million. About half of that goes to personnel costs, benefits and funding for seasonal park attendants. About \$480,000 is for grounds maintenance; \$460,000 of that goes to grasscutting. Staff determined that the elimination of the portable toilets was an area to consider for deletion since the leagues currently don't pay any fee for facilities for athletic programs. Other programs, such as Youth Basketball, Gymnastics and Before and After School programs are expected to cover all costs associated with their programs. It is estimated that a \$5 fee per person for each league registration would cover the cost of the portable toilets.

Chairman Robert Harper summarized that the County budget has gone to public hearing based on recommendations from staff. Staff was given direction to make the pool fully fund itself, which resulted in the R&P budget not being funded at last year's level – or the same "level of effort." The R&P Board has the option to make recommendations to the BOCC regarding the FY2004 budget. Options for the R&P Board to consider supporting include the proposal for the year round pool operation, support for the proposed budget cuts or support for asking the BOCC for additional funding. It's been a long-standing policy of the Board not to offset costs associated with one program with revenue from another.

**Kaki Burruss asked why the budget reduction recommendations were proposed as the deletion of the portable toilets as opposed to an across the board field usage fee. Mr. Rollins stated that staff had to make a reduction in the Parks Division budget and to specifically identify where the money would come from. She asked if this budget recommendation would mean that providing portable toilets at parks would now be up to the discretion of the sports leagues. Mr. Rollins stated that would be one option, or with Board, BOCC and league support, a procedure might be developed to collect the fees from the leagues and have R&P provide the toilets. She asked if the leagues had been informed about this recommendation; Mr. Rollins stated that, due to time constraints, they haven't as of yet. Ms. Burruss asked how many portable toilets are at parks with no athletic fields. Bill Ball informed the Board that eight waterfront areas have portable toilets; State grant funding covers the cost for the toilets at least six months of the year. Nine other park and school field sites use portable toilets;**

**some parks use the facilities for up to eight or nine months of the year.**

Ms. Burruss asked about the effect on parks and grounds if the entire \$55,000 were taken from the grasscutting line item? Mr. Rollins stated that if the entire amount were taken from grasscutting, each site would be reduced by four cuts. This action could have impacts on athletic programs. Mr. Ball stated that the weather plays a large part in the determination of when grass gets cut; wet weather generates more cuts and drought conditions mean fewer cuts.

Jody Payne noted that if the pool is not ready for summer 2003, more than one year might be needed to assess the pool operation.

The Board decided that additional time for consideration would be needed before making a recommendation to the BOCC, therefore the Board agreed to hold a meeting on May 1, 2003 to continue the pool funding discussion.

**Teen Center**

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that the \$20,000 funding allocation for the Teen Center was restored in the FY2004 Recommended Budget.

**RECREATION DIVISION REPORT**

Summer Camp Registration - Mr. Shepherd reported that summer camp registration was held on Saturday, April 5, 2003, at the R&P main office. About 40% of camp slots were filled that day with 235 families enrolled. Mr. Shepherd is working with the Information Technology Department for future on-line, web based registration. County Government will soon convert to a new, menu driven phone system; R&P is set for conversion the week of April 28<sup>th</sup>.

Easter Egg Hunt and Festival – The East Egg Hunt and Festival was held on Saturday, April 19 at the Governmental Center Grounds. Despite the cool weather, over 600 young people and parents attended.

Gymnastics Center – The Gymnastics Center will host a State meet on Saturday and Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> at the Center.

Boys and Girls Clubs – The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) recently formed a partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. NRPA encourages local R&P Departments to do the same to provide additional youth development services to communities, avoid duplication of services and provide new activities/events. Mr. Shepherd and Tyrone Harris, Special Facilities Coordinator, met with the local Boys and Girls Club to embark on the process for a possible future partnership.

Teen Advisory Board – The BOCC recently appointed several new members to the Teen Advisory Board. A meeting of the Board was recently held; the next meeting will be held at the Hollywood Recreation Center. During upcoming meetings, the following issues will be discussed: future of the Teen Advisory Board; should the Board serve as subcommittee of the R&P Board; or should the Board serve as a booster club for the Teen Center at Chancellor's Run Regional Park.

**PROJECT UPDATES**

Three Notch Trail – Mr. Rollins reported that an engineering firm, Ben Dyer and Associates, has been selected to provide the design/engineering work for phase I of the Three Notch Trail from Route 236 in New Market north to the new Northern County Senior Center in Charlotte Hall. Phase I of the trail will be under construction this summer and should be completed this fall.

Chaptico Park - The pre-bid meeting for phase I of Chaptico Park was held on April 17; the bid opening date is set for May 8, 2003. Staff expects to be under construction by the end of May or early June for phase I; if all goes as planned, the soccer fields will be seeded by this fall.

Nicolet Park – The past fall and winter season have been very difficult for outdoor construction. Staff anticipates that the park, including the skatepark, will open this summer. The two restroom buildings are under construction; the playground and sprayground should be under construction within a month.

Wicomico Shores Golf Course Clubhouse – The BOCC will host a public information meeting on the proposed Wicomico Shores Golf Course Clubhouse project on Tuesday, April 29, 2003 at 7:00 P.M. at the Clubhouse to gather additional citizen input on the project. Board members are encouraged to attend. Mr. Rollins provided copies of a letter drafted at the direction of the Board Chairman regarding the Clubhouse project.

**Kaki Burruss motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, to authorize the Chairman to sign the letter drafted to the BOCC regarding the Golf Course Clubhouse. Motion carried.**

Museum Division – Mr. Rollins reported that Michael Humphries, Museum Director, recently retired as Director of the Museum Division and moved to Alabama. Lydia Wood, Museum Historic Sites Manager, is currently serving as Acting Museum Director. A national search for a new Museum Director will begin shortly.

#### Upcoming Events

#### Mr. Rollins announced the following upcoming R&P Events.

- Bushwood Wharf Ribbon Cutting Ceremony – Saturday, April 26, 10:00 A.M., Bushwood
- Abell's Wharf Ribbon Cutting Ceremony – Tuesday, May 6, 2:30 P.M., Medley's Neck
- Lighthouse Days Festival – Saturday, May 10, 9:00 a.m., Piney Point Lighthouse
- Scott Verbic Golf Tournament – June 6, Wicomico Shores Golf Course
- Great Turtle Race – Friday, June 20, 6:00 p.m., Leonard Hall Recreation Center

#### **SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board of St. Mary's County will be held at 5:30 P.M. on Thursday, May 1, 2003 in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 P.M.

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Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on May 1, 2003.

A tape recording of the meeting is kept on file in the Recreation and Parks' office for one year.

cc: Board of County Commissioners  
St. Mary's County Department Heads  
Recreation and Parks Department Division Heads