

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Meeting of Thursday, June 4, 2009**

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert Richardson, Vice-Chairperson; Richard Buckler, Sabrina Hecht, Robert Hicks, Thomas Nelson, David Phalen and Lisa Wainger-Rush.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Patrick Dugan, Chairperson, and Al Harrison.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation and Parks (R&P); Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; Kyle Kebaugh, Sports Coordinator; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Pop Rothwell, Bruce Jackson and Doris McCaskill, were present to represent the Save the Village group.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Robert Richardson, Vice-Chairperson, at 5:35 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

David Phalen moved, seconded by Richard Buckler, to approve the minutes of May 7, 2009; motion carried 6-0.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

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

- Youth Football Update – A copy of the recent Enterprise newspaper article, “Pixtons purchase Pigskin – Changes to come as Kemps sell league after 24 years,” was provided to Board members. For the past 24 years, there was only one youth football league in the County – Pigskin Football and Cheerleading. In 2005 the Pixtons started their own youth football program called the Pax River Raiders, which has several teams that play in St. Mary’s and Calvert County. The latest information is that the former Pigskin League will now be owned and managed by the Pixtons. Earlier this year, the Southern Maryland Youth Football League (SMYFL) approached Mr. Shepherd with a plan to organize yet another league. County staff is working with the leagues to schedule fields for both the Pax River Raiders and the new SMYFL. Staff also discussed the possibility of the County administering one program for football as they do in Charles County. This was proposed in the past and has not moved forward at this time. The Pax River Raiders league has announced a “town hall” meeting to discuss football plans and needs on June 5, 2009 at Chancellor’s Run Regional Park. Staff will continue to meet with the leagues and provide regular updates to the Board.

- Community Standards Update – Mr. Shepherd provided an update on the Community Standards program. The spring 2009 report detailed that 7 leagues are in 100% compliance with background checks and coaches training. Staff is working with the other 5 leagues on boosting compliance. Kyle Kebaugh, Sports Coordinator, explained that the coaches can now complete the background check process online through the background check provider, SSCI. This will make the process easier for coaches and save staff time in entering information. He conducted a demo of the online background check process. The link to the system will also be offered to the leagues to place on their websites. The hope is this will enable a completely paperless background check system. Also, a list of all certified coaches is now on the Department's website.
- Scott Verbic Memorial Golf Tournament – Mr. Shepherd reported that the tournament teams are now full and the Department is looking forward to another great fundraiser for the Department's scholarship program.
- Great Mills Pool – The bubble was taken off the pool in late May and is now open for summer use. Staff is grateful to the Harry Lundeburg School for assisting in taking down the bubble.
- Carver Afterschool Program – The Boys and Girls Clubs had their annual year end closing picnic at Nicolet Park skatepark and sprayground and included the Carver Afterschool program. Over 400 attended the event.
- Summer Camp Training – Mr. Shepherd showed some slides of staff receiving training for various summer camps.
- Summerstock – This year's show is "Ragtime" and will be held at Great Mills High School. Shows are scheduled for July 17-19 and July 23-26. Evening shows are at 7:00 pm each night, except on Sunday evenings when they are scheduled to begin at 5:00 pm. There will be a matinee at 1:00 pm on Saturday, July 25.

CARVER HEIGHTS COMMUNITY PARK CONCEPT PLAN

The R&P Board held its May meeting at the Carver Recreation Center to gather community input and view preliminary concept drawings for the Carver Heights Community Park and the Lancaster Park south parcel. Comments and suggestions received from citizens during the meeting have been incorporated in the latest drafts of the plans. Draft copies of the Carver Heights Community Park plan were provided to Board members. Items under consideration for the property include: an African American USO Building memorial; a children's playground; picnic areas; nature trails; a multi-purpose athletic field; pedestrian walkways; basketball court; parking; and restroom facilities.

The major areas of discussion from citizens included:

- The need to find the best location for the basketball court; poor visibility could promote undesirable activity. The basketball court is now proposed for the east side of the recreation center, at a future date.
- Concerns on the location and visibility for the two memorials.

The Unified Committee on African American Contributions (UCAC) Civil War memorial, previously considered for the property, is now being proposed at Lancaster Park. Staff

met with representatives from the UCAC this week, and a suggested location has been recommended toward the back of the park in the vicinity of the Lancaster Park south parcel.

The Carver Heights Community Park concept plan will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners this summer for concurrence. The County approved funding in FY09 to begin implementation of the plan. Staff hopes to begin installation of the playground and make upgrades and repairs to walkways and parking areas this fall.

Richard Buckler moved, seconded by Tom Nelson, to endorse the Carver Heights Community Park concept plan as presented and recommend that staff forward it to the BOCC for approval. Motion carried with all in favor.

GEOCACHING PRESENTATION

Board member Robert Hicks provided a PowerPoint presentation on geocaching. Geocaching is type of scavenger hunt for waterproof containers bearing treasure using the container's exact geographic coordinates and Global Positioning System (GPS) devices.

- Geocaching is a great way to see the outdoors and provides a mix of technology, exercise, problem solving and fun.
- As of today, there are 815,039 caches in over 200 countries. In the last seven days, there have been 753,086 new logs written by 89,351 account holders.
- So what's the big deal? Finding a cache is deceptively easy. It's one thing to see where an item is – it's a totally different story to actually get there and find it!
- Equipment needed – GPS receiver, computer or Apple iPhone. Then go to www.geocaching.com to register for free membership and start the process.
- Procedure – 1) get the coordinates for a cache from the website; 2) enter or download them into your GPS; and 3) use the GPS to find the cache.
- Participants will need the following for the hunt: good walking shoes, water, snacks, cell phone, trade items, bug spray and GPS.
- Things that should be in a cache include: log book, trade items, travel bugs, geocoins and path tags. Things that should not be in a cache include: food, any potentially dangerous substances or items, trash or religious articles.
- Caches can be found in parks, on hills and mountains, underwater, in cities and in rural areas.

Geocaching is becoming increasing popular and the Maryland chapter has groups in each county. R&P's Recreation Division has partnered with Mr. Hicks to offer a class on geocaching.

PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Rollins provided a status report on several R&P projects. A PowerPoint presentation was shown with various pictures of park and facility projects.

- Mr. Rollins informed the Board that renovations to the 90' baseball field at Chancellor's Run Regional Park (CRRP) are complete. 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.

- Staff is moving forward with installing a new picnic pavilion at CRRP to replace a small, aging picnic shelter. The playground will be replaced later this summer.
- The Parks Maintenance building addition is nearly complete. The additional space will provide a meeting/training room and free up space for other work areas.
- Mr. Rollins showed a few slides of the recently completed Piney Point Lighthouse shore erosion control project.
- Phase IV-A of the Three Notch Trail, from Wal-Mart to Chancellor's Run Road, has been on hold due to the need for Washington Gas to relocate a gas line. Construction on this section of the trail should resume in the near future.
- The County has received permits for Phase V of the trail, from Baggett Park to MD Route 5; however, staff is still awaiting SHA approval to advertise. It is anticipated trail will be advertised for construction later this summer and be under construction later this fall. The next phase to be designed will be from MD 5 to MD 236 in New Market.

OTHER BUSINESS

Sabrina Hecht asked if staff could install recycle bins at Chaptico Park; she didn't notice any the last time she was there. Mr. Rollins will check into that; he noted that recycle bins are in most County parks.

Staff is also monitoring a situation with "bubbling" on one of the new tennis court surfaces at Cecil Park. The manufacturer of the material and American Tennis Courts, Inc. have been notified of the problem and are working with staff to correct the situation.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, August 6, 2009; however, the meeting was subsequently changed to Monday, August 3, 2009. The July meeting was cancelled.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on August 3, 2009.