

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

Meeting of Thursday, June 5, 2003

Minutes

Board members present: Robert Harper, Chairperson; Kaki Burruss, Coleman Hillman, Jody Payne, Andrew Roper and Richard Smith.

Board members absent: Cheryl Blazer and Robert Richardson.

Recreation and Parks staff present: Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation and Parks (R&P); Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manger; 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

Andrew Roper motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, to approve the minutes of May 1, 2003. Motion carried 6-0.

FY2004 APPROVED R&P DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Director Phil Rollins informed the Board of several FY2004 Approved Budget impacts as they relate to the R&P department. No General Fund tax support was approved for the new Great Mills Swimming Pool. The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) wishes to operate the pool strictly through the Enterprise Fund, but will assess the operation after one year to determine if limited General Fund support might be needed. The \$26,000 cut for the portable toilets, previously identified by staff to help offset costs associated with the pool, was reinstated in the Parks budget. The \$29,000 reduction in the grass cutting line item, also identified by staff to help offset costs associated with the pool, was not reinstated in the budget. This will mean that the frequency of grass cutting will be reduced by two to three cuts per location in FY2004. The portable toilets will continue to be provided at parks and facilities where no restroom buildings exist.

Also, Mr. Rollins reported that the BOCC has decided to defer filling the vacant Museum Director position until January 2004. Michael Humphries, former Museum Director, retired in April; Lydia Wood, Historic Site Manager, is currently serving as Acting Museum Director.

GREAT MILLS SWIMMING POOL

The Board viewed the videotape of the May 20, 2003 BOCC meeting at which Mr. Rollins provided a monthly update on projects to the BOCC. During that meeting, Commissioner McKay stated that the BOCC envisioned the pool operating as part of the Enterprise Fund. He stated that it would be the decision of staff

and the R&P Board as to when to open the pool based on the ability to operate it successfully from the Enterprise Fund. There may be “a date down the road when the County may need to provide some deficit funding;” at this time the Board is not ready to provide the funding since there’s not a deficit yet. During the presentation, Mr. Rollins asked the BOCC to consider reinstating the \$29,000 for grass cutting previously identified by staff to offset part of the \$55,000 shortfall anticipated for the pool operation (the BOCC had already reinstated the \$26,000 for the portable toilets).

The contractor estimates the pool will be finished sometime in August. The decision before staff and the R&P Board is whether to open in September or whether to wait until January 2004. Chairman Harper asked if it would be feasible to set up a separate activity fund for the pool; Mr. Rollins responded he could check with Finance on that, but he didn’t think the pool budget was large enough at this time to warrant a separate account. Mr. Harper didn’t agree with the implication that one program could be supplemented by other programs within the Enterprise Fund. Staff had already proposed to take \$30,000 from the Enterprise Fund; combined with the projected \$55,000 deficit, that equals a total of about \$85,000 projected to come from the Enterprise Fund to operate the pool.

Andrew Roper was unclear on Commissioner McKay’s comment about the pool being self-supporting; did he mean it should be a self-supporting pool operation or did he mean it should be self-supporting within the Enterprise Fund? **Chairman Harper will draft a letter to the BOCC requesting written clarification on whether the Commissioners expect the pool to operate as a separate and distinct fund or if the Board expects the Enterprise Fund to cover anticipated revenue shortfalls.**

Mr. Rollins explained that the total projected pool budget is \$286,00; \$140,000 was projected in pool revenue \$30,000 was projected to come from other program revenue (Enterprise Fund), with a shortfall of about \$110,000. Since that amount was too much to expect the General Fund to support, staff increased fees by 40% and the other \$55,000 was identified by cutting the Parks budget (grasscutting frequency and portable toilets). Now that the FY2004 budget has been adopted, R&P is anticipating a deficit of \$85,000. After the end of one year of operation, the pool budget will be examined and recommendations for possible General Fund support made to the BOCC if needed.

Kaki Burruss asked if the pool opening was delayed one month, what would be the impact on users? Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, stated the biggest savings would be costs associated with not scheduling daytime activities. Mr. Rollins stated there will be start up costs and a period time to build support and participation for programs; the sooner the pool is opened, the sooner the pool will be able to realize the revenues needed to operate the facility. He thought a September opening would be easier to market to the public than a January opening. Another option would be to open in the fall and limit hours to evenings; that option would reduce opportunities for swimming for seniors, pre-schoolers, therapeutic users, etc.

Ms. Burruss said that they way she understood Commissioner McKay, is that the pool should be up and running at a reasonably feasible date with the caveat that it be as self supporting as possible. She didn’t think it was spelled out that the pool had to be totally self-supporting or supported within the Enterprise Fund.

Coleman Hillman expressed support for opening the pool in September if it’s ready; he said he would “help do whatever it takes to have the pool open in September.”

Mr. Harper suggested sending a letter to the BOCC clarifying that the R&P Board recommended the reduction of \$29,000 in grass cutting to help offset costs associated with the pool. Dr. Roper expressed concern with depleting the Enterprise Fund before General Fund support would be provided for the pool.

Kaki Burruss motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, to recommend that the \$29,000 for grass

cutting be restored in the Parks budget since the original recommendation was made to help offset costs associated with the pool. Motion carried 6 – 0.

Kaki Burruss motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, that in light of the recommendations of the BOCC and so that operational baselines can be established, that the swimming pool be opened in September. After discussion, Ms. Burruss agreed to put her motion on hold until the July meeting.

Dr. Roper expressed concern that other programs within the Enterprise Fund would be expected to subsidize the pool. Mr. Rollins stated that budgets have already been approved for FY2004 Enterprise funded programs; staff doesn't plan to go back and increase fees for those programs to subsidize the pool. Any net from the operation of Enterprise Fund programs could be used to subsidize the pool this year. During the next budget cycle, fees for all programs will be examined – including those services currently being provided at no charge.

Ms. Burruss stated that it's not really a true statement to say "we're taking from those paying their fair share to subsidize the pool;" leagues currently aren't paying a field use fee or a fee for the portable toilets. Mr. Harper agreed, with the exception of programs such as Gymnastics where patrons do pay their fair share and expect the fees they pay to support their program. Mr. Shepherd stated that each program is designed to net 10% in order to support the Enterprise Fund and to fund recurring and unanticipated costs.

Richard Smith stated that he didn't see clear direction from the BOCC on the operation of the pool. He was also concerned that funds may be taken from other programs; he also doesn't want to see the level of service in the parks downgraded.

RECREATION DIVISION UPDATE

Scott Verbic Memorial Golf Tournament - Mr. Shepherd informed the Board that registration for the Scott Verbic Memorial Golf Tournament, scheduled for tomorrow, June 6th, is at full capacity. Proceeds from the annual memorial golf tournament go toward the R&P youth scholarship program; last year the event provided approximately \$4,000 in scholarships for 54 young people; this year, staff expects to provide approximately \$5,000 in scholarships.

Great Turtle Race – The Great Turtle Race is set for Friday, June 20 at Leonard Hall Recreation Center.

National Recreation and Parks Month – R&P is planning a short presentation to the BOCC on July 1, 2003 at 9:15 A.M. to highlight upcoming R&P events and programs; the BOCC will present a proclamation to the department in recognition of National Recreation and Parks Month.

Gymnastics Center Demonstration – The Board was invited to the June 14th Gymnastics Center Team demonstration at the Center.

Recreation and Parks Summer Intern – Mr. Shepherd introduced Stacey Bean, a college intern working for R&P this summer, to the Board. Ms. Bean will be assisting the Recreation Division with projects and activities.

GOLF COURSE CLUBHOUSE TASK FORCE

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that on May 13, 2003 the Board of County Commissioners appointed a Wicomico Shores Golf Course Clubhouse Task Force to “develop a scope-of-work to renovate the Wicomico Shores Clubhouse and prepare a proposal on how to move the project forward within thirty days.” Members of the Task Force include: Mr. Rollins, Director, Recreation and Parks, Chairperson; George Erichsen, Director, Public Works and Transportation; Richard Rohrbaugh, Director, Facilities Management; Gary Whipple, Project Manager, Facilities Management; Patty Meyers, Golf Course Manager, R&P; Lynn Brady, Facilities Manager for Building Services, Facilities Management; Robert Harper, Chairperson, R&P Citizen Advisory Board; Fred Wood, Citizen Representative; and John Smith, Citizen Representative. Minutes of the meetings to date were e-mailed to Board members.

PROJECT UPDATES

Nicolet Park – Due to wet and rainy weather this experienced this spring, Nicolet Park will not reopen in late June as originally planned; the park will open later this summer.

Chaptico Park – Mr. Rollins thanked members, Robert Richardson, Coleman Hillman, Jody Payne and Kaki Burruss for attending the Chaptico Park Groundbreaking Ceremony held on Tuesday, June 3rd. Construction is underway at the site; weather permitting, the soccer fields will be seeded this fall for a park opening in fall 2004.

Three Notch Trail – Per BOCC direction in May regarding the trail project, the DPW&T has assumed responsibility for trail design and engineering and R&P will handle project management. The design firm previously contracted to do the design/engineering turned the project over to DPW&T at the 30% design phase and will complete the topographical survey and forward it to the County. This change will result in a savings of approximately \$30,000, which will be redirected to trail construction.

Jody Payne motioned, seconded by Richard Smith, to sign the letter of support for the R&P department’s application for the National Recreational Trails program for phase two of the Three Notch Trail. Motioned carried 6 – 0. The County previously received \$50,000 under the program for phase one.

Dorsey Park – This project will expand and pave the parking areas at Dorsey Park. Construction was hampered by rain and wet conditions during the month of May, but should be finished within a few weeks.

Rec Plex – The private Rec Plex group meet with R&P staff several times over the last few weeks regarding their proposal to construct an indoor recreational facility on County-owned land adjacent to the Great Mills Swimming Pool. Part of the group’s proposal is for R&P to lease part of the building space for indoor programs. The BOCC has asked staff to study the group’s proposal and, if warranted, make a recommendation for the proposal to be presented to the R&P Board, and possibly the BOCC, for consideration.

OTHER BUSINESS

Myrtle Point Wade-In - Ms. Burruss informed the Board that she and Mr. Hillman participated in the Annual Hollywood Elementary School Wade-In at Myrtle Point Park on May 30th. The Wade-In was also attended by

Senator Bernie Fowler who began the event some years ago to draw attention to the need for clean up of the Patuxent River/Chesapeake Bay.

Annual Report – Chairman Harper stated that he received a letter from the BOCC requesting that the Board's Annual Report be submitted by July 1, 2003; Boards have been asked to present their reports in person during the summer and fall seasons. Board members are asked to submit their input for the report by June 27th.

Potomac River Jazz and Seafood Festival Alcohol Consumption Permit – Mr. Rollins presented an application form for alcohol consumption for the Potomac River Jazz and Seafood Festival to be held on Saturday, July 12th. R&P staff approves requests for alcohol consumption permits for parks having picnic pavilions; requests for alcohol consumption at other parks and facilities require Board concurrence. The event sponsor, the Friends of St. Clement's Island Potomac River Museum, will obtain a license from the St. Mary's County Liquor Board.

Andrew Roper motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, to approve the request for the alcohol consumption permit for the Potomac River Jazz and Seafood Festival. Motion carried 6 – 0.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board of St. Mary's County will be held at 5:30 P.M. on Thursday, June 10, 2003 in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 P.M.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on July 10, 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