

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Meeting of Monday, August 3, 2009**

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Patrick Dugan, Chairperson; Robert Richardson, Vice-Chairperson; Richard Buckler, Al Harrison, Sabrina Hecht, Robert Hicks and David Phalen.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Thomas Nelson and Lisa Wainger-Rush.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation and Parks (R&P); Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Patrick Murphy, Southern Maryland Youth Football League (SMYFL) Director; Frank Moneymaker, SMYFL Football Commissioner; and Paul Richardson, SMYFL Deputy Director.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Richard Buckler moved, seconded by David Phalen, to approve the minutes of June 4, 2009; motion carried 6-0.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

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

- Summerstock – This year's show "Ragtime" was a great success. Total attendance for 8 shows was 1,898. There were 62 cast members, 29 members in the orchestra, and 11 stage crew members for a total of 102 participants.
- Staffing - Mr. Shepherd noted that the Recreation Division employed about 215 hourly, part-time employees and 24 contract employees to operate various programs and summer camps this season.
- Gymnastics - The recreational program saw an increase in registration for the sixth straight session, with session VI registering 295 (73 first time registrants), compared to last year's 235 total enrollment (39 first time registrants). Team tryouts concluded with 55 on the 2009-2010 team.
- Great Mills Pool – Total attendance for July was 5,629; July 2008 was 4,481. The daily average was 181; the 2008 daily average was 145. This July was the pool's largest attendance month since opening in fall 2003.
- Summer Camps – Last year 2,100 slots were filled in summer camp; this year saw 2,010. Mr. Shepherd stated that the economy could have affected enrollment somewhat. A new camp for children with Autism was offered

called Camp Inspire. This camp was very well received and is expected to be held again next year.

- Carver Recreation Center - The D.A.R.E. camp, managed by the Sheriff's Department, was offered at Carver Recreation Center this season. Also, the Department will receive funding from a 21st Century grant for the Carver After School program this fall.
- A Kids Night Out program was offered at Lexington Park Elementary School.

YOUTH FOOTBALL UPDATE

Director Phil Rollins provided an overview of the current situation with youth football in the County. Historically, outdoor youth sports leagues have been administered by volunteer organizations. The County provides the fields and R&P coordinates and schedules field usage. Leagues also have to comply with the County's Community Standards initiative to be eligible to utilize public fields.

Until a few years ago there was only one youth football program - Pigskin Football. This league was originally established by Recreation and Parks in the early 1970's. For the past 25+ years, Don Kemp was the President and the owner of the league (as he owned the equipment). In 2005 Mr. Chris Pixton started another youth football program called the Pax River Raiders that participate in the Calvert County Youth Football League, with games played in Calvert County and in St. Mary's County.

Earlier this year, another program, the Southern Maryland Youth Football League (SMYFL), was formed.

In March, Don Kemp, the owner of the Pigskin Football League, announced he was stepping down and that another individual would be the Pigskin President. He proposed that R&P administer a countywide youth football league and bring Pigskin Football, the Pax River Raiders and SMYFL under one umbrella. Mr. Shepherd met with Mr. Pixton to discuss this and Mr. Pixton expressed opposition to the idea. Then the new President of Pigskin Football resigned and shortly thereafter Pigskin Football's assets (and debts) were sold from Don Kemp to Chris Pixton (Pax River Raiders). A written agreement (contract) between the two spelled out the terms of the sale. Subsequently, there was a dispute over who owned the football equipment which is stored in a County owned room adjacent to Lettie Dent Elementary School. Mr. Pixton claimed that he had a signed agreement giving him ownership, while Mr. Kemp claimed that the contract had been breached.

After consultation with the County Attorney's office, both groups were notified not to enter the equipment room until they had resolved their differences. Currently, the conflict has not been resolved. The Department's understanding is that both groups are pursuing litigation against the other.

Over the past 2-3 weeks the situation has been very fluid. There have been starts and stops in the discussions between the Mr. Kemp (Pigskin Football) and Mr. Pixton (Pax River Raiders) to resolve differences about the agreement they signed a few weeks ago. In the mean time, the equipment remains locked in a County storage room adjacent to Lettie Dent School. Mr. Shepherd and Tyrone Harris have both been

communicating with the leagues trying to stay on top of this and provide information and assistance as possible. At the end of last week, it was announced on the Pigskin Football web site that Pigskin would not have a program this fall.

Staff is proposing that R&P manage the youth football program next year using the "club model" that Charles and Calvert County employ. Mr. Rollins provided a PowerPoint presentation on the proposal. In this scenario, community based not-for-profit, youth football organizations would be established to register players, create teams, fund raise, recruit volunteers, purchase equipment and enter teams into age and weight leagues that are administered by R&P. R&P would provide oversight, establish and collect fees for league operations (game officials, hourly part-time staff, field lights, field markers and other incidental costs), assign practice and game sites, provide game schedules, supervise game day activities and continue to manage the Community Standards program.

The Department is recommending that a policy be established stating that no individual can own a league (football or otherwise) or the assets of the league and use public facilities. The Department also recommends that each club will be responsible for operating a fall and spring flag football program. Some issues that need to be examined include ownership of league equipment, creating appropriate geographic boundaries and communicating the club model to the public.

Sabrina Hecht asked if the Department envisions moving to the club model for other youth sports; Mr. Rollins stated that there are no plans for the club model for other outdoor youth sports. One of the issues is that there are not enough kids to play in two or three football leagues and play all their games in the County. David Phalen asked if there are any other leagues operating in the County that are owned by an individual; Mr. Rollins stated that, to his knowledge, there are no others. Robert Hicks asked if the Department could administer a football league with the additional administrative burden; Mr. Rollins stated that it would be a significant amount of work, but existing staff and hourly employees could handle the operation.

Patrick Murphy, Board Member, Universal Sports and Academics, and Director of SMYRFL, introduced Paul Richards, Deputy Director, SMYFL, and Frank MoneyMaker, SMYFL Football Commissioner. Mr. Murphy stated that USA is a larger organization that provides governance to the SMYFL and the Football Commissioner who is managing three semi-independent clubs (groups of teams) at present. This includes recreational and competitive teams. They are the Mechanicsville Braves, the Hollywood Patriots and the Lexington Park Hornets. The difference between this league is if one of the club presidents decides to resign, they find another president. No equipment belongs to any individual; it belongs to the SMYFL. He said this league is operated similarly to the R&P club model. He stated that both the Pigskins and the Pax River Raiders have tried to sell their organizations to the SMYFL, but those deals didn't work out. Mr. Murphy is working with Tyrone Harris to schedule fields for SMYFL for the upcoming season.

Mr. Rollins commended Mr. Murphy for what the new league is doing; however, there is still another football league in the County and someday there could be another. Having the County administer youth football would provide oversight, accountability and ensure

that the kids would get to play all recreational games in St. Mary's. Staff does not think there's room for more than one recreational football league in the County.

PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Rollins provided a status report on several R&P projects.

- 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. That has been done and 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 the project will be advertised for construction this fall/winter and be under construction by spring 2010. Phase VI is the next phase to be designed and will run from MD 5 to MD 236 in New Market.
- Lancaster Park Improvements – The disc golf course at the park is now open. The pedestrian pathway around the perimeter of the park is nearly complete and will connect to the former road system in Lexington Manor. A picnic pavilion will be installed later this year.
- Carver Heights Community Park – The CHCP concept plan was approved by the BOCC July 21, 2009 and staff was authorized to move forward with implementation of the plan with funding currently available. Staff hopes to begin installation of the playground and make upgrades and repairs to walkways and parking areas this fall.
- UCAC Civil War Memorial – The BOCC also approved the concept and the location for the UCAC Civil War memorial. Fundraising by the UCAC will fund the memorial. The Parks Division will assist the UCAC with site work and landscaping around the memorial.
- Chancellor's Run Regional Park – Staff recently completed installation of a new picnic pavilion at this park; installation of the new children's playground is nearly complete.
- Dorsey Park Tennis Court Lighting – Staff was recently notified that the County will receive \$5,000 in USTA Fix-A-Court grant funds to assist with lighting the Dorsey Park tennis courts. Staff anticipates this work will be completed this fall.
- Cecil Park Tennis Courts - Staff has been monitoring the situation with "bubbling" on one of the new tennis court surfaces at Cecil Park. Staff from American Tennis Courts, Inc. visited the site and the theory is that water coming up through cracks in the asphalt has created some air pockets. Staff is working on some additional drainage measures to try and direct standing water away from the courts. This situation will continue to be monitored.
- Public Landings – The Paul Ellis Landing new pier project is now complete. Repair work at the St. Inigoes public landing is currently underway. Permits were recently received for the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum canoe and kayak launch and the Piney Point Landing revetment project.

OTHER BUSINESS

Robert Richardson informed the Board and viewing public that the St. Mary's Babe

Ruth/Cal Ripkin Baseball League 12 year old Division won the State Championship this summer.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, September 3, 2009 at 5:30 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

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