

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD  
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY  
Meeting of Thursday, October 1, 2009**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Patrick Dugan, Chairperson; Robert Richardson, Vice-Chairperson; Richard Buckler, Robert Hicks, David Phalen 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.

**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**

**Robert Hicks moved, seconded by Richard Buckler, to approve the minutes of September 3, 2009; motion carried 5-0.**

**Richard Buckler moved, seconded by Lisa Wainger-Rush, to approve the Executive Session minutes of September 3, 2009; motion carried 5-0.**

**RECREATION DIVISION REPORT**

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

- Carver After School Program – An open house celebration was held for the Carver Recreation Center after school program on September 23, 2009. Currently, 43 children are enrolled. This program is being offered in cooperation with SMC Public Schools, Recreation and Parks and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant program.
- Community Standards in Youth Sports – Mr. Shepherd provided a handout which detailed participation in the Community Standards program for the fall season. He noted that of the 416 background checks completed, 198 were done on-line.

Robert Richardson asked how you know if all the assistant coaches have had background checks. Mr. Shepherd stated that current policy states that two coaches per team need to have background checks, so there could be assistant coaches who have not had checks. In the future, staff would like to see that anyone who coaches children is certified.

**YOUTH FOOTBALL UPDATE**

Mr. Rollins gave a brief overview of the current situation with youth football. He also

provided a handout of R&P's response to issues and assertions raised by the leagues during the September 3, 2009 meeting.

Staff is recommending the Club Model for youth football in St. Mary's County for next year. Under this plan, community based non-profit, youth football organizations would be established to register players, create teams, fund raise, purchase equipment and enter teams into age and weight divisions of a countywide league that is administered by R&P. R&P would provide oversight for football operations as league administrator; establish and collect fees for league operations (game officials, field lights, field markers, other incidental costs); assign practice and game sites; administer player weigh-ins; provide a league game schedule; contract game officials; oversee league activities at County parks; continue to manage Community Standards program (coaches training, background checks, parent training and code of ethics); and mark game fields. The new Board of Directors would consist of the league administrator (R&P staff) and Board members (presidents of each club).

R&P is concerned there could be three football leagues in the County next year if Pigskin comes back, as they propose to do; this will cause problems with field scheduling. R&P's recommendation is that youth football programs must participate in the St. Mary's County Youth Football League in order to use County fields. The main reasons for this are to help unify youth football in the County; provide accountability; and provide impartial leadership. The exception to this would be older divisions where there aren't enough in-County teams for a County league or for Club sponsored select teams participating in other, more competitive leagues. Clubs could play older kids in Charles or Calvert County.

Currently, the Pax River Raiders are a club in the Calvert County league. Staff feels that they should be able to play in the St. Mary's league as a club.

Bob Richardson stated the league administrator may act in a similar fashion as the Commissioner for Babe Ruth Baseball where the teams run themselves but come to the Commissioner with issues and concerns.

Lisa Wainger-Rush asked about the issue of boundaries. Mr. Rollins stated that a policy would need to be established to either have boundaries or be County-wide; there are pros and cons to each. Boundaries would eliminate recruitment, as some feel kids should play where they want. If boundaries are established, once families make the choice of the club they want to play with they won't be able to switch clubs. Calvert County had boundaries in the past; they do not at this time. The details will need to be worked out in the future by the Board of Directors.

Ms. Wainger-Rush asked how R&P proposes to settle issues and reach consensus. Mr. Rollins stated that under the Club Model, the League Board of Directors (Presidents from each Club) and R&P staff would meet and work to resolve issues. Some issues would be brought to the R&P Board for discussion and policy establishment.

No decision on staff's recommendation has been made at this time. Staff has had some positive discussions recently with both the SMYFL and the Pax Rivers Raiders. Mr. Rollins stated that this recommendation can't work unless both leagues are on board

with the plan. However, the County may need to say that this is the direction youth football should be going if County fields are to be used. He feels everyone can work together to form a successful Club Model league or similar arrangement in St. Mary's.

As it stands, staff feels there are four options.

1. The Club Model (which is R&P's recommendation)
2. Leave things as they are
3. The current leagues agree to form a unified program
4. Implement a phased approach to the Club Model beginning with the older players

Mr. Hicks asked if any additional response has been received from parents; Mr. Rollins stated that no further response has been received.

Chairman Dugan asked if the Department has any idea on how the Board of County Commissioners feels about the recommendation this time around. Mr. Rollins stated that while he has some individual discussions about the matter with the Commissioners, he's not sure what they would recommend as a Board at this time.

Staff will e-mail information on the Calvert and Charles County leagues to the Board before the next meeting. David Phalen stated that seeing the framework and responsibilities for the programs would also be helpful.

The R&P Board will take staff's recommendation under advisement and make a recommendation on youth football during their next meeting. Staff would like to present information to the BOCC and obtain direction by the end of the year.

## **PROPOSED FY10 BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Mr. Rollins explained the Department's recommended budget reductions submitted as a result of the first round of State budget cuts.

### **Parks Division                      \$36,950**

Highlights include: Reduce high profile areas from 1 cut to 0 cuts in March 2010. Reduce high profile areas from 5 cuts to 4 cuts in May 2010. Finally, reduce public landings from 20 cuts per year to 15 cuts per year; reduce edgings in November. High profile areas include: all parks, Governmental Center grounds and County facilities.

### **Museum Division                      \$14,093**

Highlights include: hourly employees – hours for boat captains will be decreased and tour boat only used for lighthouse tours on weekends and chartered tours; delay opening Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and cut hours for St. Clement's Island Museum weekday Museum Assistant.

Vice-Chairperson Richardson expressed concern about reducing the number of cuts at parks. He asked if the Parks Division could make some of those cuts; Mr. Rollins stated that the County does not have the equipment for grass cutting any longer. Staff envisioned that the time between cuts would be lengthened (example: every 5 days could be increased to 7). This should not pose a severe problem; however, what tends to happen is that further delays occur with rainy weather.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Dugan asked if staff had re-examined advertising on ball field fencing. Mr. Rollins will discuss this with staff.

## **SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

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

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

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Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on November 5, 2009.