

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

Meeting of Thursday, November 4, 2004

MINUTES

Board members present: Robert Harper, Chairperson, Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chairperson, Dr. Andrew Roper, Jody Payne, Dorothy Gass, and Greg Hambright.

Board members absent: Samuel Brown and Robert Richardson; Kaki Burruss previously informed the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) that she would be relocating and would no longer be able to serve on the Board.

Recreation, Parks and Community Services staff and others present: Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation, Parks & Community Services (RP&CS), Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Also in attendance was Clive Graham of Environmental Resources Management, Inc. (ERM).

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Robert Harper, Chairperson, at 5:30 P.M. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Greg Hambright motioned, seconded by Jody Payne, to approve the minutes of October 7, 2004; motion carried 6-0. Jody Payne motioned, seconded by Greg Hambright, to approve the executive session minutes of October 7, 2004; motion carried 6-0.

DRAFT LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS & RECREATION PLAN

Mr. Rollins introduced Clive Graham of ERM, the firm working to develop the County's 2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP), who presented a status report on the progress of the draft Plan. The draft of Chapters I, II and III and appendices of the Plan were provided to Board members in advance of the meeting. The drafts of Chapter IV Agricultural Preservation, Chapter V Natural Resources and Chapter VI Summary will be provided for comment after they are completed. ERM is in the process of updating the agricultural section to reflect comments made by the Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board (ALPAB).

The draft is organized to follow the State guidelines for the Plan. The Chapter I outlines the purpose of the Plan and the Plan's relationship to the comprehensive planning process. The intent is for this document to be approved as an amendment to the County's Comprehensive Plan. Chapter II details the framework of the Plan and includes information about the County's characteristics, demographics, Comprehensive Plan framework and general planning strategy. Chapter III details the current recreation, parks and open space programming and speaks to recreation and parks programs, needs analysis and priorities for lands, facilities and rehabilitation, and County priorities and land acquisition goals.

Mr. Graham stated that page III-10 includes a Summary Needs Report of recreation priorities including baseball/softball diamonds, multipurpose fields, indoor facilities, pedestrian and bicycle trail, fishing areas and boat ramps; secondary needs are listed as off leash dog areas, another swimming pool, equestrian facilities, picnic pavilions and hunting area.

He stated that a table was included on page III-11 showing recreation needs by Election District. It is projected that by the year 2020, the largest recreation deficits will be in the Eighth and Fifth Districts, followed by the Third, Sixth and First.

Page III-12 includes the chart listing land acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation recommendations based on the previous plan, the State's Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland survey, and citizen, Board and staff input; pages III-14 and 15 provide narrative explaining the chart. Other projects are also listed and could move up if priorities and needs change over the next few years. Public/private partnerships may also enable these projects to

move forward. Page III-17 refers to funding, challenges and staffing. Mr. Graham referred to the opportunity to work with Public Schools to create recreation centers through joint use of schools agreements. Finally, the chapter refers to State land acquisition goal for recreation of 30 acres per 1,000 people for St. Mary's County.

Chairman Harper asked for clarification on the MEIRS database and the County Recreation Sites Inventory, appendix E. Mr. Graham stated the State designed the MEIRS system and local recreation department staff update that inventory; staff has found it useful to have their own County inventory since the State has not designed useful reports to date using the MEIRS data.

Chairman Harper asked if the Department is looking for Board endorsement regarding the staffing recommendations on page III-18; Mr. Rollins stated that would be addressed during the upcoming year's budget deliberations. Some of these staffing recommendations were made in the 2000 LPPRP. Also, he stated that the programmatic needs of the Museum Division will probably need to be added to the plan in light of that Division's significant expansion. Mr. Harper stated the plan should reflect the significant increase in parkland acreage and facilities over the last few years with no increase in staff.

The draft of the recreation sections of the plan will be posted on the RP&CS website within the next two weeks. It is hoped the entire draft plan will receive the approval in the near future from the BOCC, Planning Commission, R&P Board and the ALPAB to send to neighboring jurisdictions and the State for the required sixty day review period. Originally, it was planned that the draft plan would be presented to the public during a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, R&P Board and Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board in December; subsequently, it was decided that this public meeting would be postponed to allow additional work on the plan and to schedule a work session with the BOCC.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

Director Phil Rollins introduced Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, who provided an update on Recreation Division projects and programs.

- The Winter 2005 layout of the program guide is underway; it will be distributed beginning December 8th. The guide will include a summer camp preview.
- Registration underway for the current session at the Gymnastics Center.
- Registration begins next week for the Youth Basketball League.
- Two swim teams, Chesapeake Bay Aquatics Club and Great Mills Aquatics Club, continue to use the pool with over 100 swimmers.
- St. Mary's County Public Schools will begin swim team practice on November 15th along with Patuxent High School.
- Open swim, party rentals, Office on Aging Classes and RP&CS lessons and classes are ongoing at the pool.
- Skatepark weekend attendance has been steady during the fall months.
- Leonard Hall, Hollywood and Carver Recreation Centers were opened for use for full day care for those in before and after school programs on Election Day when school was closed.
- Staff is working with the Community Service Division to incorporate the Summer of Safety, Arts and Reading (SOSAR) camps within the Recreation Division's summer camp program.
- The Department's annual cheerleading competition will be held on Sunday, November 7th.

Chairman Harper asked about how the financial operations at the pool are progressing. Mr. Shepherd stated that FY04 ended with about 57% of pool revenue covering the pool's expenses; staff had projected that number to be about 50%. In FY05 pool fees and charges are projected to cover about 71% of the pools expenses for operation; as previously stated, the shortfall will be covered through the Recreation Enterprise Fund.

YOUTH SPORTS INITIATIVE

Mr. Rollins reminded members that Board discussions were held last spring on the Raising Community Standards in Youth Sports Initiative. Staff proposed the initiative, in partnership with the National Alliance for Youth Sports, to be proactive in minimizing possible negative behaviors in youth sports. Some concerns were expressed from a few league representatives regarding the costs associated with coaches training and background checks. Based on those

concerns, staff decided to research the impact on the leagues and make modifications as needed. Staff would like to bring the plan back to the Board for further discussion and invite the leagues to Board meetings to have them provide a report on the number of youth they serve, their issues and challenges and suggestions. Chairman Harper recommended that the Pigskin Football League be the first league invited to share information with the Board. It is hoped the leagues and staff can work together to reach "common ground" to modify the proposal.

Greg Hambright expressed support for the Department's intent to foster good sportsmanship. He asked if there was any legal intent associated with the parent orientation form; Mr. Rollins stated that there is no legal intent associated with the form. Andrew Roper suggested including a line to print the parent's signature in addition to the signature line.

Mr. Rollins provided copies of correspondence from Mr. Don Kemp, President, Pigskin Football League, Mr. William Arrick, parent of a football participant, and the BOCC's response to the letters as examples of the types of issues that are forwarded to the Department to address. Currently, the Department has no authority to intervene and refers individuals back to the league to try and work out their issues.

Mr. Shepherd reported that the Department has implemented coaches training (to include assistant coaches), coaches screening and parent orientation for the Department sponsored Youth Basketball Program and programs administered by the Department at Leonard Hall Recreation Center. This will be done for the fall 04/05 season without raising participant fees.

ELMS HUNTING ISSUE

Mr. Rollins briefed that Board on status of citizen concerns over the reduction in the hunting areas on the Elms property. The issue was discussed during the Elms Committee meeting of October 28, 2004. Steve Riley, a concerned hunter, attended the meeting along with a contiguous property owner to the Elms property. The group discussed the possibility of using additional County leased acreage at the Elms property for hunting during certain times of the year when educational programs are not planned; staff is exploring the feasibility of that option. Draft minutes of the meeting will be provided to Board members.

PROJECT UPDATES

Nicolet Park – Phase II of Nicolet Park is nearly complete and includes a new baseball/softball field, two basketball courts, multipurpose practice field and hard surface walkways.

Chaptico Park – Construction is complete on Phase I of Chaptico Park; a Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be held in the spring.

Request for Expression of Interest for Indoor Recreation Facility – The evaluation committee (consisting of County staff, two sports league representatives and one R&P Board member) reviewed the proposals on October 21st. Staff will provide a status report on the solicitation in the near future. The County is open to discussing programmatic opportunities with company when the facility is built.

Charlotte Hall Community Recreation Center/Master Planning for Park Site – The solicitation to hire an architectural/engineering firm for site analysis and master planning for the 40 acre Northern Senior Center site, as well as for architect and engineering services to design and engineer a Community Recreation Center, was advertised with a deadline for proposals of October 29th. Staff is currently reviewing the qualifications of the sixteen firms who submitted information and will select several firms to interview.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairperson Harper thanked Board members for their support during his service as Chair. The Nominating Committee consisted of Bob Richardson, Chair, and Greg Hambright, Vice-Chair. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Greg Hambright recommended Dr. Andrew Roper to serve as the new R&P Board Chairperson. **Jody Payne motioned, seconded by Coleman Hillman, to appoint Dr. Andrew Roper as Chairperson; motion carried 6-0.**

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Greg Hambright recommended that Coleman Hillman continue to serve as Vice-Chairperson of the R&P Board. **Robert Harper motioned, seconded by Jody Payne, to appoint Coleman Hillman as Vice-Chairperson; motion carried 6-0.**

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Rollins publicly thanked Kaki Burruss for her service over the past several years on the Board and, along with her husband, Bill Burruss, for their assistance as dedicated park volunteers. She and her husband are moving from the area and will be missed by many.

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, December 2, 2004 in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on December 2, 2004.

A tape recording of the meeting is kept on file in the Recreation, Parks & Community Services' office for one year.