

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD  
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY  
Meeting of Thursday, December 1, 2005**

**MINUTES**

**Board members present:** Andrew Roper, Chairperson, Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chairperson, Samuel Brown, Patrick Dugan, Dorothy Gass, Robert Richardson and Jody Payne.

**Board members absent:** Robert Harper and Lisa Wainger Rush.

**Recreation, Parks and Community Services staff and others present:** Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation, Parks & Community Services (RP&CS), Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, and Kathy Bailey, Recorder.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board meeting was called to order by Andrew Roper, Chairperson, at 5:30 p.m. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Jody Payne motioned, seconded by Robert Richardson, to approve the minutes of November 3, 2005. Motion carried with all in favor.**

**PIGSKIN FOOTBALL LEAGUE DISCUSSION**

Director Phil Rollins provided some background information to the Board on a Pigskin Football League incident that occurred at Fifth District Park on Saturday, November 5, 2005. The incident was between a team of middle school aged youth. One team was from Lexington Park and the other was from the northern part of the County. The game got out of control; four players from the Lexington Park team were ejected; and the League President, Don Kemp, decided to cancel the game. The Lexington Park team was told to take off their equipment and leave it on the field. Apparently things got out of hand at this point and the Sheriff's Department was contacted.

As a result of the incident, the Department decided to: 1) assign park attendants to future games this season to monitor activity (the league also hired off-duty deputies); and 2) bring the "Raising Community Standards in Youth Sports" initiative back to the Commissioners table early next year for consideration. The R&P Board endorsed this initiative in December 2003 and staff took the proposal to the BOCC in April 2004. The BOCC decided to hold off on implementing the program at that time. The County Administrator also sent a letter to the League's Board of Directors expressing the displeasure with the incident and league leadership. That letter indicated that the RP&CS Department would meet with the League's Board of Directors after the season.

The Southern Maryland Youth Sports Association met to hold a discussion about the incident. Representatives from both teams involved were present and were given the opportunity to talk and discuss what happened.

The incident that occurred is exactly the type of incident that staff was concerned about two years ago when the Youth Sports Initiative was brought forward. Currently, most youth sports leagues are totally independent and managed by volunteer boards and the Department has no authority to get involved in their program. The problem is these leagues use County fields and the public expects the County to play a leadership role when there are problems, but staff doesn't have the authority to do so. Chairman Roper noted that volunteer youth league programs are advertised in the Department's program guide and that gives the perception that the programs are County sponsored.

Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, stated that early last year the Department invited youth league representatives to a meeting to provide information on the Raising Community Standards program and to gather input from the leagues. Items discussed included the role of the RP&CS Department, the draft plan outline, administrator/coaches/parent training, and how the plan would impact the leagues. Other items discussed included how

the program could be implemented, the costs associated with the program, resources currently available, parent/spectator negative behavior and authority that league representatives have in parks and facilities. Mr. Shepherd also spoke with a representative from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Department to discuss developing a plan to deal with negative behavior.

He provided a handout on the Raising Community Standards in Youth Sports initiative. The handout provided information on St. Mary's County youth sports participation, strategies for raising community standards, an overview of the planning process, the current standards, the proposed initiative, possible program costs and implementation of the program. The proposed initiative calls for:

- A youth sports user group application - renewable on an annual basis
- Training for administrators, coaches and parents – NYSCA training; 2 per league
- Coaches screening – State sex offenders registry and criminal background checks
- Smoking policy – prohibits smoking within 150 ft. of athletic fields
- Crisis intervention plan – steps for minimizing violent behavior
- Liability insurance (all the volunteer youth sports groups now have liability insurance)

The St. Mary's County program was developed from Recommendations for Communities by the National Alliance for Youth Sports. Mr. Rollins stated that while the County has a dedicated group of volunteers who do a good job of administering youth sports leagues, the Department wants to be proactive in minimizing negative behavior of some participants, spectators and coaches.

Patrick Dugan asked who conducts the background checks. Mr. Shepherd stated that the County now uses the Sheriff's Department for background checks for its programs. Mr. Shepherd stated that he thinks the parents code of ethics and the additional coaches training has helped enhance the Youth Basketball program. Mr. Dugan asked if the training is sport specific? Mr. Shepherd stated that some parts of the training are sport specific; coaches wouldn't have to retake both parts of the program when coaching more than one sport.

Program costs to implement the initiative were discussed. It was suggested that the County may consider funding some or all of the cost to implement the program.

Chairman Roper noted that St. Mary's County Public Schools are also taking a look at implementing a code of ethics between coaches, players and parents.

The Department plans to meet with sports leagues in early 2006 and then bring the initiative back to the BOCC for consideration.

## **DRAFT FY07 RP&CS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM**

Mr. Rollins provided the Board with a draft of the recently completed FY2007-2012 Capital Improvements Program handout outlining proposed capital projects and funding sources. The draft will be forwarded to the BOCC within the next few weeks. He would like the Board to review the handout and provide comments and suggestions during the January Board meeting. Board comments will then be forwarded to the BOCC. Project recommendations include:

- Piney Point Lighthouse Museum Renovation – prior approval, FY07-08
- Three Notch Trail – prior approval, FY07-12
- Tennis Court Replacement – FY07
- Piney Point Lighthouse Museum Shore Erosion – prior approval, FY07-08
- Myrtle Point Park – prior approval, FY10-12
- Central County Park – FY07 & FY12
- Gymnastics Center – FY11-12
- St. Mary's College Amphitheater – FY07-08
- Leonard Hall Recreation Center improvements – FY07
- Lancaster Park Improvements – FY07
- Park ADA Improvements (Playground Replacements) – FY07

- Lacrosse Fields – FY07
- Derelict Boat Removal – prior approval, FY07-12
- Patuxent River Public Landing – prior approval, FY07-09
- Clarke’s Landing Boat Ramp – FY08-09
- Forest Landing – FY07
- Wicomico Shores Public Landing – FY07
- Wicomico Shores Public Landing Parking Acquisition – FY07

**PROJECT UPDATES**

Mr. Rollins provided a brief update on the following projects.

**Myrtle Point Park Master Plan** – Now that the BOCC has adopted the Myrtle Point Park master plan, a phasing plan for park development will need to be drafted. Also, staff has drafted a Chesapeake Bay Gateways Site Nomination form for Myrtle Point Park and hopes to present this and a draft letter of support to the BOCC this month. Projects that will be undertaken as part of implementation of the master plan include inclusion of the park in the State’s water trails system, the structural evaluation and potential reuse of two tobacco barns, establishment of a canoe/kayak launch, development of a plan for forest restoration and controlling invasive plant species and begin working with DNR on a Wildlife Management Plan.

**Robert Richardson motioned, seconded by Jody Payne to approve and authorize Chairman Roper to sign the letter of support for the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Nomination for Myrtle Point Park. Motion carried with all in favor.**

**Three Notch Trail** - Phase I construction is nearing completion. Phase I of the trail begins at Route 236 in New Market and proceeds approximately one mile north to the new Northern County Senior Center in Charlotte Hall. Phase two of the trail will begin at the new Northern County Senior Center in Charlotte Hall and proceed north to the St. Mary’s County line for a distance of approximately two miles. The Department recently received the 30% design drawings for Phase II of the trail.

**Seventh District Park Improvement Project** – This project was funded in FY06 and includes a new playground (currently out to bid), restroom building, basketball court and possibly expanded parking. Staff is working with a firm under an open end contract to do the site planning for the park improvements. A spring 2006 perc test is needed to finalize the location of the restroom building. Staff hopes that construction on this project will be underway next spring or early summer.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Punt, Pass and Kick** – Bob Richardson reported that six first place Sectional winners were invited to compete in the Washington Redskins Team Championship Punt, Pass and Kick competition held on Sunday, November 27, 2005 during the Washington/San Diego game at FedEx Field. The Sectional winners who attended the Redskins Team Championship competition were:

- Girls 8/9 category                      Carlee Joseph of Hollywood
- Girls 10/11 category                      Kelly Sothoron of Mechanicsville
- Girls 12/13 category                      Lindsey Graves of Mechanicsville
- Boys 12/13 category                      Markus Hammond of Hollywood

- Boys 14/15 category                      Ben Windsor of Leonardtown
- Girls 14/15 category                      Shannon O'Hara of LaPlata

Of the eight first place Team Championship winners, three were from St. Mary's County and are now ranked in the top 32 nationally. Local winners from the Redskins Team Championship were:

- Girls 12/13 category                      Lindsey Graves of Mechanicsville                      First Place
- Boys 12/13 category                      Markus Hammond of Hollywood                      First Place
- Girls 10/11 category                      Kelly Sothoron of Mechanicsville                      First Place

The top four scorers from all the first place finalists in each age group will advance to the National Finals. These winners and their families will travel to the Finals at an NFL playoff game in January.

**SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board of St. Mary's County will be held on Thursday, January 5, 2006, at 5:30 p.m., in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

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Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on January 5, 2006.