

Recreation & Parks Advisory Board (Thursday, April 1, 2021)

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 5:30pm

2. Roll Call

Members present Patrick Murphy, Greg Weaver, Fred Parker, Christine Kaila, Kathryn Weatherly

Members absent Joe Longobardi, Chanda Norton, Joshua Shaffer

I move to approve the minutes of March 4, 2021

Motion by Christine Kaila, second by Fred Parker

Final Resolution: Motion carries

Yea: Patrick Murphy, Greg Weaver, Fred Parker, Christine Kaila, Kathryn Weatherly

3. New Business

- a. I move to approve the Park Use Permit for the Friends of the St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums for the First Landing Wine & Arts Festival on April 10, 2021.

Motion by Greg Weaver, second by Christine Kaila

Final Resolution: Motion carries

Yea: Patrick Murphy, Greg Weaver, Fred Parker, Christine Kaila, Kathryn Weatherly

- b. **Recreation Program Updates** – Recreation Division Manager Jessica Hale gave updates

- i. **Spring Program Guide** – programs, events happening this spring

1. Registration is now open

- ii. **Summer Camp – The Scoop** – registration opens at 9am on Monday, April 5. Offering specialized fun day camps and sports camps. No therapeutic camps this year because of limited space restrictions.

1. **Specialized Fun Day Camps** – 9 weeks being offered, no field trips, limited capacity, scholarships available

2. **Sports Camps** – wide variety of camps, all outdoor camps

3. **Question:** Board Member Kathryn Weatherly inquired about how the scholarship program works.

- a. **Response** – Jessica Hale:

- i. **You can request up to all 9 weeks;** amount approved depends on the amount of families that requested it and how many weeks they requested. If there are a lot of requests, then the person requesting assistance might only receive one- or

two-weeks assistance so that everyone who applies are able to receive assistance. Families should go in and pay the \$25 deposit and if for some reason they do not receive assistance and can not pay themselves they would get the \$25 deposit refund.

iii. Surprise Pop Up Easter Egg Hunt

1. Because of COVID restrictions we couldn't have the annual Easter Egg Hunt, so came up with a Surprise Pop-Up Easter Egg Hunt where the bunny helpers (Recreation Staff) left bags of eggs (650 bags totaling 6,500 eggs) in participating county parks and museums. There were 10 golden eggs which when opened gave a clue where to go to claim their prize. There was also a hashtag where they could leave a picture of the find in the park and enter a drawing; there also is an Easter trivia contest going on where the winner can win a R&P Gift Card. This surprise pop up event was announced on social media and a press release went out after the eggs were hidden in the parks. Great awareness of the parks and museums where citizens had never visited before. Social media lit up with positive comments on this event! We hope in the future we can offer more surprise events.

Lancaster Park – field 7 is almost complete, should possibly be completed by April 9

2. Montgomery County, MD will be utilizing fields 7 & 8 at Lancaster the weekends of April 10 & 17 for The Maryland Cup Games (soccer)
3. Chancellors Run – week behind for the completion of the turf field
4. Chaptico Park – about two weeks behind for the completion of the turf field.

iv. Shannon Farm Property

1. Proposed Center Line for Trail Access to Shore line, Wetlands Areas
2. Surveyors will come out next week to start the surveying

v. Snow Hill Park

1. Presented concept plan for boat ramp
2. Future use – wedding venue, concerts, kayak and canoeing, and other recreation

vi. Waterfront parks opened today, staff at Snow Hill, no staff at Elms or Myrtle Point

vii. Lexington Manor Passive Park

1. Construction started, get water off the property, curbing pulled out then roads cut
2. Disc Golf – new tees pads going in, move eight holes

- 3. Bids out for the restrooms, hoping tentatively to have construction completed by July
- 4. Looking for swing benches, fitness equipment, streetlights
- viii. Three Notch Trail
 - 1. Still moving forward
- ix. Question by board member Kathryn Weatherly if there would ever be lifeguards at the waterfront parks, right now we are managing without lifeguards at the parks
- x. Question by board Chair Patrick Murphy will be going to 3feet
 - 1. State Licensing is still 6feet
 - 2. Licensing for school age care & summer camps licensed by the Maryland Department of Health, still waiting on the regulations to be release, hoping it will go to 3feet where we can accommodate more campers. Currently, we are still operating at 6feet, we follow the guidelines from CDC and the local health department

4. Old Business –

- a. COVID Updates
 - i. Successes and challenges
 - 1. Great Mills Pool – open for online reservations; will keep this aspect since it has shown to be a great tool
 - 2. Full Day School Age Center at Hollywood – 23 students
 - 3. Challenges – not being able to accommodate many people; please to be able to offer some of our programs to people
 - 4. Greatest challenge – going through quarantine
 - a. Just over 60 incidents of people exposed or being near someone who was exposed
 - b. Have very few positive cases in our programs or with staff; it did occur but not high percentage
 - 5. Question by Chair Patrick Murphy – has there been any discussions about requiring immunizations for programs. Director Shepherd said no and that no strong conversation with the Health Nurse yet.
 - 6. All waterfront parks are opened to all citizens, county citizens and non-county citizens
- b. **Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan** – Director Shepherd gave an overview – must go through this review every five years
 - i. Gives community, board members and staff input; establishes goals; gives us our own internal report card. Will hire a consultant this summer because the five-year period will be over 2022
 - ii. Goals 1-4 can be found on page 55 of the plan are singled out and listed below

1. **Goal 1:** Expand the inventory of County managed athletic fields and sport courts, and enhance the condition of current fields and courts to improve the playability of field surfaces
2. **Goal 2:** Expand opportunities for water access and waterfront recreation throughout the County.
 - a. **TO DO:**
 - i. Begin the design phase of the Myrtle Point and Elms Beach CIP projects
3. **Goal 3:** Create a network of connected walkways, trails, and paths throughout the County.
 - a. **TO DO:**
 - i. Inventory and map all existing trails, trail heads, trail parking
 - ii. Expand trail partnerships
 - iii. Participate in regional initiatives – Received email from Charles County about connecting the trails
4. **Goal 4:** Continue to operate, maintain, and improve existing County parks, recreation facilities, museums, and open spaces in an efficient and cost-effective manner for the benefit of the residents and the visitors

- iii. Director Shepherd goal is to have board members engage more between now and May, mapping a path forward, take these goals along with page 55 and see what can be presented to the Commissioners in September
- iv. Board Member Greg Weaver said the biggest goal was maintaining all that has been completed to date. Director Shepherd said at this time no plans to hire another full-time staff.
- v. Chair Patrick Murphy asked if with the success of the pool reservations this year if something like that would be implanted for the waterfront parks? Director Shepherd stated that online reservations are the way to go the way of the future. You can set capacity limit. With online reservations you aren't charge at the time you are charged when you arrive because it is weather dependent. Have an app on your phone where you can check to see if the park is full.
- vi. Chair Patrick Murphy asked have you ever thought about inviting food trucks to the parks when games are going on? Director Shepherd stated when the parks are opened for tournaments there will be food trucks. The leagues would have first chance to sell concessions to enhance their revenue and then we go from there.

5. Next Meeting

- a. The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, May 6, 2021.

6. Adjourn

I move to adjourn the meeting at 6:30pm

Motion by Fred Parker, second by Greg Weaver

Final resolution: Motion carries

Yea: Patrick Murphy, Greg Weaver, Fred Parker, Christine Kaila, Kathryn Weatherly