

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Thursday, October 5, 2017
5:30 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doug Bellis, Chairperson; Jake Heibel, Patrick Murphy, Fred Parker, Caroline King and Floyd Warren.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dick Buckler, Thomas Nelson and Ashley Varner.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Arthur Shepherd, R&P Director; David Guyther, Parks Manager; Tyrone Harris, Facilities Coordinator; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Wieck Playground Committee members and citizens attended for the Community Input for New Playground discussion. Southern Maryland Pickle Ball Association members also attended.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Doug Bellis called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Fred Parker moved, seconded by Floyd Warren, to approve the minutes of September 7, 2017; motion carried with all in favor.

INTRODUCTION OF MUSEUM DIVISION MANAGER

Arthur Shepherd, Director, introduced Karen Stone, new Museum Division Manager, to the Board. Karen provided a brief report of the education/experience she brings to the position.

PICKLE BALL

Floyd Warren, board member and member of the Southern Maryland Pickle Ball Association, expressed thanks to the Recreation and Parks Department for assistance in providing spaces for pickle ball play in the County.

WIECK PLAYGROUND PROJECT OVERVIEW

Mr. Shepherd provided an overview of the Wieck Playground project at Miedzinski Park. The playground was built through a community/county effort in 1997. This project will replace the old, all wooden playground with a new, safer playground made of composite surfaces. New safety surfacing will be a major improvement over the existing wood mulch and will make the playground more accessible for children of all abilities. The County has provided \$200,000 and a grant from the Community Parks & Playgrounds program provided \$200,000, which brings the project total to \$400,000. A committee of nine members has been formed and has met four times to date (includes the three original Project Playground members from 1997). The online survey has produced nearly 600 responses to date.

COMMUNITY INPUT FOR NEW PLAYGROUND

The following is a summary of comments provided on the project.

Cathy Ertter – provided the example of Watkins Park in Prince George’s County as a good model; has a great play surface; asphalt walkways; shade; spend money on surface, equipment and theme.

Heather Hahn – supported themed playgrounds; visited Watkins Park; new playground needs to be fenced; unique park/fantasy theme; not plastic and metal; need musical features, but no horns; concerned with toxicity of surface materials (rubber mulch); no features that jam up over time.

Elizabeth D’Aurora – would like to see a mini library and hide and seek hunt.

Christina Fowlkes – she would like to see additions to existing structures as opposed to new; need shade and seating; enclosure; size of playground important; make it a destination park; no sandbox (unsanitary, attracts animals).

Rachel Boarman – sandbox concerns also; likes wood as it does not get extremely hot.

Mellissa Willy – traditional playgrounds are too hot; no issue with sand box.

Christine Komar – with All Recreation/Burke equipment; also resident of Leonardtown; themes can get pricey; consider warrantee and durability; All Recreation has 100 year warranty; they can develop an educational curriculum for the playground.

Dorothy Huffman – One of the original members of Project Playground; fenced in playground; natural approach; she has talked to Leathers (company that provided the original playground equipment); does not want to see metal and plastic playground, but wants a creative play environment.

Jaclyn Hall – Has a child with special needs; enclosed playground and not overwhelming; shade very important; likes the grass/turf product like the playground at Leonardtown Wharf; and likes the Trex® material; would be happy if county replaced the currently playground, board by board, with Trex® decking material.

Mr. Shepherd thanked community members for attending the meeting. A meeting to comment on the draft playground designs will be held during an upcoming R&P Board meeting.

PARK ATHLETIC FIELD PLAN

A full plan discussion will be held in November and it is anticipated the plan will be presented for Board vote in February 2018.

PROJECT UPDATES

John G. Lancaster Park – Mr. Shepherd thanked Board members for attending the ribbon cutting ceremony for improvements at Lancaster Park on September 26th.

Clarke’s Landing – Mr. Shepherd noted that the project to replace the boat ramp at Clarke’s

Landing is moving forward.

Nicolet Park Entrance – Site plans are nearing completion for the Nicolet Park Entrance project.

Dorsey Park Improvements – Purchase orders have been issued for the new well, irrigation, soil amendments, top soil, Bermuda grass sprigs, and electrical work. The well installation will begin shortly; other work will need to wait until the end of football season. Fields will be sprigged with Bermuda grass in June 2018.

Fifth District Park – Funds are being requested from Program Open Space to construct a playground at Fifth District Park.

Restroom Renovations – Staff is busy obtaining quotes to renovate restroom buildings at Dorsey, Fifth District, Cecil and Cardinal Gibbons Parks.

Beacon on Three Notch Trail – The contract for design of the beacon at Baptist Church has been awarded.

Pickle Ball Courts at CRRP – The new courts will be under design/engineering in the near future.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Shepherd noted that an Hourly Employee Recognition ceremony will be held during the next meeting.

Caroline King suggested CRRP needs a dedicated walking path as people are walking through the parking lots. Patrick Murphy suggested a one way vehicle traffic lane for now to improve safety. Mr. Shepherd suggested that could be something to look at during the upcoming budget process.

Chairperson Bellis reminded the Board that a nominating committee for the 2018 Election of Officers needs to be set during the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING OF R&P BOARD

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, November 2, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on November 2, 2017.