

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Thursday, December 5, 2013
MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Buckler, Chairperson; Robert Hicks, Tom Nelson, David Phalen, Lisa Wainger-Rush and Ashley Varner.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Phil Cranford, Sabrina Hecht and Julie Lemmon.

RECREATION AND PARKS STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Loewe, Director; Debra Pence, Museum Division Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Richard Buckler at 5:30 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

David Phalen moved, seconded by Lisa Wainger-Rush, to approve the minutes of November 7, 2013; motion carried 5-0.

MUSEUM DIVISION REPORT

Director Brian Loewe introduced Debra Pence, Museum Division Manager, who provided an overview and update on projects and activities at the County's Museums. Items in her Power Point presentation included:

- Drayden African American School House – constructed in 1895; used until the late 1940's; and donated to the County in 2000. The site is managed in cooperation with the Unified Committee on Afro-American Contributions.
- Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Park – Historic Lighthouse and Keeper's Quarters were built in 1836; decommissioned in 1964. The property was added to the Museum Division in 1990. South campus of the property includes historic buildings, rain garden, boardwalk, public pier, beach and picnic area. North campus includes main museum building, public parking, maintenance and support facility, kayak launch and maritime exhibit building. Site also includes the U-1105 Black Panther submarine underwater dive preserve located off of Piney Point.
- St. Clement's Island – The Museum Division shares an active partnership with the MD Department of Natural Resources and the St. Clement's Hundred group to preserve and interpret the site of "Maryland's birthplace."
- St. Clement's Island Museum – Founded in 1974 and opened in 1976. The facility serves as the primary site for administrative and museum support facilities and includes the museum galleries, research room, and staff offices. The Collections facility is also located at this site; the building was funded through the assistance of the Friends of the Museums group. Grounds also serve as a public park with outdoor exhibits and fishing pier.

- Charlotte Hall Schoolhouse – Located on grounds of SCIM. Built in 1820 and donated to the museum by Henry Fowler family.
- Summary of goals for the next five years: 1) complete the enhancement project at the PPLM; 2) design and install new exhibits at the SCI Museum; and 3) complete the requirements for the American Association of Museum accreditation process.

CAPITAL PROJECTS DISCUSSION

Director Brian Loewe provided draft FY2015 – 2020 requested capital improvements budget spreadsheet. He also included a handout from the approved 2012 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan that included information on recommendations for land acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation projects. He also included information on projects completed, underway, or planned for the future as funding permits.

FY2015 projects include: Leonardtown Park, Parkland and Facility Acquisition; Recreation Facilities and Park Improvements/Renovations; and Three Notch Trail Phase VII.

Other projects programmed from FY2016 through FY2020 include: Chaptico Park phased development; Elms Beach Park Improvements; Nicolet Park Entrance; Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Park; and St. Clement's Island Museum.

There are three new projects proposed in the FY2015 – 2020 requested capital improvements budget.

- Central County Park – Recommended for design and engineering in FY2020 and construction in future years.
- Myrtle Point Park – Recommended for design in FY2020 and construction in future years.
- Three Notch Trail Phase VIII - Recommended for design in FY2020 and construction in future years.

Lisa Wainger-Rush noted she was surprised that Myrtle Point Park is so far out in the capital program. She would like to have a discussion to determine if the park improvements for Myrtle Park should move forward. The Board could make recommendations to the BOCC on this. Mr. Hicks agreed and expressed concern about parking issues at the park.

She also expressed the need to address space needs for ice skating and ice hockey and asked if it could make it onto the long-term list; Mr. Loewe stated that might be addressed with another project; such as a future recreation center.

Bob Hicks stated there is a need for space for futsal; he is working on some recommendations to forward to staff on this.

PROJECT UPDATES

Director Brian Loewe provided an update on the status of several park and facility improvement projects.

Three Notch Trail Phase VI

All local approvals have been received for the project. Staff mailed the plans, specifications and engineer's estimate (PS&E) packet to SHA for approval to advertise the project on October 21st. Staff anticipates hearing something on the review in the near future.

Charlotte Hall Athletic Fields

Spreading of topsoil on playing fields is approximately 80% complete and construction on the stormwater management structures is nearly complete. Work on the asphalt walkway has begun and will be completed in spring 2014. Final seeding will be done in the spring; wet weather has delayed the permanent seeding until the next growing season. Over seeding of the fields will take place in fall 2014; the fields are anticipated to be ready for use in spring 2015.

Lancaster Park

Design and engineering continues to move forward on this project to construct two additional multi-purpose fields, parking and an entrance road at this park off Willows Road. It is anticipated this construction project will be out to bid in spring 2014.

Civil War Interpretive Center at Lancaster Park

The renovated former Flat Tops building/Interpretive Center is intended to include displays and information about the Civil War Memorial as well as African American history and contributions in St. Mary's County. It is also envisioned that the center will provide space for meetings and community activities, as well as public restrooms for the memorial park and the adjacent pavilion. The plans were sent to the Maryland Historic Trust for Easement Committee review on December 3rd. The Committee must review and approve the plans as there is a historic easement on the exterior of the former Flat Tops house property. The review will focus on impacts due to improvements planned for windows and doors and new utility hook-ups.

Leonardtown Park Design and Engineering Project

The engineering firm continues to work with county staff on the concept planning for this new county park. The park's concept plan includes multi-purpose fields, baseball/softball fields, a playground, dog park, restroom building, and parking. When the draft is finalized, it will be presented to the Board, Board of Education, Town of Leonardtown, Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. The Phase I archeological study and the evaluation of the barns and other buildings on the site are now complete. The documents were sent to Maryland Historical Trust on November 21st. Staff anticipates a reply from MHT within the next few weeks.

Wicomico Shores Public Landing Restroom

The facility is nearly complete and will be ready for use by the public in April.

OTHER BUSINESS

- The Board thanked Julie Lemmon for her dedicated service on the Recreation and Parks Board and wished her well in her future endeavors.
- Lisa Wainger-Rush and Phil Cranford previously agreed to serve on the nominating committee for the election of officers to be held during the February 2014 meeting.
- There will be no January 2014 meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, February 6, 2014 at 5:30 p.m., in the Chesapeake Building in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on February 6, 2014.