

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

Meeting of Thursday, February 5, 2004

Minutes

Board members present: Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chair; Sam Brown, Dorothy Gass, Greg Hambright, and Robert Richardson.

Board members absent: Kaki Burruss, Robert Harper, Jody Payne and Andrew Roper.

Recreation and Parks staff present: Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation and Parks (R&P); Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chair, at 5:30 P.M. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Greg Hambright motioned, seconded by Dorothy Gass, to approve the minutes of January 15, 2004 with one amendment. Page 4, FY2005 Budget Update, paragraph three, should read "Mr. Hambright asked if the residents of Wicomico Shores would rather have the tennis courts replaced or would they support using the funding appropriated for the tennis courts, along with FEMA and WWI funds, to fully fund the Wicomico pier replacement project in FY2005. Mr. Rollins will investigate." Motion carried 5-0.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

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

Great Mills Swimming Pool – Mr. Shepherd reported that December 2003 pool usage increased approximately 100% over November 2003 usage. The facility hosted its first swim meet January 23rd – 25th; over 260 swimmers participated.

Carver Recreation Center – R&P recently formed a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Southern Maryland; the Club began operating an after school program at the Center in January. A public information meeting for the community was held on Tuesday, January 20, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. at the Center. A follow-up meeting, to be combined with a Carver Recreation Center Open House event, is planned for April.

Vice-Chair Coleman Hillman asked about concerns raised during the community meeting on January 20th. Mr. Shepherd stated that the number one issue/concern was the sustainability of youth development programs and the need to fund and to continue youth programs. Staff is also working to address a few concerns regarding weekend teen dances.

Gymnastics Center – The Center will host a Level 4 State Meet on February 28th and 29th.

Summer Camp Registration – Summer camp registration will begin on April 19, 2004. Staff is hopeful that on-line web registration will begin in the near future.

UPDATE/DISCUSSION SPORTS TOURNAMENT FIELD USE FEES

Mr. Rollins provided a handout on the proposed sports tournament field use fees. Staff is recommending this fee to help offset some of the direct costs for hosting tournaments at parks which include charges for park supervision, trash removal, restroom supplies, concession stand utilities and lighting. It is expected that fees would be charged for travel and select teams and private fundraising groups who host tournaments. Mr. Rollins stated that staff views this situation similar to fees charged for reserving picnic pavilions. Generally, picnic pavilions are open to the public to use on a first come, first serve basis. Individuals and groups can reserve pavilions for exclusive use by completing an application and paying the required fee. Staff is proposing that tournaments be managed in a similar fashion. A flat registration fee of \$120 is proposed to be charged for each park used for independent tournaments; flexibility will be in place (on a case-by-case basis) to waive or lower the fee if only one game is played at certain parks. A lower fee would be charged to affiliated leagues for park supervision. Staff is also proposing a fee to be paid from the net profit generated from the event (affiliated league tournaments may pay 25% of the net to R&P; non-affiliated, private groups may pay 40%). If leagues are able to have some services donated, that should still be shown on the event report as an expense, thus still benefiting the league. Staff would like to implement the field use fee for the spring 2004 season.

Greg Hambright asked if the Department is trying to cover direct costs of hosting tournaments in parks or is this a method of generating revenue. Mr. Rollins stated that it is both – to cover direct costs and to generate revenue. Mr. Hambright stated he feels a clear fee schedule, listing categories for groups and associated fees, should be developed to provide a definite understanding of the fees to all involved.

Mr. Shepherd stated that staff could develop a schedule with categories for in-County youth, out-of-County youth, private businesses and chartered charities. Mr. Hambright stated that could even be simplified with two categories - for profit and non-profit.

FY2005 R&P BUDGET

PROJECTS INCLUDED IN FY2005 CAPITAL BUDGET

Nicolet Park – \$200,000 for phase two construction which will begin in spring 2004 and includes a flex use field, basketball courts, picnic pavilion, and a water sprayground (funded in FY04 but not constructed due to regulatory issues which have now been resolved). Phase one of park development included the County's first Skatepark, a playground, two restroom buildings, a loop drive and parking.

Three Notch Trail – \$150,000 for FY05, and \$150,000 for each year up to FY10, for the Three Notch Trail to be constructed on the County-owned railroad right-of-way. This represents \$50,000 in County Funds and \$100,000 in either state or federal grants.

Parks ADA Accessibility Project – \$239,970 to finish this multi-year project to make accessibility improvements at exiting parks. This includes new, accessible playgrounds at Fifth District Park and St. Clement's Shores Park.

Piney Point Lighthouse Shore Erosion - \$265,000 in FY05; this represents a no-interest State loan to implement shore erosion control measures at the Piney Point Lighthouse property.

Piney Point Lighthouse Expansion Phase II – \$275,000 in FY05, and \$100,000 in each year through FY10, to renovate an existing building on the County-owned, former Stuart property to house the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum. Currently, the Museum is closed due to damage sustained to the present Museum building from Hurricane Isabel.

Tennis Court Replacement – \$0 in FY05; \$60,000 in FY07 to replace tennis courts at various park locations.

Wicomico Courts Replacement – \$0 in FY05; \$50,000 in FY06, and \$100,000 in FY10, to replace tennis courts at Wicomico Shores. Mr. Rollins informed the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) of the R&P Board's suggestion of possibly using the Wicomico Shores replacement funds to fund the improvements needed at the public landing; the BOCC is considering that option.

PUBLIC LANDINGS

The following public landing improvement projects are requested to be funded at 100% by the State's Waterway Improvement Program or Program Open Space.

Fox Harbor Landing - \$0 in FY05; \$100,000 in FY06 to replace the pier.

Wicomico Shores Pier Replacement - \$266,090 to replace the pier damaged by Hurricane Isabel.

Wicomico Shores Public Landing - \$200,000 to replace the boat ramp, dredge a channel and to stabilize the shoreline at this public landing. The BOCC is considering "forward funding" this project in anticipation of receiving State grants to fund the majority of the project.

Piney Point Public Landing - \$0 in FY05; \$50,000 in FY07 to replace bulk heading near the boat ramp.

Patuxent River Public Landing - \$0 in FY05; \$300,000 in FY06 and \$100,000 in FY07 to acquire land on the Patuxent River for a new public landing.

Derelict Boat Removal - \$30,000 in FY05, and \$30,000 each year through FY10, in State funding for derelict boat and debris removal.

OPERATING BUDGET

Mr. Rollins referred to the handout regarding the R&P Operating Budget previously e-mailed to Board members. He noted that staff was provided with direction to submit a "flat" budget with the exception of personnel merit increases and increases due to health insurance costs. This is an \$80,460 increase over the FY04 approved budget.

Administration – The department has requested \$672,754 for FY05 for the Administration Division. This represents costs for staff salaries, mileage, supplies, etc. Also listed are grants in the amount of \$23,000 and \$20,000 requested for Teen Centers.

Park Maintenance - \$1,343,083 is being requested for Park Maintenance and includes such items as grass cutting services, supplies and materials, water and sewer, carpentry, etc.

Museums - \$335,981 is being requested for the Museum Division and includes printing and binding, advertising, operating supplies, professional services, etc.

The total R&P departmental budget request is about \$6.6 million. This includes \$2,394,818 from the General Fund, \$2,948,834 from the Recreation Enterprise Fund, and \$1,238,028 from the Wicomico Shores Enterprise Fund. Departments were also asked to submit a prioritized list of requests for additional funding (if funding is available) and a prioritized list of potential reductions. R&P requests for additional funding include funds to offset the deficit anticipated for the Great Mills Swimming Pool, a new dump truck to replace a 1986 worn out model, funds for grass cutting to offset additional cuts needed for Chaptico Park and other associates expenses, and portable toilet rental and sanitary disposal service. The list of potential reductions includes funds to produce the Tide of Tolerance Play, equipment rental, irrigation services and minor carpentry repairs. The complete list of requests and reductions will be e-mailed to Board members.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTERS

Mr. Rollins briefed the Board on the BOCC trip to Harford County to visit the McFaul Activity Center on January 20th. Mr. Hillman attended the tour on behalf of the R&P Board. The multi-generational concept is being examined as a possible option for the new Northern County Senior Center in Charlotte Hall. At this time, Board members viewed a video tape of the tour.

Mr. Rollins stated that R&P is very supportive of the concept of dedicated space for seniors and youth with room for flexibility in program scheduling. There are several examples of multi-generational centers operating in St. Mary's County which include Chancellor's Run Activity Center and the Hollywood Recreation Center. Due to the size of the Chancellor's Run Center and the lack of a gymnasium, this site is not the ideal site for a multi-generational center. R&P operates a teen center and before and after school care at the Hollywood Recreation Center (old Hollywood Elementary School); the Office on Aging also operates a Medical Adult Day Care Center at this site. Also, as Mr. Shepherd mentioned earlier, R&P recently formed a partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southern Maryland to offer programs at the Carver Recreation Center (former George Washington Carver Elementary School).

PROJECT UPDATES

Three Notch Trail

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that plans are moving forward for phase one of the Three Notch Trail. Staff anticipates construction will begin this spring and be completed in summer 2004. Phase one will begin at Route 236 in New Market and proceed north to the new Northern County Senior Center.

Sam Brown inquired about the construction work being done in the railroad right-of-way near Hughesville. Mr. Rollins stated that he has been informed that Verizon is installing underground lines in preparation for the Hughesville bypass construction. He did not think this work would impact future plans for the trail.

Nicolet Park

The Nicolet Park Phase 2 project will go out to bid in the near future and construction is expected to begin this spring; staff anticipates the project will be completed in fall 2004.

Wicomico Shores Golf Course Clubhouse

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that two proposals were received for the new Wicomico Shores Golf Course Clubhouse. Both proposals were significantly over budget. Staff met with both contractors and the architect to come up with potential savings for the project. The BOCC is scheduled to consider this information and to discuss the project during their meeting of February 24, 2004.

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, March 4, 2004 in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 P.M.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board March 4, 2004.

A tape recording of the meeting is kept on file in the Recreation and Parks' office for one year.

cc: Board of County Commissioners
County Administrator
St. Mary's County Department Heads
Recreation and Parks Department Division Heads