

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

Meeting of Thursday, April 1, 2004

MINUTES

Board members present: Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chair; Sam Brown, Kaki Burruss and Dorothy Gass.

Board members absent: Greg Hambright, Robert Harper, Jody Payne, Andrew Roper and Robert Richardson.

Recreation and Parks' staff and others present: Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation and Parks (R&P); Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Also in attendance were Todd Ferrara, RecPlex; Don Kemp, President, St. Mary's Pigskin Football & Cheerleading; Trude Kemp, Director, Southern Maryland Alliance for Excellence in Sports; and other members of the Pigskin Football League's Executive Board.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chair, at 6:55 P.M. at the Carver Recreation Center in Lexington Park.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Since there was no quorum, the Approval of the Minutes was deferred until the next Board meeting.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that the meeting is being hosted tonight at the Carver Recreation Center as part of the celebration of the Carver Recreation Center Grand Opening and National Boys and Girls Clubs Week. Director Phil Rollins introduced Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, who provided an update on Recreation Division projects and programs.

Carver Recreation Center - Arthur Shepherd reported that Recreation and Parks (R&P) programs have been operating at the Carver Recreation Center since November 2003 in partnership with St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS). R&P is currently offering youth and adults sports, teen dances, rentals and space for community meetings at the site. He is currently working with SMCPS to develop a new, annual Memorandum of Agreement to replace the current document which expires on June 30, 2004. The new agreement will address maintenance, utilities, grass cutting and other responsibilities. The R&P Department recently partnered with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southern Maryland to offer after school and other positive youth development programs to the community at the site.

Special Events

- Disability Awareness Day – The Department, along with the Commission on Persons with Disabilities, hosted the fifth annual “High Hopes for Everyone” Disability Awareness Day on Saturday, March 27, 2004. Activities included kite flying, awareness activities and information from various agencies and service providers.
- Easter Festival – The Department will host the Annual Easter Festival and Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 10, 2004 at the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

Great Mills Swimming Pool - During the months of February and March, the Great Mills Swimming Pool attendance averaged approximately 1,000 swimmers per week. He reported that birthday party rentals are increasing. Adaptive swimming classes begin next week; this new program will offer two different types of models - the educational model and the therapeutic recreation model. Each model has distinct components associated with it, along with goals and objectives that are specific to individual needs. Mr. Shepherd also reported that he’s had discussions with SMCPs regarding plans for high school swimming for next school year.

The air supported “bubble” structure will be taken down the weekend of May 21 and the pool will be closed for approximately one week afterwards for seasonal maintenance. Vice-Chairman Hillman asked if staff would videotape the process of taking down and storing the bubble. Mr. Shepherd stated that was a good suggestion and he will talk to staff about the possibility. Representatives of the company that manufactures the structure will be on hand to assist with the process.

Skatepark - The skatepark was opened on weekdays and on weekends during the month of March. Currently, the skatepark is open on weekdays from 2:00 p.m. until dark and on weekends from noon until dark. The facility will stay open longer when Daylight Savings Time begins. Staff will consider only opening the skatepark on weekends next year during the month of March due to weather conditions. The Mid-Atlantic Series finale will be held at the facility on August 21st and 22nd, 2004.

REVIEW OF DRAFT REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY

Mr. Rollins briefed Board members on the Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) for an Indoor Sports Facility and provided a draft of the REOI which was previously e-mailed to members. In September 2001 a group of business people presented a concept to the R&P Board for partnering with the County to build an indoor sports facility. Staff met with the RecPlex group several times over the past few years to discuss the feasibility of the proposal. A few months ago, the RecPlex group made a presentation to the BOCC and offered to build the indoor recreation facility on the 19-acre Great Mills Road property adjacent to the swimming pool. The group proposed to build and operate the facility and that R&P lease part of the facility for basketball, roller hockey and indoor soccer. The BOCC asked R&P staff to provide a report and recommendations to the Commissioners on the proposal. The BOCC recognized the fact the RecPlex proposal was an unsolicited proposal and asked staff to draft a REOI to determine if there are other groups that may have an interest in providing a similar service. The draft has been provided to the Director of Finance and e-mailed to the BOCC; the BOCC would also like input for the R&P Board on the draft REOI. After R&P Board input, the draft will be presented to the BOCC; after that time, the BOCC may direct staff to work with the Office of Procurement to place the solicitation out for competitive bid.

Kaki Burruss asked if it was correct to assume that the RecPlex proposal includes the commitment that the County lease space from RecPlex in the facility. Mr. Rollins stated that the RecPlex proposal does require that the County lease of portion of the facility; the REOI is not that specific and doesn't require that commitment. The solicitation is primarily to identify qualified vendors who would provide a concept for a similar proposal. A selection committee, consisting of staff, R&P Board members and citizens, would review proposals and determine which proposals have merit and who would be invited to provide additional information. Advertisement of the REOI does not commit the County to awarding a contract.

The consensus of those in attendance was to move forward as soon as possible with the REOI.

FY2005 BUDGET UPDATE

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that the BOCC approved the FY2005 Recommended Budget on Tuesday, March 30, 2004. A public hearing on the budget document will be held on April 29, 2004 at 6:30 p.m. at Chopticon High School. He provided the Board with a summary of General Fund expenditures; the R&P Department's General Fund recommended budget (tax dollars) is \$2, 539,731 which is a 9.7% increase over last year's approved budget. Not included on the handout is the budget for the Recreation Activity Fund and the Wicomico Shores Golf Course Enterprise Fund. Those budgets are funded by user fees; the Recreation Activity Fund budget is approximately \$2.9 million and the Wicomico Enterprise Fund budget is about \$1.2 million. The total R&P budget is approximately \$6.6 million.

The major increase in the FY2005 Recommended Budget is the transfer of two positions previously paid for by the Recreation Activity Fund to the General Fund. To partially offset this change, the BOCC agreed to transfer utility costs previously paid with General Funds to the Recreation Activity Fund. Also, the \$20,000 historically funded in the General Fund budget for the Teen Center will now be paid from the Recreation Activity Fund. These changes will allow the Enterprise Fund to absorb the anticipated revenue loss for the pool operation. He also stated that the majority of the Parks budget consists of personnel and grass cutting costs; the BOCC increased the grass cutting line item by \$45,000 for FY05.

Mr. Rollins stated that the recommended Capital Budget does not include any changes from the draft Capital Budget handout provided to Board members last month.

PROJECT UPDATES

Chaptico Park - Some of the soccer fields were completed and seeded in late March while others are being completed in April.

Nicolet Park Phase II – Staff has received the cost proposal for phase II of Nicolet Park for the contractor and it's anticipated that phase II work will begin in June 2004. The sprayground should be under construction within the next few weeks.

OTHER BUSINESS

Reorganization – Mr. Rollins briefed the Board of the Office of Community Services' merger into the Department of Recreation and Parks. Effective, Monday, April 5, 2004 the Department will be called the Department of Recreation, Parks and Community Services (RP&CS). Cynthia Brown, Director of Community Services, will be a Division Manager with RP&CS and report to Mr. Rollins; her staff will continue to report to her and remain in their present location for the time being.

Comments from the Pigskin Football League Regarding the Raising Community Standards in Youth Sports Initiative - Don Kemp, President of St. Mary's Pigskin Football and Cheerleading, and Trude Kemp, Director of the newly formed Southern Maryland Alliance for Excellence in Sports, appeared before the Board to express concerns with staff's draft proposal titled "Raising Community Standards in Youth Sports." Trude Kemp read a letter from the St. Mary's Pigskin Football and Cheerleading Executive Board explaining their concerns. Major concerns included, "...we find that the goals and programs of the NAYS are in most cases exceeded by the youth organizations of St. Mary's County," "in St. Mary's County we are not in crisis," and "it is our understanding that the only Certified Youth Sports Administrator in Southern Maryland is Trude Kemp." The letter will be kept on file in the R&P main office.

Mr. Rollins stated that staff will formally present the draft Raising Community Standards for Youth Sports initiative to the BOCC on Tuesday, April 27; staff will then present the draft to the R&P Board on Thursday, May 6 for additional comment and input; leagues will also be invited to the presentation.

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, May 6, 2004 in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board May 6, 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