

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE KENT COUNTY PARKS AND  
RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

March 21, 2011

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**Present:** Melinda Bookwalter, Melissa Cannon, Faye Little, Penny Usilton, Laura Karns, and Myra Butler

**Absent:** Joyce B. Moody, Bryan Williams, Ron Jordan, Rachel Williams, J. Buddy Elgin, and Commissioner William Pickrum

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ACTION ON MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. The minutes of the January meeting were approved as written.

**II. OLD BUSINESS**

- Ms. Butler informed that Mark Dixon, Maintenance Supervisor, has assured that the Edesville Park Ball Field will be prepared for softball practices by Thursday, March 24.
- Ms. Butler has been informed by the Public Works Department that two attempts have been made to repair the light at the Millington Pool; however, during both attempts the weather conditions have been too windy for completion. Public Works must now wait for the availability of the County Bucket truck, but has assured Ms. Butler that the repair has not been forgotten.
- Ms. Butler reviewed the FY11 Kent County budget information as it pertained to the Parks and Recreation Department. She informed that for every \$100 of the assessed value of property, \$1.022 is paid in Kent County property taxes. Of the \$1.022, \$.030 is allocated to Parks, Recreation, and Culture. Additionally, Parks, Recreation, and Culture accounted for 2.93% or \$1,235,966 of the County's total FY11 budgeted expenditures. The Parks and Recreation FY11 budget totaled \$874,367. In response to a question raised by Ms. Bookwalter, Ms. Butler will confirm what portion of the FY11 debt service is attributed to the Community Center.
  - In response to a question raised by Ms. Bookwalter regarding the daytime uses of the Community Center, Ms. Butler informed that although there are not many daytime uses of the building, the building is utilized often by Kent County Public Schools, as well as ping pong players, and the tots of fun program on a regular basis. Ms. Butler expressed a desire to increase the day programs, and advised that although she has previously been approached by Chesapeake College for daytime use of the building for Adult Education Classes, this never came to fruition.

- Ms. Butler attended the Kent County Public Schools Administrators and Supervisor's meeting on February 9 and was able to address Parks and Recreation's evening use of the school facilities as recreation centers, as well as the communication challenges and scheduling conflicts that Parks and Recreation has faced with the school system as a result of these uses. Ms. Butler feels that communication with the school system has improved since this meeting.
- Ms. Butler reported that on January 25, she met with the County Commissioners, along with members of the Public Works Department, to propose increasing the per player Sports League fee from \$4 to \$5.50. Additionally, it was proposed that games held under the lights be \$75 per game. Following the Commissioners' approval of the proposal, the new fees were communicated to the league presidents on February 9. Leagues requested to be part of the process for policy changes in the future. Ms. Butler informed that most leagues have been accepting of the policy changes, with the exception of the Youth Soccer league, which was discontent with the approval process.
- Ms. Butler informed that the Community Center Authority has made presentation of its Annual Report to the Board of County Commissioners. The Community Center Authority has requested that the Commissioners define a vision for the Community Center, as clear directives for the Community Center have yet to be given. Subsequent to presentation of the Annual Report, the Commissioners approved a merger of the Community Center Authority with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Legislation allowing for this merger is likely to be introduced during the month of April.

### **III. STAFF CHANGES**

- Ms. Butler informed that Program Coordinator Matthew Arkins is no longer with the department. A recommendation was made to the Commissioners to backfill the vacancy with Richard Coffin, who was part of the pool of candidates received in October. The Commissioners approved Mr. Coffin's employment, and he is scheduled to begin work on April 11 (pending the results of the urinalysis screening.) Mr. Coffin currently works as the Manager of the Athletic Facility and Special Events for the College of Southern Maryland.

### **IV. ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS**

- Ms. Butler briefly reviewed the results of the Parks and Recreation Online Survey. Parks and Recreation is currently looking into some of the suggestions provided in the survey, including more adult trips, morning fitness classes, fitness equipment, aqua fitness, and night swimming. Increased pool offerings will depend upon the

Commissioners' budget approval of additional lifeguards. If necessary, Ms. Butler plans to suggest opening Bayside Pool on Friday through Sunday only, in order to offset some of the additional lifeguard costs.

- Ms. Cannon questioned whether childcare services are offered during fitness classes. Ms. Butler responded that childcare classes were not utilized when previously offered; however, if daytime fitness classes are offered again, Parks and Recreation may attempt to offer childcare services again.
- Ms. Butler informed that plans to obtain fitness equipment from the Betterton Fire Hall have fallen through. She plans to look into potentially obtaining used fitness equipment from fitness chains.

#### **V. SPRING/SUMMER 2011 PROGRAMMING**

- Ms. Butler reviewed current and upcoming offerings, as highlighted in the Spring/Summer newsletter.
  - Ms. Bookwalter suggested that programming and events offerings also be listed on the last pages of the newsletter that currently highlights the benefits of the Facility Access Card. Ms. Bookwalter continued that she believes that the public has the perception that there are no programs offered at the Community Center. She stated that the public needs to correlate the Community Center with the programs offered at the center, which would require better marketing (i.e. a bold box in the coming events portion of the Kent County News listing programs.) Ms. Butler expressed appreciation for Ms. Bookwalter's input, and stated that methods for better marketing of the Community Center would perhaps be a good item for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Community Center Authority to address once they merge.

#### **VI. DEPARTMENT WEBSITE**

- Ms. Butler reviewed Frequently Asked Questions, which have now been added to the Join Us page of the Parks and Recreation website.
- Ms. Butler noted that in the future, a Word from the Director, as well as a photograph of Full Time Staff will be added to the About Us Page of the website.

#### **VII. REPORTS**

Turner's Creek:                      *Nothing to Report*  
Worton Park:                         *Nothing to Report*

Bayside/Ingleside: *No Report*  
Betterton Beach: *No Report*  
Millington Pool: *Ms. Cannon stated that the pool appears to be in good condition, with the exception of a few tree branches that have fallen down. She also noted that there appears to be a piece of industrial pipe on the pool grounds.*  
Edesville Park: *Nothing to Report*  
Toal Park: *Nothing to Report*  
High School: *No Report*  
County Commissioner: *No Report*  
Board of Education: *No Report*

### **VIII. BETTERTON BEACH PAVILLION**

- Ms. Butler informed that although Commissioner Pickrum was unable to attend, he requested that the Board be made aware of a request made by the Republicans of Kent to rename the Betterton Beach Pavilion in honor of Delegate Mary Roe Walkup. The Commissioners approved renaming of the Pavilion on March 1 by a 2 to 1 vote, with Commissioner Pickrum dissenting due to the request failing to be presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and there not being time for discussion. None of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members in attendance objected to the renaming of the Pavilion in Delegate Walkup's honor.

### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:15 pm, a motion was made by Ms. Karns, seconded by Ms. Little, and passed by a majority of the Board to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denisha C. Brown, Office Manager