



**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**



Kent County Community Center * 11041 Worton Rd., Worton * MD 21678

November 20, 2023, at 6:00 PM

MINUTES

In Attendance: Greg Welch Jr., Chair; Rick Myers, Vice Chair; Jill Coleman, Member; Mary Fisher, Member; Melissa Landon, Student Member; Faye Little, Member; Albert Nickerson, Member; Dan Mattson, Member; Trish McGee, Member; and Sandy Adams, Clerk.

MINUTES

The minutes from the August 21, 2023, meeting were approved by the Board electronically.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Welch called the board meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Department Operations (Jill Coleman)

- Ms. Coleman said that the shirt that has been provided to each member this evening is just a small thank you for serving on the board and supporting Kent County Parks and Recreation.
- Ms. Coleman announced for the first time in a long time Parks and Recreation is fully staffed. The full-time facility monitor position has been filled by Heidi Haigis.

Parks

- **Program Open Space (POS) and Local Parks and Playground Infrastructure (LPPI) Grant Projects Updates (Dan Mattson)**
 - The playground at Worton Park has been completed and is getting some good use.
 - We had a ribbon cutting at Millington Park in honor of the pickleball/tennis courts, half-court basketball, and parking lot renovations that were just completed.
 - We are making good progress on the Betterton boardwalk replacement project. The plan is to have a concrete walkway in place of the current Trex boards. With the materials that will be used, it will have the look and feel of a boardwalk but will be much more resilient. The goal is to have the project completed by summer.
 - Bathroom renovations at Worton park will be well underway, if not completed, by the next time the board meets. The plan is to install new toilets that are easily flushable, sinks with water efficiency, repaint the exterior to match the Grounds' shop, and to add some security lighting around the outside.
 - Fencing will be installed at the ball fields at Worton and Toal parks via replacing some of the fences on the sides, as well as adding some to the team bench areas. Orem Field is getting new dugouts at a higher level, and we are working with the State for the possibility of using the remaining grant funds for adding grass in the infield for better drainage.

- Mr. Mattson said that he worked with Ms. Coleman to finalize the POS grant application that the Board voted on at a previous meeting. He said the main focus of the application is renovating the basketball courts at Worton Park (resurfacing/fencing/lighting). He said if approved by the County Commissioners, the hope is to have the application submitted in the near future, and the next step will be to put bids out to contractors.
- **Development Update (Jill Coleman)**
 - The grant request that was submitted for the ADA Recreation Trail at Turner's Creek was declined. Ms. Coleman said it was declined because it is unable to be interconnected to other trails. Ms. Coleman said we have not given up hope yet, as we are working with Shore Rivers to help us determine which grants would be best to apply for to get the project done.
- **Fin Kayak Rentals at Turner's Creek (Jill Coleman)**
 - Ms. Coleman said she recently talked about trying to get kayak rentals at Turner's Creek. She said a study was done, and it was determined that there is not enough traffic at Turner's Creek for it to be beneficial for the company. She said they wanted to charge the County \$1K per month just to keep the kayaks down there. Ms. Coleman said instead, we will work with the Sultana during the spring, summer, and fall for offering various outdoor activities and adventures.

Committee Report Out

- **Program Development Committee – Ms. Coleman Reported:**
 - Parks and Recreation has two program coordinators, and the deputy director oversees those positions.
 - Parks and Recreation is currently running 57 programs. This encompasses special events, leagues, free programs, partnership programs, etc. The leagues that Parks and Recreation offers are wrestling, volleyball, softball, basketball, and adult co-ed softball. All other leagues, i.e., soccer, field hockey, football, lacrosse, and baseball are run independently, but they use the County's fields at Worton Park.
 - Parks and Recreation partners with the following organizations/groups: Animal Care Shelter of Kent County, Judy Center, Friends of East Neck Island, National Wildlife Refuge, Kent County Health Department, Kent Family Center, Wayne Gilcrest (Senior Hikes program), Minary's Dream Alliance, Kent County Spartans Football, Lockbriar Farms, Washington College for Mens/Womens Basketball Team, Women's Softball Team, and Women's Field Hockey Team. We just recently posted that on Sunday, January 28, 2024 from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., Washington College will conduct a free field hockey clinic (on our behalf) for ages 7 – 14.
- **Parks Development Committee – Mr. Mattson Reported:**
 - Mr. Mattson thanked Ms. Coleman for compiling the list of all the park projects that were funded via grants over the last 20 years. He said his committee took a little time to review the list and in doing so, determined there have been some substantial projects that have been spread across the county's parks.
 - We have a number of LPPI projects in the works. This year, the focus is on the basketball courts.
 - Our committee discussed some thoughts for the future and consideration for grant applications for next year's park projects. For example, adding lighting to the walking trail at Worton; potentially lighting up E-Diamond at some point in the future; upgrades at Turner's Creek for the possibility of disc golf and a wildflower installation with the walking trails; and possibly campgrounds, although this idea would require a good program, additional staff, and maintenance, and would take a lot of

thought and planning prior to developing the project.

- **Finance Committee – Ms. Little Reported:**

- We used our time to get familiar with this fiscal year’s budget, the department’s expenditure lines, and to discuss the committee’s task.

- **Publicity/Marketing Committee – Ms. McGee and Ms. Landon Reported:**

- Ms. McGee thanked Ms. Coleman for the list of applications and social media that is currently being used for publishing Parks and Recreation’s programs.
- Ms. McGee suggested running a contest for inquiring about the social media apps that are being used by today’s youth and young adults.
- Ms. McGee suggested using message boards for advertising upcoming programs. She said the brick mortar that currently exists at the Community Center entry way could possibly be used.
- Ms. Landon suggested using the elementary school at Millington for advertising upcoming programs.
- Mr. Mattson said there is currently a grant request for a message board at Worton Park (interior) by Orem field for field assignments.

NEW BUSINESS

Recreation (Jill Coleman)

- **What’s Happening at KCRP:**

- Pools and Beach summer totals:
 - Kent County Community Center Pool:10,282, an increase of 757 visitors.
 - Millington Pool: 2,122, a decrease of ~200 visitors.
 - Bayside Pool: 988, an increase of 659 visitors.
 - Betterton Beach: 18,121 visitors, an increase of ~1,000+ visitors.

Ms. Coleman mentioned that our summer season would not have been as successful without our full-time staff that worked very hard for us.

- The three lifeguards that saved a young girl from drowning at Betterton Beach will soon receive an American Red Cross Training Service Hero Award. The local chapter will contact us with a date/time that the awards will be presented.
- Upcoming change at the KCCC Pool & Millington Pool next summer season: Pool Vouchers will be given in lieu of monetary refunds. Ms. Coleman said this change is similar to how other counties handle aquatic refunds.
- Registration numbers are up for all winter programs. (Members were provided a copy of the programs in their meeting packet.)
- Kent Goes Purple in September: Worton Park was the location for the “Shore is Going Purple Together.” Kent, Queen Anne’s, Caroline, Talbot, and Dorchester counties were present for the event.
- The Kent County Community Center hosts the Home Educators of the Eastern Shore. This is a home school that comes twice monthly and uses our gym as part of their physical education requirement.
- Parks and Recreation partnered with Garnet play group this year. They come weekly and use our

Kids' Room.

- Gymnastics Open Play takes place on Fridays.
- A free Facility Access Card was offered to all freshmen during the month of September; approximately 10 youths took us up on the offer.
- Dan Mattson and I met with Betterton's Mayor and Town Council regarding a pay-to-park proposal for Betterton Beach. The Mayor said they will review our proposal at their next meeting and get back to us.
- Our Athlete of the Week program is back by popular demand. The athletes are picked by our coaches and then we interview them and put them on our social media.
- Ms. Coleman said during the month of October she met with each of the (5) town managers. She said the meeting was to introduce herself and to determine how Parks and Recreation can assist them.
- Ms. Coleman announced some changes that were made at the Community Center:
 - The front desk is now called the "Welcome Desk."
 - Our forms have been changed to make them more user friendly.
 - We have added some new weight training pieces to our Fitness Room, and we rearranged some of the equipment in the room. Also, we are having the Fitness Room, Kids' Room, Computer Room, and Meeting Room painted with some color to make the rooms more inviting and pleasant.
 - All new facility access holders and guests receive a building tour by one of our facility monitors.
 - We offered a new sports program this year. It was a co-ed youth volleyball program in partnership with Queen Anne's County. In the spring, we will offer a co-ed sand volleyball program.
- **Story Walk:**
 - We are partnering with Kent County Public Library to provide a story walk on the Worton Park trail around the playground. The library will change the story for us monthly. Dave Eason from D&D Home Improvements is trying to help by reaching out to other contractors to donate the materials.
- **Sensory Path:**
 - We are partnering with SNAP-Ed (Eric Fitch) to provide a sensory path on the Worton Park trail around the playground. This will tie into the Story Walk where it will either start with a sensory path, or end with one.

REPORTS (All Members)

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. McGee made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. Fisher seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, February 12, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Please Note: Committees should plan to meet at least 30 minutes prior to each meeting (5:30 pm) or make other arrangements to meet on a different date prior to the meeting.