

Wicomico Recreation & Parks Commission

June 25, 2019

Minutes

The Wicomico Recreation & Parks Commission met in regular session on June 25, 2019 in the Conference Room of the Youth & Civic Center. The meeting was called to order by Allen Brown.

The following Commission members and staff were present:

Commission Members

Allen Brown  
James Reid  
Jay Disharoon  
Tom Bowden  
Shawn Johnson  
Les Wright

Staff Members

Steve Miller  
Chuck Poole  
James Simmons  
Nancy Nielsen

With one correction, the minutes from May 28, 2019 were approved as circulated.

Mr. Poole reported that the Parks Department continue with the seasonal tasks of grass cutting, janitorial and landscape at all County parks. He noted they were in the process of building a drainage swale in Cedarhurst Park. He then gave an update of the FY19 Program Open Space projects. Winterplace Park renovation of the tennis courts including replacing the fence fabric is underway. The renovation of the tennis courts at Cope Bennett Park is also underway. Upon completion, the new courts will have one tennis court and two pickle ball courts. The play equipment at East Wicomico Little League, Eastside Youth Sports Complex, Indian Village, and Emerson Holloway parks have been replaced. The equipment at Billy Gene Jackson Park will begin on July 1<sup>st</sup> with completion planned for July 3<sup>rd</sup>. The replacement of fence fabric at Cope Bennett will begin on June 26<sup>th</sup>. This is projected to be a two day project. Other projects outside POS include the spraying of Leonards Mill Pond and Coulbourne Mill Pond for hydrilla. This project is projected to take 3-4 years to get the hydrilla under control. The USSSA Softball Tournament returns July 18 through August 3. This will consume 5 full time and 12 seasonal/part-time staff for the three week period. The remaining Parks staff will be involved with set up and breakdown of the facilities, mowing grass, assisting after weather events, record keeping, mechanical issues and tasks as needed. The Parks team will also assist with the County Fair, August 16-18. This will be a two week process involving setup, working the Fair then clean-up.

Mr. Simmons presented the Recreation program updates. He began with the overview of the Summer Camp program. The new Summerfest events program is off to a good start. The first was held at Billy Gene Jackson Park on June 20. An estimated 300 children and parents were in attendance. Event logistics will continue to be modified as necessary. Next event will be held at Doverdale Park. These events will continue every Thursday (with two exceptions) until August 15. Mr. Simmons noted the continued strength in the youth sports programs. Team and individual participation is trending up. Most notable is the WYBL Skills Academy. He continued with the facilities usage recap at the Athletic Complex. The number of events/rentals is up 20%, with hours of usage slightly down. The percentage of usage breakdown is 40% local play and 60% tournament play. HSPAC's concessions revenue is trending up 20% and Pemberton Park weddings are showing an increase.

Mr. Simmons spoke of upcoming special events. Among the summer and fall events are: Wicomico County Fair-August 16-18 and Fresh Start Back to School Event is planned for August 25. The Pemberton 24 is proposed for Pemberton Park on September 20-21. It will be held 7 pm. – 7 pm. The event will consist of 24 hours of 5k races. This can be an individual or team registration. Good Beer festival will be held October 11-12.

The Salisbury Jaycees were requesting approval for an alcohol permit for the County Fair to be held August 16-18. This request was approved by the Commission.

Mr. Miller provided updates on Pirate's Wharf. The public presentation of the master plan was held June 17 to approximately 43 attendees. As an overview, he noted that Phase I would consist of basic trails with scenic overlooks of the river, boat launch, pavilion, restroom facilities, and parking. The plan is projected to include a historic trail noting dwellings and plantation areas. Phase II will include additional trails and observation decks. The Phase I development of the park is projected to be complete in 2021. The overall feedback of the plan was positive.

"Project 7.5" Challenger program continues to receive great support. He noted the funds to build will be from County, State and Private Sectors. The Baltimore Orioles were contacted for sponsorship opportunities. Their involvement has not been confirmed. The capital campaign will be set up next month through the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore. Mr. Miller explained that through his visits to similar facilities in Maryland, he has not seen amenities included with the fields such as a playground. His efforts are directed towards connecting with families to help in accessing their needs. Businesses and individuals continue to offer their time and materials to help build this project.

With no further updates, Mr. Miller led the discussion of Strategic Planning focusing on the proposed 5 Year Departmental Goals. The Mission/SWOT/Goals will be vetted with staff over the summer of 2019 and a draft of the plan will be presented to the boards in the fall. Once board feedback is received, the plan will be vetted with the County Administration and County Council. The goal is to have a plan adopted by the end of 2019. This plan will cover 2020 – 2024. Mr. Simmons discussed the branding of new logo for Governor's Challenge. He noted an outside source was used to design the new collateral for the basketball tournament. The entire process was well received. Mr. Miller requested feedback from the board for additional goals by the end of the month.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

The next meeting will be held September 24, 2019.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,  
Linda Lyons