



# Wicomico County, Maryland

## OFFICE OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

P.O. BOX 870  
SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21803-0870  
410-548-4696  
FAX 410-548-7872

Steve Roser, CPA/CIA/CFE  
*Internal Auditor*

**June 22, 2015**

### **Internal Auditor's Report**

The County Council and County Executive of Wicomico County, Maryland:

Pursuant to Section 305(D) of the Wicomico County Code and Council Resolution No. 114-2014, the Office of the Internal Auditor (IA) conducted a review of Wicomico County Parks Division Maintenance Practices. A report is submitted herewith. The purpose of the consultation was to gain an understanding of the operational practices and challenges faced by the Parks Division.

IA conducted the consultation with due professional care, and IA planned and performed the consultation to obtain a snapshot of the current practices and methods employed by Parks Division for maintaining County park facilities.

IA extends our appreciation to management and staff from Recreation and Parks for their assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Stephen Roser, CPA  
Internal Auditor

## Contents

Internal Auditor’s Report .....	1
Contents .....	2
Consultation Report .....	3
Background .....	3
Objectives .....	3
Scope .....	3
Findings .....	3
Personnel .....	4
Routine Maintenance .....	4
Special Projects .....	5
Suggestions .....	5
Software .....	5
Shared Drive .....	5
Auditor’s Closing Remark .....	5
Appendix I – List of Wicomico County Parks Facilities .....	6
Appendix II – Playground Equipment .....	7

## Consultation Report

### Background

Wicomico County maintains 47 recreation and park facilities<sup>1</sup> throughout the county. The park facilities contain a variety of structures including:

- Boat ramps
- Playground equipment
- Tennis courts
- Ball fields
- Pavilions
- Picnic tables and grills
- Various trails
- A variety of other buildings

The Wicomico County Department of Recreation and Parks have maintenance responsibility for these facilities. Special skills involved include engineering, plumbing, electrical, turf management, horticultural, environmental, and mechanical.

### Objectives

The objectives of the consultation were to:

1. Gain an understanding of the operational challenges faced by Parks Maintenance
2. Evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of current practices

### Scope

Objectives and methodology were adjusted as information was gathered. The consultation period examined on a test basis was FY 2015 to date. The Scope was open ended. Observations, interviews, and Inquiries with appropriate personnel were conducted. IA performed inspections of selected equipment and facilities, and investigated seasonality parameters in relation to parks maintenance. Additionally, IA examined various documents pertaining to the following:

- Internal time and motion studies performed by Parks Division
- Prioritized work plan
- Timing parameters for maintenance and repairs
- Other maintenance documentation including selected work schedules, checklists, etc.

### Findings

We present these findings to highlight issues that bear discussion concerning parks maintenance. Recreation and Parks, like most areas of County government, face constrained budgets and must innovate in order to provide services at constant levels. We have evidence that Recreation and Parks management personnel carefully track their needs including future anticipated maintenance requirements. They use

---

<sup>1</sup> Please see Appendix I for a complete list of facilities

various tools at their disposal (some of which they invented) to organize and track scheduling and other needs of these facilities.

### Personnel

Recreation and Parks has two full-time managers along with eleven staff positions as follows:

- One equipment operator
- Two inmate supervisors
- Three crew leaders
- One facility technician
- One painter
- Three facility workers

These eleven County associates, along with prison labor from the Department of Corrections, maintain the County's 47 facilities.

### Routine Maintenance

Recurring maintenance termed "core responsibilities" by Recreation and Parks management include the following:

- Tree trimming
- Trash removal
- Janitorial
- Grass cutting (35 sites – 374 acres)
- Landscaping (including mulching and flower maintenance)
- Field improvement (weed control, rototilling, combo planing, setup, etc.) and maintenance
- Safety inspections (inspectors must be recertified annually)
- Safety repairs
- Snow removal

Management determines the required work hours and tracks via monthly spreadsheets. Management then budgets remaining available hours for other projects in pre-determined priority order. For example:

- Tennis court maintenance
- Deck replacement for fishing pier
- Roof repairs
- Painting

Management must adjust baselines to reflect historical reality and improve the accuracy of future scheduling.

## Special Projects

Other projects have greater scope and must be performed by outside contractors through the bidding process. Recreation and Parks management must split their time between supervising routine maintenance and supervising projects performed by outside contractors. Some examples follow:

- Field replacement for Perdue Stadium
- Bulkhead replacement
- Irrigation installation
- Fence replacement

Managers, including the Director, coordinate supervision during project meetings. IA attended a meeting where participants created a Gantt chart to assure proper coverage.

## Suggestions

We offer two suggestions as a result of our analysis.

### Software

It may be possible that specialized computer software will assist Recreation and Parks maintenance tracking and scheduling. IA attended Parks and Recreation module training at a recent Tyler Technology conference. The module (available for MUNIS<sup>2</sup>) concentrates mainly on the process of running programs (softball youth, etc.) rather than facility maintenance. Most other available software reviewed had the same focus. The County uses dedicated software to run its recreation programs. Review of County recreation programs lies outside the scope of this exercise. However, we did locate one program in our research dedicated to parks maintenance. We suggest that a cost-benefit study of such a program may be in order.

### Shared Drive

Recreation and Parks management must share its scheduling spreadsheets. IA suggests that a shared computer drive may add efficiency and effectiveness.

## Auditor's Closing Remark

The Wicomico County Office of the Internal Auditor would like to thank the Recreation and Parks Management and Accounting for their robust assistance with this project.

---

<sup>2</sup> MUNIS is the Countywide accounting software.

## Appendix I – List of Wicomico County Parks Facilities<sup>3</sup>

Adkins Mill Park	JCC Park
Allen Park	Kilburnie Playground
Arthur W. Perdue Stadium	Lake Street Park
Billy Gene Jackson Sr. Park	Leonards Mill Park
Bivalve Wharf	Mardela Boat Ramp
Cedar Hill Park and Marina	Mardela Playground and Ballpark
Cedarhurst Playground	Mason Dixon Park
Centennial Village Playground	Nanticoke Harbor and Recreation Area
Cherry Beach Park	Nick Meyer Park
Cope Bennett Park	Pemberton Historical Park
Cove Beach	Pittsville Playground and Park
Crooked Oak Playground	Riverside Boat Ramp
Doverdale Playground	Roaring Point Park
East Side Youth Sports Complex and Willards Recreation Area	Salisbury City Park <sup>4</sup>
East Wicomico County Little League	San Domingo Park
Edgewood Park	Schumaker Park
Emerson C. Holloway Park	Tyaskin Park
Fruitland Recreational Park and Annex	West Salisbury Little League / Jaycee Park
Gene Lowe Park	West Side Community Center
Gordy Park	Wetpquin Park
Harmon Field	Wicomico Memorial Field
Hebron Playground and Ballpark	Wicomico Youth and Civic Center
Henry S. Parker Athletic Complex	Winterplace Park and Wicomico Equestrian Center
Indian Village Neighborhood Park	

<sup>3</sup> Source: Wicomico County Website

<sup>4</sup> IA reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding between Salisbury and Wicomico County concerning City Parks (dated August 15, 2000) outlining County responsibilities. There are 11 items consisting mainly of softball field maintenance, equipment repair (e.g. basketball and tennis net replacement), and portable toilets. A copy is available upon request.

## Appendix II – Playground Equipment

IA performed testing of a replacement schedule for playground equipment maintained by Recreation and Parks. The replacement schedule contains information about depreciation and costs along with condition on a 5-point scale ranging from poor to excellent. Testing showed no subjective variance. Two examples follow:



Cedarhurst (poor)



Leonards Mill (excellent)