

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2020

Those present at the meeting were:

PRAB MEMBERS: Mark Cascia, Vicki Paulas, Laurie Dalziel, Jim Moran, Leigh Dillon, Phil Starkey, Leigh, Sid Pinder, and Paul Lombardo.

PARKS & RECREATION STAFF: Steve Chandlee, Mike Watson, Nancy Scozzari, Robbie Blackiston, James Wood, Joan Brooks and Beth Miles.

Guests: Ernest Rodriquez and Steve Pringle

Meeting was held on GoToMeeting. Therefore, it was held mainly to address budget and COVID-19 concerns and questions.

Paul Lombardo started the meeting addressing the concerns of probable budget cuts; questioned whether cutting back on mowing grass would save some money. It was also observed that the monies for Bike/Pedestrian walkway over Rtes. -50/301 were removed from budget – could it have been moved to another line item such as paving from Matapeake School Complex to Ellendale? Steve referred to a conversation that he and Nancy had with Steve Cahoon.

NANCY – PLANNING REPORT-

- ❖ Steve Cahoon is overseeing a Planning Study which incorporates not only the trail but the entire Rt. 8 corridor. SHA does not have the funding for road improvement but may have funding enough for bike/ ped measures... AKA Trails. Nancy and Steve had a conference call with Kimberly Horne, coordinator of the Kent Island Transportation Study. They are conducting a planning study and we requested that an addendum be added for exhibit and cost projects for the trail starting at Davidson Road going towards Ellendale up to KMART parking lot. The Cornish Company looks promising to get access through KMART property to the service road. This route includes a lot of property belonging to BOE or the County. Ms. Horne's group is considering that and will get back to us in the near future. It is easier to get an access outside the State Highway Right of Way than in. Getting these cost figures is huge when approaching land owners/state/ and Cornish Company for access and/or acquisition.
- ❖ Paul Lombardo wondered who would be the central contact person to coordinate efforts. Nancy prefers Steve Cahoon, who is already versed since being in charge of Planning Study at DPW and on board with getting Ms. Horne to do the work. It will be a County Commissioner/ County Administrator decision on who will contact landowners once we reach that stage of the project.
- ❖ Next question from Paul was regarding Paving of the Cross Island Trail- Brambles scheduled to pave Mid-May to early June. Currently working at the Business Park and hopefully they can use it as a staging area to pave the trail.
- ❖ E-Bikes are allowed on the trail- 15 MPH maximum speed. If it is an ADA apparatus we cannot question it.
- ❖ Patrick Thompson MOU for Mr. Trimble– mark-up on Nancy's desk. Need more information from Steven Pringle. Mr. Pringle is anxious to get started using volunteer hours to construct. Steve must review and address minor comments. Jim Moran may review before executing MOU – MOU is inclusive on steps required to go forward.
- ❖ Corsica Dredging is a State Funded Project and is not affected by our budget cuts

- ❖ Funding for paving Batts Neck is not in budget right now. If we go ahead with project, the parking stops at Batts Neck will be removed by us saving the labor costs. Concrete curbing will be installed in place of parking stops.
- ❖ Castle Marina Road trail stops at cul-de-sac and does not go into the Four Seasons Development. Four Seasons is responsible for building that access when funding is available.
- ❖ Conquest - Washington College has planted over 20,000 trees and blooms, an edible garden with over 100 blueberry plants, and 40+ acres of habitat crafted. MDE will possibly finalize plans for wetland in the near future.
- ❖ Whitemarsh – edible garden and fencing has been installed. Informational/educational signs have been designed and are being printed. Parks staff has been working on kiosks for the signage.
- ❖ We are working with Mary Margaret’s Foundation on the Women’s Museum and archeological dig this summer.
- ❖ Blue Heron Nature Preserve Trails have been mowed and maintained and are being used by many pedestrians as well as motocross and ATV’s. Wetlands are functioning beautifully, and once dry enough they will be planted and seeded. Motocross and ATV’s are not allowed – working with Juvenile Services to cover damages caused.
- ❖ Waterman’s Monument – Parks coordinated efforts to remove overgrown landscaping and lifted monument to repair drainage underneath. Landscape Company will re-landscape the area with low-growing/low maintenance plants.
- ❖ Cross Island Connector Trail – Rangers been busy removing trash. Trail usage has increased exponentially. Steve has the counts. More trail connection requests coming in.

JAMES WOOD PUBLIC LANDING REPORT -

- ❖ Update on Dredging Project for Corsica River
 - Pre-bid meeting - 7 contractors interested
 - Bid opening will be held on June 1st
 - Question/answer period will close soon- Minutes from today’s meeting will go out. Site Visits
 - State Permits are in hand- modification to include dredging town slips, transient area and ramp.
 - Wetland mitigation requested. Historical data will be forwarded for review.
 - Corsica River- DMP Site Reclamation has had a delay due to rain. Optimistic now they are back on site working.
 - Dredging window to begin around June 15th
 - Hope to have bid awarded, signed contracts and start by Mid July
 - Have the state \$500,000 grant- if bid over that, requesting more money could be difficult
- ❖ Boat Slip rentals –Renewals went out for April. 71% in good standing, working with waterman due to COVID-19 – No late fees. Getting signed contracts and a deposit for further payments once working in July.
- ❖ Fishing Piers – Too busy. Hard work keeping up with Trash

JOAN -RECREATION UPDATE:

- ❖ Working on Fireworks Display for July. County Commissioner to review next Tuesday. At this point no entertainment will be held. We have permission to use Jamal Douglas’ parking lot for parking. We may have to postpone until next year. Fireworks Company is good to work with – We have been delaying our answer.
- ❖ We are enrolled in a 60 day certification course for Youth Sports administration – two of us completed. Conducive academic training – more cohesiveness and accountability with diverse leagues

- ❖ Since schools are closed for the summer – no will be no summer camps. CDC regulations are strict. Possible virtual scenarios are being reviewed
- ❖ Doing Virtual programming on Instagram and Facebook – subjects pf bird watching, yoga classes, and scavenger hunts. Upcoming tennis and chess.
- ❖ Youth summer hired help will work at the BHGC.
- ❖ Turf Field scheduling is currently shut down

PARKS UPDATE:

- ❖ For about a month now, half the park crews are working every other week to reduce staffing for COVID-19
- ❖ We are still dragging the dirt and cutting grass
- ❖ We have been doing drainage work and tree trimming.
- ❖ Some trees have come down because of rain and wind– requiring immediate attention
- ❖ Contractor has been notified for Stripping KI South Trail and Ewing Park area. Done in the next two weeks.

CONTINUING BUSINESS: - already covered

- ❖ County Commissioners Hearings- May 26th ruling for Fireworks on July 1st. Final determination due June 1st.
- ❖ Mike touched on the Parks COVID Schedule and Recreation has been teleworking
- ❖ Beth Miles has been reassigned to EOC “helped out dramatically with them and still does, so we appreciate that and I know they appreciate her going out to help out”
- ❖ Continuing to get work done even with reduced staffing.

NEW BUSINESS:

- ❖ South Island Trail paving is completed and Cross Island Trail paving coming up soon
- ❖ May 5th was our budget meeting. Tomorrow night is the final budget meeting- PRAB could write a letter in hopes of swaying a couple of dollars toward trails. Current Capital Budget is the same as last year at \$96,000 – summary sheet is in your attachment. Same with the Operating Budget – good position because before COVID we cut the budget by 1 or 2% due to retirements, people in certain positions brought back in lower pay scales. The Airport and Golf Course Bond Bill dropped so they were requesting less.
Mr. Lombardo asked about \$50,000 cut in Court Work – Does that open us up to Liability problems. Yes, that could be an issue – we are requesting POS monies to assist. We have a lot of courts and we can only afford about 2 a year. Each court costs about \$70-\$80,000. We are thankful for any monies we receive, but yearly requests are usually not enough to complete projects – but plan for accumulating monies over the years until we get enough to complete a project.
Mr. Lombardo also questioned the line item for Athletic Field Lighting- Is this for updating what we have or add lighting to new fields. We would like to light some fields at White Marsh and other parks need upgrading. Current Budget money is enough to install infrastructure in parks and the subsequent years to finish install.
Mr. Lombardo was wondering if those monies could be transferred to a shovel-ready project of extending the South Kent Island Trail to Ellendale. Always an option to do a budget Transfer, but there is possible POS monies (if available) that can be utilized. There is an advantage of completing a project half done than starting a new from scratch project. PRAB can always advocate the County Commissioners for extra monies for pet projects.
- ❖ Mr. Lombardo has seen mowers going from Terrapin to Old Love Park without transport. With COVID-19 regulations only 2 people allowed in a truck. Not enough CDL licensed drivers, trucks or trailers to move tractors up and down the road.

- ❖ Jim Moran added that COVID-19 has wrecked a beautiful budget-Leaving 2020 and 2021with lean years to come. If economy bounces back, a budget amendment is all that will be needed. In the meantime, projects must be listed and done as per priority.

Next Meeting:

June 15th at 6:00 PM

Adjourn: Mark motioned to adjourn and James Seconded. Adjourned