

CHESAPEAKE PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

December 5, 2019

Chairman Holt called the meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Advisory Board to order at 6:30 pm.

Members Present:	Chuck Anderson, Rick Bruner, Jean Carideo (non-voting ex-officio/GBBWHF), Kevin Cole (non-voting ex-officio/CPS), Chelsea Hall, Kayleigh Hamel (non-voting Youth Liaison), Jean Holt (Chairman), Jennifer Hoover, Annette Kelley, Mike Kos (Vice Chairman), Bob Leedom, and Phyllis Lewter, Kimi Stevens (non-voting until sworn in), and Geral Stukes
Members Absent:	Christine Arrasate, Susan Dixon, Dani Feret, Berkley Gibbs, Lindy Huber, Chris Lowie (non-voting ex-officio/GDSNWR), Melissa Randall, and Troy Thorn (non-voting ex-officio/CCC)
Staff Present:	Mike Barber, Monica Christiansen, Thurman Diamond, Kim Murden, Ray Wharton, Malcolm Johnson and Cori Fuqua

ROLL CALL

Ms. Fuqua called roll. The attendance roster reflected a quorum with 10 voting members present, 6 absent, and 1 member not yet eligible to vote.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER:

Chairman Holt welcomed new board member, Kimi Stevens, who gave a brief bio of herself and then board members introduced themselves.

MINUTES:

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Ms. Hoover made a motion to approve the November 7, 2019 minutes as presented. Mr. Leedom seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved by the board.

HEARING OF CITIZENS:

None present.

REPORTS:

a. Committee Reports:

- **Tourism Committee** – No updates.
- **Rules Committee** – After discussion, the board agreed to compromise and recommend raising the maximum weight limit for 13-year-olds playing tackle football from 115 lbs. to 125 lbs. and keeping the additional 5 lbs. at tournament time in place. Ms. Kelly made the motion for the proposed recommendation and

Mr. Leedom seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Barber agreed with the recommendation and also suggested that this could be revisited next fall after the season starts. Then we would have the numbers of those affected by this change and could discuss if any further change would make sense. Mr. Johnson added that it's a fine line between scaring away younger players vs. being able to keep older 13-year-old players in the program.

b. Ex-Officio Reports:

- **Great Bridge Battlefield & Waterways History Foundation:** Jean Carideo gave the following updates:
 - The Battle of Great Bridge re-enactment is this Saturday and Sunday along with the SAR/DAR ceremony.
 - The exhibits are coming along but will not be finished by this weekend as hoped and we're not exactly sure how long the delay will be. It may be late winter or early spring before completion. The board has approved a budget of \$500,000 for the exhibits and stated that whatever could be saved with in-kind donations received would go to the operating budget. So far, the museum has received \$112,500 of in-kind donations toward the build-out of the exhibits.
 - The Army Corps of Engineers has agreed to take responsibility for an exhibit in the waterways portion of the museum and they have made a video, worked with the designers but there are still uncertainties about where exactly the funding will come from. Mr. Barber added that the official approval from ACOE legal was received today and that they can only dedicate/donate the equipment to the City.
 - Also in December is the Breakfast with Santa event. Chessie will be there along with the young Virginia regiment.
- **Chesapeake Public Schools:** Mr. Barber provided the following updates:
 - We had scheduled our senior's holiday luncheon from 11am-1pm at Oscar Smith High School but at the last minute we had to try and find another location due to an unforeseen scheduling issue. With Mr. Cole's assistance, it was able to be moved to Greenbrier Middle School and we were able to overcome some of the other issues of moving to a middle school as well (like small chairs and tables!). So thank you Mr. Cole for your help!
- **Chesapeake Conference Center:** Mr. Thorn provided the following updates:
 - Princess Ball Tickets are now on sale. This event is very popular and sells out every year.
 - Tomorrow evening is the annual Jingle Ball and is expected to be a fun time as always!

- This will be Mr. Thorn's last advisory board meeting as he is pursuing another opportunity away from Chesapeake and Virginia. He thanked everyone for the experience and their support and wished everyone the best in 2020. Mr. Barber extended his thanks to Mr. Thorn as well.

c. Tourism & Conference Center Report:

Ms. Murden reported on the following:

- **Ambassador Academy:** The second Ambassador Academy tour was held in November with eight attendees. They really enjoyed it and visited a number of retail and restaurant locations that they were not aware of, and survey feedback has been very positive. The next tour will be held on December 16th and will focus on sports facilities and opportunities in Chesapeake. As we move into 2020, awareness of the academy will grow and hopefully attendance as well.
- **Meeting sales:** A team attended the AAA Super Bowl of Knowledge and manned a table to help educate counselors from the AAA offices about Chesapeake. We also attended Spotlight on the Mid-Atlantic to work with tour operators on possibly itineraries in Chesapeake.

d. Parks and Recreation Department Reports:

Recreation: Ms. Christiansen and Mr. Diamond reported on the following:

- **December Highlights:**
 - **Chesapeake Holiday Parade** is this coming Saturday night and we are ready with the decorated float and the bus. All board members are invited to ride!
 - **LOVE Letters at Courtyard Square Park** have been decorated for the holiday season and are perfect for holiday photo opportunities.
 - **2020 Events Planning Session** is happening next week to talk about our schedule for 2020 and how we can improve and enhance. If you have any ideas, let us know.
 - **Splash Pad** contract has been awarded so we are only weeks away from construction to begin at Western Branch Community Center and are still hopeful for an opening in early summer.
 - **Department Holiday Sing-Along** was held on our bus with Chessie's Tiny Band of staff playing tiny instruments and singing Santa Claus is Coming to Town. Watch for it on Chesapeake Television Channel 43 - hopefully very soon.
 - **Gym Floors and Goals** – Floor refinishing in all gyms has been completed and replacement of old basketball goals is in process.

- **TR Annual New Year's Eve Party** will be held at River Crest on Saturday, December 28th, and are in the process of registering attendees.
- **Basketball Season** – Staff has been working on drafts and assigning players to teams. Practices begin on Saturday.

Grounds and Housekeeping: Mr. Wharton had the following updates:

- **New Housekeeping Supervisor II** has been hired. Ms. Phyllis Simpson was a supervisor at Norfolk General Hospital for the past 11 years and we are excited to have her on board.

Athletics: Mr. Johnson commented on the following:

- **Judges for Cheer Day** – a big thank you to Jean Holt for assisting in providing judges (ODU cheerleaders) for this year's Cheer Day. They did a great job and we appreciate it.
- **Athletic Rules Committee** – thank you for your efforts and enjoyed working with you this year.

e. **Director Updates:** Mr. Barber gave the following updates and reviews:

- **Indian River Town Hall Meeting** was held on Tuesday night in the new format and citizens seem to love it because they can actually have face-to-face interaction with City Council and City staff. A lot of people wanted information on senior programs and pools, as well as complimenting improvements to parks and facilities. There was also dialogue regarding hiring a City arborist from some of the environmental groups in attendance. We do have a couple of certified arborists in our department but they do department work not general city work for multiple departments, and we're not sure a City arborist would resolve some of the questions and issues that were brought up without significant resources and staff. The town hall meetings are always interesting because you get to hear different perspectives on issues and concerns, and are able to disseminate information at the same time.
- **Budget Presentation** – Our budget presentation will be on January 10th. Our biggest point of emphasis this year will be a request for a Historical Services Division.
- **Multi-Purpose Stadium** – The RFP is supposed to go out the middle of this month (the master plan/concept portion of the stadium).
- **Marjorie Rein Overlook** – The bids came in a little lower than budgeted and the bid was awarded so renovation should begin around the beginning of 2020 and will be about a six month project. We are very excited and really looking forward to opening it again after being closed for 10+ years.

- **AAU Junior Olympic Games** are coming again this summer in July. It will bring around 12,000 athletes from all over the country into our region for 10-12 days depending on their sports.
- **Holiday Brass** featuring the Virginia Symphony Orchestra is coming up on December 19th at the Chesapeake Conference Center and the event, as always, is free to the public.
- **Holiday Parades** – there is a holiday parade in Western Branch in the morning as well as the one in Great Bridge in the evening on Saturday, December 7th.
- **City Hall Holiday Lighting and Decorations** – staff spent some time this year at City Hall decorating the median and entrance. It looks great so check it out if you get a chance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Election of Officers for 2020** – Ms. Fuqua handed out ballots for Chairman and Vice Chairman. Ms. Holt ran unopposed for Chairman and Mr. Kos and Ms. Hoover ran for Vice Chairman. After votes were counted by Ms. Fuqua and checked by Mr. Johnson, it was announced that Ms. Holt was re-elected as Chairman and Ms. Hoover was elected as Vice Chairman.

HEARING OF BOARD MEMBERS:

- Ms. Hoover went to the Holiday Brass concert last year and it was phenomenal so if you get a chance to attend, please go!
- Mr. Barber mentioned that the department is working with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra to schedule additional smaller concerts like Holiday Brass during 2020 so we'll keep everyone posted on that.
- Ms. Stukes wished everyone a happy holiday season and new year.
- Ms. Kelley attended the Holiday Craft Fair and was pleasantly surprised and blown away by the children's area – it was wonderful! Especially nice was the thoughtfulness of providing wheelchairs, if needed, for handicapped patrons. Also, she was asked by a citizen why the community centers close early during the summer when that would seem like a prime time for use, especially for youth. Mr. Diamond said that they close an hour earlier based on attendance trends and program demands. Many kids are vacationing, traveling on sports teams, etc. and we found that our centers are usually close to empty towards the end of the day in the summers. We started opening an hour earlier instead to adjust. Mr. Barber added that Friday nights are a struggle as well to keep open unless it's basketball season.
- Mr. Anderson said that there are no crosswalks on the Bruce Road trail and Mr. Barber responded that there are some in process after discussions with Public

Works. Also, the Rails to Trails portion has not been put out to bid yet by Public Works and that was initially supposed to be completed by the end of the year as well as Phase II on Tyre Neck.

- Ms. Fuqua said that Mr. Gibbs wanted to let everyone know that the Turkeys for Tickets program with the police department will be happening again this year. Mr. Barber added that the turkeys are donated and there will be 100 given away. It's a community good will project that everyone always enjoys – especially the Police staff.
- Ms. Holt commented that she went to Oak Grove Lake Park to run and there were people (Sheriff's crew?) cutting grass and she was concerned that if people were coming down the path from the other direction and didn't see them, they might get hit with flying debris. Ray will discuss with crews.

NEW BUSINESS:

- None.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on Thursday, January 9, 6:30 pm, at the Dr. Clarence V. Cuffee Community Center, 2019 Windy Road, Chesapeake, VA 23324.

Minutes submitted by: Cori Fuqua, Secretary