

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION
MINUTES OF APRIL 16, 2015
INLET POND COUNTY PARK – RED HOUSE
GREENPORT, NEW YORK**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Miles Borden	Trustee, Town of Smithtown
Gilbert Cardillo	Trustee, Town of Riverhead
Kathleen Gooding, Ph.D.	Vice Chair, Town of Shelter Island
Dawn Hopkins	Chair, Trustee, Town of Brookhaven
Debra Kolyer	Member of the Board
Peter Leis	Trustee, Town of Islip
Arthur Leudesdorf	Trustee, Town of Southold
Alexander McKay	Trustee, Town of Huntington
Terence McSweeney	Trustee, Town of Babylon
William B. Sickles	Trustee, Town of Southampton
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

ABSENT

Terrence Pearsall	Member of the Board
VACANT	Member at Large

PARKS DEPARTMENT

Greg Dawson	Commissioner
Nick Gibbons	Principal Environmental Analyst
Richard Martin	Director of Historic Services
Barbara Rittman	Senior Clerk Typist

GUESTS

Honorable Al Krupski	Legislator, District 1
Tom Damiani	Director, North Fork Audubon Society
Carmella Masem	Suffolk Committee for Camping
Lauretta Fischer	S. C. Dept. of Planning & Environment
Christina DeLisi	Legislative Aide to Dep. Presiding Officer Jay Schneiderman
Gwynn Schroeder	Legislative Aide to Legislator Al Krupski

PUBLIC PORTION

There were no members of the public present.

Richard Martin gave a brief overview of the history of the Red House. The County is presently in the process of renovating the extension, and two restrooms have already been completed with one wheelchair accessible. The roof and exterior of the house will be re-shingled and a new wheelchair ramp which will be constructed along the side of the house in keeping with the historic look of the house. The farm house itself dates back to the early 19th century and two wings of the house were added during the 1940s.

Nick Gibbons gave a brief summary of the park property which is a trailhead that extends down to the Long Island Sound and includes a variety of habitats to explore such as wetlands, transitional and wooded areas containing a great diversity of songbirds. There is a trail that runs along the beach and the Long Island Sound

spills into Inlet Pond. The County also purchased property to the west of Inlet Pond CP and both properties are continuous. There is another house on that property called the White House.

The North Fork Audubon Society is the County's presence on the sixty acre property and the organization offers programs and hikes throughout the year. Nick introduced Tom Damiani who continued with an overview of the organization. Tom stated that the North Fork Audubon Society has been partnered with the County for about eighteen years at Inlet Pond CP. The North Fork Audubon Society agreed to create trails, keep them open and clear for the public, and use the Red House to hold Board meetings and general public meetings. The organization offers nature and bird walks, and some children's programs as well. There is a viewing platform at Inlet Pond where you can see over the barrier beach to the Sound. There is also a bird blind at Prentice Pond, named after Bev and Tony Prentice who were the first people to start working with the County on the property. It is about a 10-15 minute walk to the water and the longest trail, Black Trail is about 1½ miles long, continuing in a loop. There is also a short and intermediate trail in the park and most of the trees are black locust cherry.

Audubon member, Gwynn Schroeder added that the organization is currently working on a pollinator meadow garden at Peconic Landing and also doing some work related to climate change.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 19, 2015

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee McKay. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

PLANNING

Lauretta Fischer reported that there is one proposed acquisition, the Ketcham Creek Addition which is Schad property in the Village of Amityville. The stream corridor runs north to south into Great South Bay and is very important to the health and water quality of the Great South Bay. There are five additional properties totaling about ¾ acre. The County also owns a number of other parcels to the north along this same stream corridor and also to the south. This purchase is being considered under the Old Drinking Water Protection Program (125E1A) which requires that the Parks Trustees approve the acquisition. There is still some Town of Babylon funding which will be used to acquire this parcel for habitat protection. The property is considered a wetland and the Town of Babylon has already completed some cooperative wetland restoration work with the County on a number of stream corridors.

A motion to acquire the proposed Ketcham Creek Addition was made by Trustee McSweeney and seconded by Trustee Gooding. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Dawson welcomed and thanked all for attending the Parks Trustee meeting at Inlet County Park in Greenport, including elected officials Town Supervisor Scott Russell and Legislator Al Krupski.

Commissioner Dawson reported that the new reservation system is up and the public can now make reservations online. The system has not been running as smoothly as anticipated but the issues are being addressed. Some of the interactive features, maps and graphics on the camping sites were using a lot of memory so they were temporarily disabled.

The golf courses opened about three weeks ago and have been doing well. There were some issues with the tee sheets but they should be back up online today.

Commissioner Dawson thanked Legislator Krupski for his assistance with the Junior ROTC grass planting project at the Indian Island Park bluff last week. 12,000 plugs of beach grass were planted and the event was a big success. It is very much appreciated by the Parks Department because it will be a big help in preventing beach erosion.

Commissioner Dawson reported that a lot of the capital improvement renovations being done at the Red House and the one just completed at Timber Point Marina was done by County employees. Close to \$2 million was saved on the Timber Point Marina project by not having to hire outside contractors. However, an outside contractor did install the main electric line panels and the County purchased all of its own material to complete the balance of the project.

Commissioner Dawson thanked Tom Damiano and the North Fork Audubon Society. Public/private partnerships such as this are very important to keep buildings maintained and utilized for programs by various local community groups. It is greatly appreciated.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Hopkins inquired about the temporary easement that passed legislation for the MTA Double Track Project which will go through a small portion of Lakeland County Park. Commissioner Dawson stated that a resolution passed last month that allowed the County to enter into an agreement with the MTA and allows them access to the park. They are widening their track and need to fill in a very small piece of wetland within their right of way. The DEC permits dictated that before they used that small area of wetland they had to create a new wetland somewhere else in the park. Nick stated that the agreement was made with the DEC to create another wetland and also add an extension to the boardwalk with wheelchair accessibility going out over the lake. The boardwalk is thirty years old and aged but has been very well maintained and new boards are replaced whenever needed. Canon employees did a large cleanup at the park last year and re-stained the boardwalk and all of the rails. Legislator Krupski added that the MTA is a good partner to work with, are environmentally sensitive and have been very cooperative.

Chair Hopkins reported that Lake Ronkonkoma has partnered for years with SUNY Stony Brook's Marine and Atmospheric Sciences Program which does sampling of the lake for water quality. This is the first year that they have been able to use a motorized boat, since gas powered boats are not permitted. They partnered with Bill Pfeiffer from Long Island Divers Association and were able to take a lot more samples than they can normally take. They have also agreed to keep records on the results along with the County.

Chair Hopkins inquired regarding a presentation that was supposed to take place on the southern pine beetle at the next Legislative meeting. Christina DeLisi updated that it is planned to be on the agenda for next month's meeting instead.

ROUND TABLE

Trustee Cardillo inquired about when the restroom at Indian Island CP will be repaired. A fire had been set in the building and the interior needs to be cleaned up. Commissioner Dawson will look into it.

Legislator Krupski inquired about the Cedar Beach restoration project with Cornell Cooperative Extension. Commissioner Dawson stated that in the Army Corps revised contract with the County there was a question raised of who would be responsible if any toxic material were found or discharged during construction. This is being reviewed and Commissioner Dawson believes it may have already been resolved.

Legislator Krupski asked for an update on the Indian Island Wetland Restoration. Nick stated that he believed any remaining issues were resolved and that the County contact for the project is Frank Castelli and/or Vector Control.

Legislator Krupski inquired about brush fires and quality of the fire roads in Flanders which cause access issues for fire fighters. Commissioner Dawson reported that the Pine Barrens Commission has a grant to do an analysis of all of the roadways in the Flanders area, including fire roads and downed trees so that some remediation can be done. Nick Gibbons elaborated by stating that the area is an assemblage of Pine Barrens, County and Town jurisdictions each with their own rules and regulations. Although action is moving at a slower pace than they would like, Flanders was recognized as a particular area to be addressed.

Legislator Krupski thanked Nick for the tour at the North Fork Preserve CP which gave those present the opportunity to observe the preserved farmland as well as the drainage issue. The question of appearance once the drainage project has been completed is currently being addressed by the Department of Public Works.

Commissioner Dawson thanked Carmela Masem (Suffolk Committee for Camping) for agreeing to sit on the North Fork Preserve CP Committee and also attending the Parks Board meeting.

Supervisor Russell stated that he appreciated everyone coming out to Southold.

Trustee Sickles thanked Chair Hopkins for taking his place at the vendor selection for Meschutt Beach County Park. He inquired if the Parks Department has any Earth Day events planned. Commissioner Dawson stated that the Suffolk County Environmental Center/Seatuck's annual Eco-Carnival is scheduled for Saturday, April 25th.

Debbie O'Kane, president of North Fork Audubon Society announced that International Migratory Bird Day will be celebrated on May 9th. There will be a trail walk in the park (Inlet Pond CP) starting at 8 a.m. and there will be other planned events throughout the day.

Trustee Leis inquired if there is a marina out at Shinnecock. Commissioner Dawson stated that there is a marina at Meschutt County Park offering both year-round and transient slips.

Trustee McKay reported that he attended a meeting with the North Shore Land Alliance, representatives of the Town of Huntington, Nick Gibbons and Richard Martin to discuss plans for the Williams Estate acquisition recently completed jointly by the Town, County and the Land Alliance. It was agreed upon that the property will be known as "Wawapek" which is an Indian word that was historically the name of a farm located on the Williams property. The Land Alliance owns approximately five acres of the property which will provide access from a local neighborhood to the park and there was discussion at the meeting that the County portion of land may include a parking area adjacent to the Land Alliance section. Trustee McKay inquired if there has been any further discussion to confirm this plan.

Nick Gibbons stated that this was a \$6 million purchase of 25-30 acres of land. Half of this purchase was made by the County and the remaining 50% was split between the Land Alliance and the Town of Huntington. Separate from that purchase, the Land Alliance acquired an additional four acres which is the historic formal garden area. Access and parking will be almost entirely on the Land Alliance four acres, however all parties will be working cooperatively to get plans underway in an efficient manner.

Trustee McKay stated that the beautiful property overlooks the harbor from steep slopes at the western end of Cold Spring Harbor. Richard Martin reported that he will be researching the historical significance of the original Williams property and the estate building which is still owned by the family. He added that the 27

acres that the County purchased is already listed in the National Register and he will be bringing the site to the attention of the Historic Trust Committee.

Legislative Aide Christina DeLisi thanked Commissioner Dawson for the quick response to constituents with camping reservation issues for the upcoming July 4th holiday. Commissioner Dawson stated that there are a limited number of sites available at certain locations such as Smith Point CP and they become available to the public 90 days prior at the 7 p.m. hour which is a fair time of day for most people to log on to the system. Golfers can make reservations 7 days in advance if they are residents and 5 days if non-residents.

Trustee Cardillo announced that the next North Fork Preserve CP Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 27th at 7 p.m. in the Cornell building and will be open to the public. He added that Nick Gibbons did an excellent job with the map illustrating future usage of the park.

The next Parks Trustee meeting will be held at the Suffolk Lodge in Southaven County Park in Yaphank on Thursday, May 21, 2015.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee White and was seconded by Trustee McKay. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.