

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION
MINUTES OF JUNE 21, 2012
COINDRE HALL
HUNTINGTON, NEW YORK**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Miles Borden	Chairman, Town of Smithtown
Gil Cardillo	Trustee, Town of Riverhead
Kathleen Gooding, Ph.D.	Trustee, Town of Shelter Island
Dawn Hopkins	Vice Chair, Trustee, Town of Brookhaven
Debra Kolyer	Member of the Board
William B. Sickles	Trustee, Town of Southampton
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

ABSENT

Alexander McKay	Trustee, Town of Huntington
Terrence Pearsall	Member of the Board
VACANT	Trustee, Town of Babylon
VACANT	Trustee, Town of Islip
VACANT	Trustee, Town of Southold

PARKS DEPARTMENT

Greg Dawson	Commissioner
Tony Trotta	Superintendent
Terry Maccarrone	Coordinator of Community Based Programs
Nick Gibbons	Principal Environmental Analyst
Richard Martin	Director of Historic Services
Barbara Rittman	Senior Clerk Typist

GUESTS

Heather Buggee	Founder & Executive Director, Splashes of Hope
Tom Young	County Attorney's Office

PUBLIC PORTION

There were not any members of the public present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 17, 2012

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Gooding. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Dawson reported that Legislator Spencer put forth a resolution to ban smoking in our county parks which passed by only one vote. He stated that he understands that it is a very important issue, however feels that from an operations standpoint it would be very difficult to police and enforce an all-out ban. The topic was discussed at length by the Legislature and after much input, it was agreed upon to ban it in county parks, with the exception of golf courses and campgrounds. A copy of the smoking ban as well as the twilight

fee resolution was handed out for Trustee review. Trustee Cardillo questioned the reasoning for the ban and the Commissioner stated that secondhand smoke is an unhealthy carcinogen, particularly around children in outdoor areas. The policy mimics other municipalities and is pretty close to what New York State is doing although everyone has different amenities in each of their parks. The Commissioner stated that he has weighed it out and is in support of it. Trustee Borden inquired if the Commissioner feels that it requires action by the Trustees and the Commissioner stated that it involves a change of park use so he felt compelled to bring it to the Trustees for a vote.

Tom Young stated that it wouldn't hurt for the Trustees to give their endorsement and read from the charter that states: to approve all matters having to do with regulation use of parks and recreation facilities which matters shall be referred to the Board by the Commissioner.

Trustee Gooding expressed that it is an important health issue and that she supports the ban. Trustee Sickles expressed that he doesn't have a problem with the concept but feels that the issue is unfairly being placed on the shoulders of the park employees to deal with it and that it's an unenforceable law because it calls for voluntary compliance and carries no penalty. Trustee Cardillo commented that we already have anti-littering rules. The Commissioner had given the issue a lot of thought and he is in support of it. Tom Young stated that you need six people to vote to carry a motion.

A motion to endorse the Legislative action on non-smoking was made by Trustee Gooding and seconded by Trustee Hopkins.

A motion to table the action was made by Trustee Borden and seconded by Trustee Cardillo with a show of hands of 7-0-0.

Commissioner Dawson also brought up discussion of the ongoing debate of charging a \$4.00 twilight admission fee at Smith Point, Cupsogue and Meschutt beaches between the hours of 5 and 8pm. Traditionally, the county has charged admission between the hours of 10am and 5pm, with the lifeguards going off duty at 5:30pm. Frank Marsilio's Beach Hut concession currently uses all three of our parks after hours and is doing a booming business with such events as Lobster Nights and the 70's Band Nights. The Parks Department could have extended the time of collecting admission to the later time in the evening without getting a Legislative approval but felt this was a better option. The resolution went through the Legislature and passed by a 2/3 majority vote. Commissioner Dawson asked the Trustees for their support of this action at the three parks. He added that just the night before, Smith Point had 826 cars enter the park between 5-8pm. We have added maintenance when there are 3,000 people at these evening entertainment events so rather than to charge \$8 and \$15 (non-residents) admission, we felt it fair to ask a \$4 twilight fee. Trustee Sickles agreed that we have added employees cleaning restrooms, picking up litter, emptying cans and bringing garbage to the dumpsters which is added cost to the county.

Trustee Sickles made a motion to approve the resolution and Trustee White seconded. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

Terry Maccarrone gave an update on our capital budget for 2013 for Trustee review. He distributed copies of the Proposed Capital Budget from the County Executive that was approved by the Legislature and also a spread sheet comparing all of the County Executive's proposals with the Parks Department requests. It's only slightly different from the Parks Department requests so the department is satisfied for the present time. Terry explained that the Budget Review Office reviewed the County Executive's proposal and for the most part, Budget Review's recommendations coincide with the County Executive's proposed budget. Requests were conservative, with consideration given to the current economic state of the county and the resulting staffing issues.

Trustee Sickles inquired if John Fritz's boardwalk at Cupsogue will be further delayed. Terry replied that because of recent changes at the Department of Public Works, it will most likely be delayed since permits have not yet been received.

Trustee Hopkins asked about construction improvements at Smith Point Park with regards to requests in the capital program. The County Executive's Office had already advanced money for it and there is a master plan in place for it so Parks Department did not ask for added funds. Trustee Cardillo asked about Meschutt and Terry reported that we asked for funds for construction in the program, but not planning. Terry stated that the crew did a nice job on the parking lot there and Commissioner Dawson added that we added 5,000 yards of additional sand to the berm. Trustee Sickles asked about possible plans for the ten camp sites to be moved to another area and Commissioner Dawson stated that we are working on a plan to put them behind the parking lot. Hopefully, we will get the full ten sites back for next season. Campers who were displaced this year were given the option to switch to either Smith Point or Sears Bellows and most of them opted not to.

A motion to adopt the proposal for the capital budget was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Borden. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

Commissioner Dawson added that we are working on the operating budget now and we should have it for review shortly. The RFPs are in for Timber Point and there will be a meeting tomorrow for Lessings to make their presentation to the committee. We had a number of people come for the tour, but only one submission which was Lessings once again. It seems to be a very good proposal. Lessings is a growing business and at West Sayville they have events going on just about every night of the week.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Borden asked how many lifeguards the county has at our beaches and Commissioner Dawson stated that we have more than one hundred. He also inquired about progress on the parking area at the Makamah County Preserve and Nick Gibbons stated that it is still on the list of projects to be completed and it will most likely be completed in the fall.

Chairman Borden inquired about the Trustee vacancies in the Towns of Babylon, Islip and Southold.

He brought up his thoughts on the value of student internships and commented on an article he read in the Suffolk County Community College publication called Career Focus. Both the county and students could benefit from real on-the-job experience acquired working for such organizations as hospitals, the Police Department, the Fire Marshall, the Attorney General's Office, Brookhaven National Laboratories and many more. Commissioner Dawson agreed and will review the article for future consideration.

ROUND TABLE

Trustee Sickles asked Nick Gibbons for an update on our piping plover management program so far this season. Nick reported that unfortunately due to high tides on June 4th and 5th, we lost 75% of our plover nests in some places. 6 out of 7 pair were lost at Smith Point and Montauk lost a pair. It resets the clock now to late July for a new hatching. At Smith Point we have room for approximately 550 day-trippers which is not enough. That's in a half-mile of beach that's available for beach buggy use and there is no out beach camping right now. On a brighter note, there was a piping plover pair seen nesting at Hay Beach on Ram Island causeway on Shelter Island for the first time in about 8 years. There are 5 pair presently at Cedar Point and 1 pair at Northwest.

Richard Martin reported that restoration has begun at the Homan House and steel girders have been installed under the house. It is located opposite the Hawkins House where the Yaphank Historical Society is. The house should be stabilized in about 6 months and then the restoration work can start.

Trustee Hopkins inquired about the approval to expand parking at the south Ronkonkoma Avenue entrance at Raynor Park. Terry reported that they would also be rehabbing some of the courts in the park and that both the Department of Public Works and the Parks Department approved the design proposal. Terry Maccarrone reported that the bid results are due back this month and they will choose a contractor.

Commissioner Dawson announced that the resolution to rename Theodore Roosevelt County Park, Montauk County Park passed the Legislature unanimously, along with renaming the Third House to Third House and also naming a room in the Third House, the President Theodore Roosevelt Room. Trustee White commented on a few complaints he received from some in the community who didn't approve of the name change, but he explained that records show that Theodore Roosevelt never actually stayed at Third House but he did stay a house on Ditch Plain Road and his encampment was nearby.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 19, 2012 at Bergen Point, West Babylon, New York.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Cardillo. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 7-0-0.