



**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND  
PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**

Kent County Community Center \* 11041 Worton Rd., Worton \* MD 21678



Virtual Meeting (Microsoft Teams)  
September 21, 2020 at 6:00 PM

**MEETING MINUTES**

In Attendance: Melinda Bookwalter, Myra Butler, Melissa Cannon, Kate Ervin, Mary Fisher, Joyce Moody, Bryan Williams, and Jim Wright.

Absent: Commissioner Bob Jacob, Faye Little, Penny Usilton and Greg Welch.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Recreation**

**Kent County Family YMCA** – Unfortunately, Ms. Butler has not been able to talk with Robbie Gill to secure a new meeting date. It will be a year in October that the announcement was made that YMCA would be taking over Kent Athletic and Wellness on January 1, 2020. Ms. Butler has not received feedback or information from anyone that participates in programs and activities at the Kent County Family YMCA in regard to what programs are offered at the facility. Ms. Butler asked if the members hear anything to please pass the information on. Ms. Butler provided information after the meeting regarding groundbreaking ceremony that took place for the YMCA.

**Department Fees** – The County did a comprehensive review of all department fees in an effort to see if there were opportunities to increase revenue. Parks and Recreation is subsidized approximately 80% by taxpayer dollars and will be even more than that this year depending on the expenses we will incur upon reopening. Not having the pool open this year was a huge hit on our revenue. The approved increase for County and out-of-County residents is 20%.

**Spring/Summer 2020 COVID Impact to Operations** – On March 16<sup>th</sup> all County Government buildings were closed to the public. Employees were still reporting to work daily until March 24<sup>th</sup>. All employees with the exception of essential employees were on administrative leave. Early on the County made the decision not to resume spring and summer camp programs. The plan was to open the Community Center pool based on the query of lifeguards we had apply. Approximately a week after the June 29<sup>th</sup> announcement we received notifications from several lifeguards they had accepted employment elsewhere or had another part time job that would affect their schedule at the Community Center pool. Unfortunately, the county had to make the announcement the Community Center pool would remain closed after staff assessed the dates of availability and the number of lifeguards that were committed to work. It was determined there was not an appropriate level of staff to stage at the Community Center.

**Parks**

**Parks and Ground Maintenance** – Mr. Wright stated the maintenance shop construction has been completed, however, there are some issues with the door openers.

**Worton Rolling Skating Arena Demolition** – Mr. Wright stated a good portion of the arena has been demolished.

**Pool Fencing Replacement** – Mr. Wright stated that the fencing was erected and completed at Millington Pool and Bayside Pool locations.

**Betterton Beach** – Originally the beach was open for exercise purposes only. Restrictions that were in place that included no tents, sunbathing and picnicking were lifted for July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. The beach supervisor no longer enforced those specific temporary policies that were in place due to COVID. The only restriction that remained in place and was enforced was “no grilling”. Ms. Butler discussed the Annual Goose Bump Jump Fundraiser with Kent Center and it was decided they would possibly move the event to early March 2021. Ms. Butler suggested they look at the end of March or early April so that the bathhouse would potentially be open.

**Bathhouse Renovations** – The Betterton Beach bathhouse renovations have been completed with minor corrections needed. Corrections are planned to take place in October to address the high spots and low spot issues with floor drains. A soft opening took place Labor Day weekend that allowed visitors to utilize the bathhouse while at the beach. Surveillance is now live. The bathhouse is scheduled to be open on weekends through October 31<sup>st</sup>. The bathhouse will be closed for the season after October 31<sup>st</sup>. An official ribbon cutting ceremony in correlation with Betterton Beach clean-up in the Spring would be ideal.

**Trash Can Art Design Contest** – The original plan was for the design stencils to be completed by the High School Arts Program. The project was unable to happen due to COVID. Hopefully when students return to school the project can be resumed or we may have to pursue other options.

**Park Supervisor** – The beach supervisor will remain on duty during the weekends through the end of October.

#### **Other**

**Tour of Parks & Facilities** – The scheduled tour for May was cancelled due to COVID.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Recreation**

**Community Center Reopening** – Over the last three (3) months staff have been planning a safe reopening by implementing CDC guidelines with social distancing, mask requirements and cleaning protocols within the building and fitness equipment. Generally, we have the ability to offer most of the same programs that we offered before COVID with the exception of Youth Basketball, Wrestling and Youth Tumbling. The fitness room will be open by sign up appointment only with a specific time frame that is predetermined for a specific piece of equipment. Staff would be required to clean the equipment after each use. Pickleball program participants will be required to register for the programs as they normally would and sign up for their session time. Programs will have a limited number of players per session. There will be information available when reserving their allotted time and a waiver will be required to be signed by each patron.

Further discussion ensued about whether masks should be required when working out in the fitness room and during fitness classes as well as entering and moving about the community center. Ms. Moody disagreed with allowing masks to be removed during exercising.

Ms. Bookwalter asked the attending members to vote for November 2, 2020 as the date for reopening.

Ms. Cannon made a motion to approve the November 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Center reopening date. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and the motion was approved 7:1 with Ms. Moody objecting to the November 2<sup>nd</sup> reopening date.

**COVID Building Modifications** – Buildings throughout the county have been modified with safety precautions in mind such as partitions being installed to separate staff and the public. The Community Center will have a glass partition installed at the front desk and possibly a door to keep the public from going behind the front desk. There will be two doors installed in the rear of the building that leads to the administrative offices.

## **Programs and Activities**

**Outdoor Programs** – Pickleball and Platform Tennis players continued to play in the park throughout the spring and summer months. We began accepting pavilion rental reservations August 1st. The Community Center will be offering a Youth Volleyball Clinic, Youth Football Clinic, Adult Corn Hole League, Youth Relay Games and fitness classes to be conducted under the pavilion in the park.

## **Indoor Programs**

**Pickleball Schedule** – There will be four (4) courts set up in the gym and for each court there will be a maximum of 6 players per 90-minute session. There will be a 15-minute cleaning period between each scheduled session.

**COVID Safety Protocols** – The County building at 400 High Street is going to slowly allow patrons to enter the building to make property tax payments. There will be safety protocols in place such as a security officer at the door, metal detector, temperature scans and health assessment questions upon entering the building. The Community Center has been working on what protocols will be implemented when we reopen. Reservations and appointments will be required for all programs and classes. Masks will be required when entering the building. Due to air quality/control fans will not be permitted to be used during programs/classes nor in the exercise room. Mr. Williams stated the schools had a company monitoring the air circulation/duct work. Mr. Wright stated the heating and cooling systems that are in place throughout county buildings are not set up for upgraded filters therefore, the filters will be monitored and replaced when dirty.

**Parks** – Mr. Wright stated there was nothing to report for parks.

**Other** – Nothing to discuss.

**Call-In Meeting Attendance** – Ms. Butler asked attending members if they preferred the November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting be held virtually. Unanimously, the attending members voted to have a virtual meeting November 16, 2020.

## **REPORTS**

Melinda Bookwalter, Chair (Turner's Creek Park):

Ms. Bookwalter stated she has not been to Turners Creek and is unaware of anything that may be going on.

Faye J. Little, Vice-Chair (Worton Park):

No report.

Penny Usilton, Bayside Landing Park & Pool:

No report.

Greg Welch, Betterton Beach:

No report.

Melissa Cannon, Millington Pool:

Nothing to report.

Ms. Cannon stated a learning hub is located at the Sassafras Environmental Educational Center near Turners Creek.

Joyce B. Moody, Edesville:

Nothing to report.

Mary Fisher, Toal Park:

Nothing to report.

Kate Ervin, High School:  
Nothing to report.

High School: Vacant

Bryan Williams:

Mr. Williams asked Ms. Williams to give a brief overview of school reopening plans. Ms. Williams stated that obviously there is a push to get students back in the classroom. Currently there are 52 students that returned to school. On October 28, Pre-K will return and every two weeks the plan is to bring back students that truly cannot access the internet. Children will return this semester as long as the safety protocols are followed and there is proof the protocols that are in place are working.

Jim Wright, County Engineer:  
Nothing to report.

Bob Jacob, County Commissioner:  
No report.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 pm.