



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



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

**May 19, 2025 at 5:30 PM
Toal Park (Galena)**

MINUTES

In Attendance: Greg Welch, Chair; Rick Myers, Vice Chair; Jill Coleman, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation Member; Carrie Klein, Deputy Director, Department of Public Works; Faye Little, Member; Trish McGee, Member; Paige Miller, Student Representative; Joyce Moody, Member; Albert Nickerson, County Commissioner Member; and Sandy Adams, Clerk.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Welch called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Welch asked for a motion to approve the February 10, 2025 meeting minutes. Mr. Myers made a motion to approve the minutes, and Ms. Miller seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Parks

- Program Open Space (POS) and Local Parks and Playground Infrastructure (LPPI) Grant Projects Updates (Carrie Klein):
 - The basketball court renovations at Worton Park are nearing completion. The renovations are as follows: The site has been paved; 15 additional parking spaces have been created, making it a total of 27 parking spaces; the courts have been turned 180° and moved down for a more level playing surface; there are four new goals with Plexiglas backboards; 1,000 feet of electrical line has been laid and buried for new lighting; two 50 foot poles were installed with four aimed lighting units (the system is equipped with the same remote control and monitoring system as the lights on Orem Field); the asphalt is still curing; and there will be some finishing touches with landscaping. The total cost for this POS project is \$275K.
 - Worton Park upgrades/improvements: We installed a new homerun fence, a 30 foot backstop, new dugouts, new team benches, and a sunshade on Orem Field; we priced out the cost for regrading which will be taken care of in the fall; the bathrooms have had a new ADA compliant sidewalk installed, non-slip floors, new plumbing fixtures, and a chilled water fountain and bottle filler. We are still waiting on additional quotes for rerouting the exterior and new lighting fixtures for the bathrooms. The remainder of the ballfields (with the exception of Volunteer Field) have new sunshades, 20 foot backstops, and dugout enclosures. Heroes Field has a new set of dugouts. The laser grading and regrading for all fields will be done in the fall.
 - A digital message board has been ordered for Worton Park, and it will take approximately 14 weeks to arrive. The board will be installed on the left as soon as you enter the park and will display all activities going on within the park. The electric lines have been run, and we are hoping to have the

board up and running by mid-summer.

- Toal Park: A new backstop and dugout enclosures were installed, along with two benches for the playground. The total cost for improvements at Toal Park is approximately \$110K. Funds are left over from this project, and we are checking with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to see if the funds can be reallocated for the Worton bathroom project.
- Betterton Beach Boardwalk Replacement: The project is to replace the existing boardwalk with a concrete walkway with an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible boardwalk extension. The engineer said he expects the design to be completed within the next week. Our plan is to put the project out for bid the second week in June and award the project sometime early in July. Construction should begin mid-to-end of September with a 90 day window for completion.
- Still Pond Station Park: We are working on a comprehensive site plan for the future of the park. Staff from Parks and Recreation, Planning and Zoning, and Public Works met with Shore Strategies last Wednesday to talk about a site plan. We are primarily focusing on passive recreation in the area. Shore Strategies will put together a draft plan for the Board's review and then the plan will be presented to the County Commissioners. Ms. Coleman commented that the funds for this project were awarded through a POS grant back in FY22, and we are just now able to work on this project.
- Turners Creek/Toal Park project with Washington College: We are awaiting confirmation from Washington College regarding the grant that they submitted for the habitat restoration project, and they are hoping to hear something back in June. Providing the grant gets awarded, Washington College will spearhead the (meadow) project for both areas.
- Demolish Old Concession Stand and Relocate Red Shed: We will make a request to DNR to use the leftover funds from the Toal project for the Worton Park bathroom upgrades and to replace the roof on the old concession stand. Providing we get approval to reallocate the leftover funds and once the roof is replaced, the old concession stand will be used to store our park summer camp supplies in one section, and the Grounds division will use the other section for additional storage. The red shed will be relocated to the back of the park.
- Development Updates (Jill Coleman):
 - Ballfield(s) Signage: The new ballfield signage is up, and each field has been renamed in honor of someone or a particular group of people. The new field names are as follows:
 - Orem Field (no change)
 - Commissioners Field (formerly AA field)
 - Heroes Field (formerly B field)
 - Veterans Field (formerly C field)
 - All Star Field (formerly D field)
 - Volunteer Field (formerly E field)
 - Park Rules Signage: One of the FY26 capital fund requests that we asked for is funding for new signs with basic rules for our four parks (Edesville, Toal, Turners Creek, and Worton). We will have an update on this project once the Commissioners establish the FY26 budget.

Recreation (Jill Coleman)

- Communication Board Update: There is a new initiative that all new playgrounds must have a communication board in the play areas. This is an adaptive board for all individuals to be able to communicate. Worton Park already has a communication board, and since Edesville Park is getting a new playground, it qualifies for a communication board, purchased with POS funds, as part of that

initiative.

NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Welch recognized Paige Miller, Student Representative, with a certificate of appreciation for her service to the Board in FY25. Ms. Miller graduates this year and her service on the board is ending.

Parks (Jill Coleman)

- Granary Funds: Ms. Coleman said because Program Open Space (POS) funds were used to stabilize the Granary and the project with which the POS funds were used is supposed to last at least 20 years, we must pay back the money we used to stabilize the structure. She said that since we ended up having to demolish the structure, we must now decide how we will use the remaining \$33K funds for upgrading the site, and the upgrades have to be made within the same area as where the structure existed, i.e., the parking lot to the waterfront. Ms. Coleman said that both she and Ms. Klein will meet on Thursday to discuss, and she said they are open to suggestions. Ms. Coleman informed the Board that all ideas will be presented to them at the August meeting.
- Mobile Mat at Betterton Beach: Ms. Coleman said we requested another mobile mat for Betterton Beach. She said for those that are unaware, a mobile mat is a mat that is laid out on the beach for mobility and for easy transition on the sand. Ms. Coleman said the Department of Public Works staff will put out the mats at the beginning of the season and then store them at the end of the season. She said we hope to find out if our request is approved by the August/September timeframe.
- Ms. Coleman announced that the Program Open Space (POS) funding award for FY27 is \$87K, and she offered the following suggestions on how the funds can be utilized:
 - Dog Park at Worton Park (area at the back of the park closest to the solar panels)
 - Dugouts at Worton Park
 - Combination of Dog Park and Dugout

Mr. Welch asked for a motion regarding how to utilize the funds. Ms. McGee made a motion to propose the Combination of a Dog Park and Dugout to the County Commissioners, and Ms. Little seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor.

Recreation (Jill Coleman)

- Ms. Coleman asked the members to refer to the 2025 Summer Guide that was provided in their meeting packet. She said the guide lists all of the activities that are currently being offered this summer, and she asked everyone to browse through the guide at their leisure.
- We had a Beach Tennis Pro International Tournament a couple of weeks ago. People came from all over the world to attend the event. Ms. Coleman said participation is increasing, and the sand courts are well used.
- In May we had two baseball tournaments. Over 30 teams participated in the first tournament, and 15 teams participated in the second tournament. Ms. Coleman said after this weekend, there are three more tournaments scheduled.
- Washington College Sports Clinics: This year we had a baseball, basketball, field hockey, soccer, and softball clinic, and the events were free of charge. The athletes at Washington College hosted the clinics, and they did a marvelous job. Ms. Coleman commented that the kids love it and continue to ask for more.
- The Community Center now has a “Wall of Fame” which is located on the wall outside of the fitness room. The Wall of Fame is for teens that win a championship and for individuals who win a state title.

Currently we have three basketball teams that won a championship, and four wrestlers who are state champions, and their pictures are hung on the Wall of Fame.

- The Youth Fishing Derby will be held on Father's Day, June 15th, in the morning. The event will be held at the Cypress Branch State Park in Millington.
- We will have a Teen Luau on July 31st. This is a very popular event for teens (high schoolers from 9th – 12th grades), and we partner with the Boys and Girls Club for this event. The event is free and there will be swimming, water games, music, and food.
- Ms. Coleman announced that she and her staff have been taking online training classes offered by the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT). She said there are a variety of topics to choose from to help with both mental and physical health, as well as job related training.
- Kent County Parks and Recreation will have two vacant full-time positions available, as two full time staff members will be leaving the County at the end of this month. Jessica Plum, our sports and aquatics coordinator, is relocating back to her home state, and her official last day is June 2nd. We also have a full time Facility Monitor position opening, and this position becomes vacant on May 29th.
- We currently have 21 lifeguards for the 2025 pool and beach season. Ms. Coleman said this is approximately 10 guards short of where we need to be in order to keep all water sites open throughout the season. She said if there is a shortage on any given day and in order to keep all of the pools open, the guards would be taken from Betterton Beach, and the beach would be "swim at your own risk."
- Our aquatics staff (pool cashiers and lifeguards) are currently going through a two week training period in preparation for the pools to open on Memorial weekend. They have been working very hard in preparation for the opening, and we are working very hard to make them feel as comfortable as possible.
- The Community Center's kiddie pool has a new duck feature.
- Our 2025 pool season is cashless. This means that we accept credit and debit cards only at our pool sites. Ms. Coleman said she did some research and found that most pool sites in other counties are cashless as well.

COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, or REPORT OUTS (All Members)

- Ms. Moody suggested having an emergency (911) phone available in each of the County's parks. Ms. Coleman said she would look into it.
- Ms. McGee asked which of the County's facilities have AEDs. Ms. Coleman said most County facilities have an AED on site and at County parks, the AEDs are located outside of the restrooms. Ms. Coleman also said that through her department, over 80 people have been First Aid and CPR trained. She said this includes KCPR full-time staff, all coaches, seasonal aquatics and camp personnel, Department of Public Works Grounds staff, and four sessions were offered free to the public.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Welch made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. McGee seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

Monday, August 18, 2025, 5:30 PM, at Worton Park
10932 Worton Road, Worton