

Board of Trustees
Suffolk County Department of Parks
Recreation and Conservation

Minutes of November 16, 2006 at Meadow Edge, West Sayville

**BOARD MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

| | |
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| Ray Corwin | Chairman, Member at Large |
| Miles Borden | Trustee, Town of Smithtown |
| Gil Cardillo | Trustee, Town of Riverhead |
| Aurelio Colina | Vice Chairman, Town of Southampton |
| Gregory Dawson | Trustee, Town of Islip |
| Jeanine Dillon | Member of the Board |
| John Fritz | Trustee, Town of Babylon |
| Scott Hilary | Trustee, Town of Southold |
| Alexander McKay | Trustee, Town of Huntington |
| Gary Olsen | Trustee, Town of Brookhaven |
| Terrence Pearsall | Member of the Board |
| Richard F. White, Jr. | Trustee, Town of East Hampton |

ABSENT:

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| Vacant | Trustee, Town of Shelter Island |
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PARKS DEPARTMENT:

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| Ronald F. Foley | Commissioner |
| Tracey Bellone | Deputy Commissioner |
| Colleen Hofmeister | Contracts Manager |
| William B. Sickles | Senior Parks Superintendent |
| Tom Hroncich | Marketing Specialist |
| Richard Martin | Director of Historic Services |
| Ann Rothenberg | Assistant to the Commissioner |

GUESTS:

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| Jennifer Kohn | Assistant County Attorney |
| Lauretta Fischer | Principal Environmental Analyst, Planning Department |
| Janet Longo | Assistant to Commissioner, Department of Environment & Energy |
| Andrew Seal | Office of Ecology |
| Joshua Slaughter | Representative - Legislator Kate Browning |

Chairman Corwin opened the meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION

Chairman Corwin calls Arlyne McMullin to speak.

Arlyne McMullin: I'm from Lake Grove and I'm here to talk about dog leash free areas in Suffolk County Parks. My husband and I are campers and travel throughout the country and Canada and we keep a list of dog parks whenever we travel. Dogs need socialization. The only Park in Suffolk County is in West Hills and we'd like to see more areas where dogs can socialize.

Trustee Hilary: How are these other parks managed?

Ms. McMullin: Most are self managed by the people who go to the parks. Most people police after their own dogs and some parks provide water, or owners bring their own.

Chairman Corwin: Do people charge fees for these parks?

Ms. McMullin: In some places there is an annual yearly fee of \$5.00 for residents.

Trustee McKay: Are there designated areas where the dogs are kept or are they allowed to run free?

Ms. McMullin: Some parks have leash free areas without fences – others are fenced in areas; a fenced area for larger dogs and one for smaller dogs.

Trustee McKay: Are you advocating that we have leash free areas where dogs are allowed to run at will?

Ms. McMullin: I'm not advocating leash free areas, except in places like Coindre Hall. The dogs are kept on one side.

Trustee Cardillo: Is there fence at Coindre Hall? We had discussed this at length some time ago.

Trustee McKay: There was a proposal for a fence there, but it never happened. There is no fence at Coindre Hall. The dog owners were not interested in having a fence there was the last I heard of it.

Trustee Borden: Is it possible for you to describe the general use of those parks – are there picnic areas that the people bring dogs to?

Ms. McMullin: If there's an open picnic area, you don't necessarily want dogs where there are young children and food, but at the same time, a lot of the places that have designated dog park areas, people bring their food and picnic there with their dogs. I don't say have every place open to dogs. Dogs are more aggressive when they don't have dog parks. When they are in a park and socializing, you don't see aggression because there's nothing for them to protect.

Trustee Fritz: You're advocating that dogs run free. What is their affect on wildlife? Commissioner or Bill – wasn't there an incident at Shagwong where an off leash dog attacked another dog causing serious injuries.

Commissioner Foley: I'm not familiar with that incident, however there have been some incidents, but not too many.

Trustee Fritz: So how do you know which dogs are aggressive and which ones are not?

Ms. McMullin: The owners usually know which dogs are aggressive. If you're walking with one dog on a leash and another dog is not, there may be a problem, but that happens all the time. In all our travels, we've never seen a problem.

Trustee Fritz: I've had a problem where the friendly dogs have jumped up on me. That happened at Gardiners Park and the dog got mud all over me. The owners said "I'm sorry." People have rights too.

Chairman Corwin: The next speaker is Ed McMullin. I encourage speakers to keep their remarks to three minutes.

Ed McMullin: I'd like to bring to your attention to the difference between the West Hills Park, which is very small and not well kept, and the parks I've seen around the country. There are beautiful parks for example, in Ft. Lauderdale. The smallest park is about 10 acres. They usually have drinking areas for the dogs, water fountains for the dogs, play toys for the dogs, agility equipment for the dogs, fenced in areas for the larger dogs and the smaller dogs. Places for people to sit, with shelters. There are parks like that all over the country. The West Hills Park is one of the worst I've seen.

Chairman Corwin: Thank you Mr. McMullin. Next speaker - Johan McConnell.

Johan McConnell: I am President of the South Yaphank Civic Association. First of all, I'd like to congratulate the Trustees that were reappointed at the Parks Committee meeting the other day. One of my concerns is the fee structure. There's a fee for a Green Key for residents and a separate one for non-residents. That applies to all county facilities except the Trap and Skeet range, which does not have that distinction. Why is that the only facility that does not have that distinction? Another huge concern for residents is the dumping that occurs at the northern most end of Southaven Park. We're not sure how they're getting into the park. The new signs were up that said "Danger – Hunting in Session". They had to drive by all this dumped material and, as I said, it's been there a long time.

Chairman Corwin: Can you point to the area of the park on a map? I'm sure Parks will want to take a look at that.

Ms. McConnell: It's at the very northern most part of the park just before you get to the railroad tracks. I'm also in support of the dog runs. I asked my county legislator to put a request in for a dog run in Southaven County Park. There's over 1300 acres in this park. When this was privately run, there was a public game preserve. Dogs have always used this facility. We support having dog runs. Because of potential problems, I support having a fenced in dog run, unless you found an isolated spot.

Chairman Corwin: On your card you had mentioned the Sportsmen's Advisory Committee. Do you want to comment on that?

Ms. McConnell: It is my understanding that there are vacancies on the Sportsmen's Advisory Committee. I received a flyer from Legislator Browning and put in an application on August 15th. I'm curious if there are still vacancies and if there are, what is the actual criteria? Of the eight activities listed on the flyer, there is probably only one I have not participated in.

Chairman Corwin: The Commissioner has added that onto his list and will update us later. Thank you. Next speaker - Larry Jacks.

Larry Jacks: It's the first time I've been down here. It's an impressive park and a beautiful setting here. I'm here to speak on behalf of the off leash dog park at Coindre Hall and to take a look at a number of Suffolk County Parks that can be utilized for an off leash, fenced in area for a dog run. There's a very significant area, I believe the northern part of Coindre Hall, that we've tried to designate for off-leash activity. There are 20 dogs and 20 dog owners that congregate in a particular area. I don't think that the dogs are going to wander off ½ mile away to where the people are picnicking. Where the people are and where the dogs are is where the activity is going to be, so you can have an unfenced area. The other thing I'd like to point out at Coindre Hall is that it's probably the only geese free park that we have in Suffolk County. The dogs keep the geese droppings to a zero. The people are responsible for their own dogs and have to be responsible for their actions. We do pick up after the dogs. We sometimes police the area to make sure everything is cleaned up from the park.

Chairman Corwin: When you say we, do you mean an organization or collectively the owners?

Larry Jacks: The Long Island Dog Group is the official umbrella organization.

Trustee McKay: Have you noticed an increase in the number of people who are using Coindre Hall?

Larry Jacks: I would say in general, no. If you compare it to what it was two years ago. The utilization is different in the summer time, in the evening around 6:00 PM or 7:00 PM.

Trustee McKay: How many people do you see during a peak time?

Larry Jacks: If I were to guess, I'd say 25.

Chairman Corwin: We have a few more speakers. I'd like to call one more speaker, Ginny Munger Kahn. After that we're going to take a short break to allow Richard Martin to speak. He has something for us and needs to leave by 1:30 PM.

Ginny Munger Kahn: I'm one of the organizers of the L. I. Dog Owners Group. We are simply a community based group of dog owners. We represent thousands of Long Island residents and tax payers. We frankly are getting very tired of being treated like criminals in the parks. I've been going to Coindre Hall for 30 years. I've worked to save Coindre Hall from being sold off by the county to private interests in 1978/1979. I'm not going to have worked to save Coindre Hall for the community just to be kicked out by the Parks Department. We love Coindre Hall, we take good care of it. We have proposed a solution that we think is fair and equitable and comprehensive and I wanted to come here today; first of all to tell you how upset dog owners are about the Parks Commissioner's plans to get rid of off leash activities there. I want you to hear it personally from me. I want you to meet us and I want to describe to you this Share the Parks Program Proposal we did earlier this year that worked surprisingly well, and that we feel forms the basis for a solution. I take issue with the fact that the Parks Commissioner characterized dog owners at Coindre Hall saying that he thought dog owners think they have the right to do whatever they want. That is very unfair. We have organized cleanup campaigns, we instituted a park steward program and we instituted this Share the Park campaign in February. This program worked better than we imagined. We told dog owners to stay in the field to the left of the gymnasium on weekends. We had little cones we put out. The dogs and the owners stayed in the lined area. We thought this was an innovative, low cost solution to a problem that

has been plaguing officials in Suffolk County for a number of years. We wrote the Parks Department at the end of August telling them about this campaign and its success. The letter we got back from the Commissioner was we are damaging the historic value of Coindre Hall and that we have inappropriate use there. This was so disappointing. What I want you to do is understand where we're coming from and to encourage the Parks Department to sit down and talk to us in a constructive manner. We are taxpayers, we are responsible people and we feel that Coindre Hall is a good place for off leash activity.

Chairman Corwin: We'll come back to you in a few minutes. Right now, in the interest of time, Richard Martin would like to speak with us on an issue at Lake Ronkonkoma County Park.

LAKE RONKONKOMA COUNTY PARK

Richard Martin: There's been a request from the Lake Ronkonkoma community, from the Civic Association, to retain and restore an historic fence that's along East Drive which is directly opposite the Town of Brookhaven Beach. From that request we have researched the ownership of it. It's confusing at this point. Right now we feel the fence is not county ownership, but we need to confirm that. The surveys and tax maps are showing that this fence is on private property. There's confusion in the neighborhood and the Parks Department is still trying to document where the fence is. What we're trying to do in Historic Services is to document the history of the fence. The community has approached us that it's a part of the Hollywood Pavilion site which stood where the town beach is. Our research shows it is not part of that site, it was part of the property to the south of the road. The fence originally stretched up the hill along Pond Avenue and was probably part of an old, private estate. We feel the fence predates the building of the Hollywood Pavilion, which was built in 1921.

Chairman Corwin: Commissioner, did you want to comment?

Commissioner Foley: The Civic Association came to us with some certainty that it belonged to Suffolk County and I thought they were going to be here today to make their claim. As I looked through the documents we have here, when you look at the area with the overlaid lines on it, no one can be certain that they line up exactly right. That dramatically shows that it would not be ours and, again, you have to question those lines. On the tax maps, it appears that this jag in this property, that doesn't exist on this neighboring property that would include the fence and that would make it a privately owned fence. If that's true, we have no business dealing with it at all. We need to do more work to figure out the actual ownership of it versus the suspected ownership.

Chairman Corwin: Is there something your department can do to help locate a deed or a survey?

Richard Martin: Well, I have a survey from the property next to it.

Commissioner Foley: But that's not definitive.

Janet Longo: I can look into it to see if we have anything.

Richard Martin: It would be nice to get some help on this. The neighbor claims she doesn't want it down, she wants it maintained.

Chairman Corwin: One can't have it both ways. One either owns it and is responsible for it or one does not own it. Does anyone have any more questions for Ginny Munger Kahn?

PUBLIC PORTION (resumes)

Trustee McKay: I'd like to make an observation. You mailed me a copy of your letter to the Commissioner and in it you make an accusation about a hidden agenda for Coindre Hall. As a Trustee, I guarantee you I have no knowledge of any hidden agenda at Coindre Hall. I don't know where you got the rumor, but I don't care for the tone of that. I think you're spreading rumors that shouldn't be spread.

Ginny Munger Kahn: The Civic Associations there suspect that. They have come before you and told you that they suspect that the Parks Department is going to make Coindre Hall into a large catering facility like the Huntington Town House. When the Commissioner sent us letters not even dealing with our proposal at all, we thought they don't even care about talking to us. They just want us out of there. So that's why we fear there's a hidden agenda.

Trustee McKay: I think this impugns your credibility when you put something like this into a letter.

Ginny Munger Kahn: I appreciate what you're saying. Thank you for having us.

Chairman Corwin: Thank you for coming. The next speaker is John McConnell.

John McConnell: I am a member of the South Yaphank Civic Association and I totally support having dog runs. Nassau County has five and they are a very small county. There's much more room here. This is a pretty park and I think it's underutilized. We fully support having a dog park.

Chairman Corwin: Do you mean specifically at Southaven or somewhere in the county in general?

John McConnell: Well, Southaven - we have plenty of room here. It doesn't make any sense that Nassau has five.

Trustee White: Are the five dog parks run by Nassau County Parks or are they run by individual towns?

John McConnell: All five are run by the Parks system.

Chairman Corwin: Thank you for being here and speaking. The next speaker is Peter Nack.

Peter Nack: I have been a resident of Huntington for over 25 years. I've used Coindre Hall as an off leash area. The main thing I want to address is not what Nassau County has, or other areas of the country. Dog parks are a legitimate recreation use. More people want to use them. My main concern is the terminology people have been using surrounding this issue. We hear words like accosting, ruining the ground and polluting storm run-off, destroying protected plantings. I have spent time at Coindre Hall with my dog and I am personally very careful seeing what my dogs do. I am considerate of other people. They certainly don't pollute the storm run-off because we pick up after the dogs. There's a strong ethic there. To some degree the dog run is self-regulated. Past minutes have referred to linking dog runs to ATV's. Clearly dogs don't tear up the ground like ATV's. In the Share the Park Program, we'd like to see a fence along the property by the grove. We'd share in the labor. Come down and see for yourself how we behave with our dogs.

Chairman Corwin: Thank you for coming. Our final signed up speaker is Charlotte Berman.

Charlotte Berman: I've been a resident of Huntington Village for 30 years. I've raised two children and after my daughter got married I decided I needed company and got a dog. In the 4 years I've had a dog, I've lost 15 pounds and gained 3% bone density. I no longer have high

blood pressure. I feel that parks are wonderful and it's very hard to exercise with your dog. I think that what you're hearing is that Suffolk County parks are for families and residents of the area.

Chairman Corwin: Thank you very much. That's the extent of our speakers for today. We've heard everyone and we will be asking the Commissioner and his staff to look at some of the issues. Right now we will move on to Planning and Real Estate.

PRESENTATION BY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND REAL ESTATE

Lauretta Fischer proposed two acquisitions that were originally presented on their Master List.

Smith Road/AVR Property – 400 acres in Ridge split into three parcels. The three parcels we are discussing are the parcels in purple, red and orange on distributed maps. The purple parcel is going to be acquired by the State of New York on its own as a separate lot. The second lot in red is going to be a joint acquisition between New York State, Suffolk County and the Town of Brookhaven. The state will buy 50% and the county will be 25% and the town 25%. The third parcel in orange is going to be a joint ownership between the Town of Brookhaven and Suffolk County 50%/50%. We are going to be acquiring this under our Multi Faceted Land Preservation Program under Land Preservation Partnership.

A motion to approve recommended proposed acquisition was made by Trustee Olsen and seconded by Trustee Borden. Unanimously approved by a vote of 12-0-0.

Fresh Pond/Dickerson Creek – Dickerson Property – 0.74 acres in Town of Shelter Island on the southern area of the island. This proposed acquisition is directly on Fresh Pond and is outlined in red. It's a landlocked parcel with mostly fresh water wetlands along the pond. We want to try to protect watershed as best we could. It's also going to be a partnership with the Town of Shelter Island 50%/50%.

< A motion to approve recommended proposed acquisition was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Colina. Unanimously approved by a vote of 12-0-0.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Dog Parks

Commissioner Foley: I want to read to you from Parks Rules and Regulations 378-4 "Prohibited Acts" "it is prohibited to bring in or permit any horses, cattle, livestock or domestic animals of any kind on any park land except when a dog or cat may permitted on a leash restricting them to the immediate area of a campgrounds and outer beach areas. Horses may be permitted on approved trails with special permits that must be obtained from the Commissioner for any events involving horses, dogs, etc. No animals shall be allowed at large."

Those are the rules created by the Legislature. They were later amended to allow fenced in dog runs at two locations: West Hills County Park and the lands around Coindre Hall. We were in active negotiations with the Town Huntington to construct the authorized fenced dog run at Coindre Hall when the proponents of the dog run, who had fought for this through the Legislature and CEQ, decided they didn't like where it was and asked everyone to stop. We stopped. We have these rules and it's my job to enforce them within the best of my ability and in a reasonable way. There is no authority for dogs on the grounds of Coindre Hall. There is clearly no authority at Coindre Hall, or anyplace right now other than West Hills, for an unleashed dog to be in a park. We have no agenda to create a catering hall at Coindre Hall. There's no authority to have dogs in that park. The people fought to get authority, they got it, they didn't like it, we stopped. I have stretched the authority at West Hills to create a much larger, two acre dog run.

The Legislature has authorized the construction of one at Blydenburgh. We will have to bring that issue back to you, because there's a Master Plan and it does not include that use.

I don't think we're at any kind of a war here. There is an unauthorized, unapproved activity going on at Coindre Hall. In the battle to get an approved area, the historic preservation people and CEO decided that having unleashed dogs up near the house was not an appropriate thing. There's a set of minutes that lay out that argument completely. I agree with them – it's an historic property and should be treated as such. In the minutes where I said they do what they want to do, I'll stick by that because whatever this program was you just heard about was done without any discussion or authority with us. It still remains true that if you walk down through that property, you can and will be jumped on by dogs. If you drive in the driveway, as I have done several times, you will have to stop short for an unleashed dog running in front of your car. This is what I'm talking about when I say it's inappropriate. The property isn't large enough. The Suffolk County Parks Department has a long history of preservation of open space. That's the priority. Even knowing that, I've decided these people have a legitimate need that we need to try to fill, in the appropriate place. I'd be happy to answer any questions you have.

Trustee Colina: I recall when we discussed the regulations. I reviewed them. I personally wrote a draft revision when Commissioner Gordon was pursuing this. It was well known to the Trustees, at that time, the entire requirement of the Parks regulations regarding dogs and other animals. Personally, I support the Commissioner in the hard place of his position that we must enforce the rules that govern the parks. The rules may need to be amended or changed, but this is not the body that can do that. It needs to go to the Suffolk County Legislature. There could be a dog park at Coindre Hall right now, with a fence around it, in an area that had previously been agreed upon by both the town and the county.

Commissioner Foley: We have a situation there that's not in accordance with the rules, and we've been letting it go. We can debate about changing the rules, but it has to happen somewhere else.

Chairman Corwin: The current status is the legitimate dog runs would be the one authorized at Blydenburgh that's in the design phase and needs to be fit into the Master Plan, but what about situation at Coindre Hall ?

Commissioner Foley: There is a legislative signed authorization to build a dog run in a specific place.

Trustee Colina: The general consensus supports what the county has in place and what our Commissioner has attempted to enforce. I think we are all on the same page with you, Commissioner. We support what you have done. It's too bad that people have taken advantage of your generosity and to take certain liberty with things. I think you're on the right track.

Trustee McKay: I think we do have to acknowledge there is a need of this kind of facility. I must reiterate I am not in favor of free running animals in any park, or any town. Most dog owners trust their own dogs, but there are dogs that cannot be trusted and they should not be allowed to roam freely.

Commissioner Foley: It's an emotional issue, however we have rules we're supposed to be enforcing and respecting.

Trustee Borden: I feel there should be a solution somewhere and I think most of us feel the same way. The Suffolk County Legislature prohibited the dogs' access to county parks – is that what you're saying?

Commissioner Foley: Essentially, that's what that rule does. This was not a knee jerk reaction when they did that and it's not a knee jerk reaction that there are no dogs allowed in most state parks on Long Island. The confrontation between people and dogs is inevitable and it's a concern. What dogs leave behind on beaches has always been a problem for non dog owners on beaches and kids digging in the sand, so there's rationale for this being the way it is. Times have changed and there's pressure to make some adjustments. We are responding to that pressure and we are making adjustments. My plan is we'll build these two new ones – at West Hills and Blydenburgh. Let's see how things go for a while before we go off on any new adventures with this. We are determined to work with the proponents of these dog runs to come up with a good set of rules and regulations. We've given them the plans for the West Hills dog run to get their recommendations on what amenities should be included and how it should be built and I think we are progressing with that. By spring it will be fully up and running (the one at West Hills). There's this use that has grown over time at Coindre Hall and people say, even before we owned the property there, that it's problematic.

Trustee Fritz: I can't help but draw a comparison between legitimate dog owners and legitimate surfers and if everyone obeys the rules, it's great. There are always the ones that don't, and that makes it bad for everybody. The DEC has property on Commack Road in Edgewood and they run dogs there all year round. I'm sure the DEC has properties all over the state where you can run your dogs.

Chairman Corwin: I'm not so sure about that.

Janet Longo: You need a permit, but it's not too difficult to get a permit.

Chairman Corwin: I'm not sure if you asked for a permit for running dogs that you would get that. I don't know if you would or would not.

Janet Longo: There's a list that you can get from DEC.

Ginny Munger – Kahn: We appreciate what the Commissioner is saying. We've been working with him to create the dog park at West Hills and Blydenburgh. We are very appreciative of this. We need these dog parks – there are no places to take our dogs. The county parks are big and we thought it would make sense to put off leash areas there. We're talking about a designated area at Coindre Hall. We're not talking about a fence, we're talking about dogs being in just a designated area. This has been done all over the country. We appreciate the historic aspect of Coindre Hall, we appreciate that but there are many uses at Coindre Hall that are not historic. We feel that we are being singled out and that's not fair. We ask the Parks Department to please sit down and talk to us about coming to a solution at Coindre Hall.

Trustee McKay: I don't think you've heard what the Commissioner is saying. You are presently in violation of Parks rules that it's his responsibility to enforce. Those rules were created by Suffolk County and this is probably not the forum, unless you want to ask us to make a recommendation to the County Legislators who consider changes to Parks rules so that you can have use of that particular piece of property for your particular purposes.

Ginny Munger Kahn: We understand the situation and what the Commissioner is dealing with, but we would like to sit down and talk with him.

Commissioner Foley: You make it sound like we have not talked about this endlessly. Coindre Hall is against the rules. We have talked about legitimate legal ways to solve this problem, repeatedly. I've met you at Blydenburgh, at West Hills, any place where there was a legitimate

possibility.

Ginny Munger Kahn: We've proposed a solution. Can't we just talk about it.

Commissioner Foley: It's illegal.

Chairman Corwin: I'm going to take the liberty of making a couple of comments and take final comments because we do need to move on to other, equally pressing and important topics. I want to echo Trustee McKay's comments, the Commissioner and his staff are indeed between a rock and a hard place. I do, however, recognize the Commissioner did outline a solution path forward which may be more difficult than simply negotiating with Parks. If that involves going to the Parks Committee, or going to the County Legislators to get changes to the rules, that may be the path that's needed. I don't think it's fair to ask the Commissioner to stretch the legal authority more than he has. It sounds like he's doing a good job. I also appreciate the need for dog owners to have a place to go. The questions are two fold. One is what is the Commissioner and the Parks Department allowed to do under the current set of rules? They're doing what they can and they have an obligation to enforce them. If there's a problem with any rule, one needs to entertain possible changes to the laws with the people that make the laws, in this case the County Legislators. I don't think Parks is adverse to crafting solutions, but they are, and should be adverse to circumventing the rules and regulations that are currently in place. If there are suggested solutions that you think are workable programs and you sit with County Legislators from the districts involved, I'm sure that Parks would participate in discussions or offer opinions. I'm sure the Board here would be willing to offer some, hopefully, constructive suggestions. I'd like to thank everyone who attended, and I'd like to allow the Commissioner to move onto the non dog issues.

Big Duck

Commissioner Foley: The annual Duck Lighting at the Big Duck is scheduled for 7:00 PM on Wednesday, November 29th. Not mentioned on your handout is that it's the 75th birthday of the Duck. I encourage you to attend.

Tracey Bellone and I had a meeting with the Supervisor of Southampton and they are trying to develop a community identity with Flanders and do things to highlight the history and vitality of Flanders. The Supervisor has asked that the Duck be moved back to the site from which it came before it was where it is now, which is not the original home, but the second home of the Duck.

Bill Sickles: The first home was in Riverhead on a farm.

Commissioner Foley: We are having a conversation with the town. Even if this did happen, and I'm not saying it will, the county would retain ownership to not threaten its historic designation on the National List of Historic Places or on the Suffolk County landmark list. It's all preliminary. They would develop a passive park around the area.

Flagpole at Vietnam Memorial

Commissioner Foley: The flagpole at the Vietnam Memorial proved to be less able to grow than the trees that surround it. When the trees got taller than the flagpole, we met with Tom Ronayne from the Veterans Department of Suffolk County. Thanks to Trustee Gary Olsen and Symbol Technologies, we were able to put up a new, much taller flagpole in a matter of days. Great appreciation to Symbol Technologies and to Trustee Olsen for making that happen. A resolution will be going through the Legislature accepting the donation.

Fair Market Rates for Rental Properties

Commissioner Foley: Consistent with another piece of legislation that was passed in 2002, we've

been working our way through implementing fair market rates for rental properties in the 45 or 50 residences we manage that are on Suffolk County parkland. We are shortly going to be sending out a letter to existing residents that their rents will be increasing to that fair market rate. In some cases it's a moderate increase, in others it's pretty large. We may hear from some of them that it's unreasonable to do this. We're obligated by the law to do this. We spent a fair amount of time figuring out how to do this. Real Estate did a good job of getting the appraisals done so we have a basis for these rates. We'll give the residents until sometime early next year to make a choice on whether they stay or vacate.

Trustee White: In some cases the rent is going to be exorbitant because of the location, location, location. Parks employees who have lived in these facilities – they live there but they are working 24/7. People knock on their doors all hours on the day and night. I hope that is factored in and some consideration is given to that.

Chairman Corwin: Can Parks do that?

Commissioner: There's not much room in the legislation to do that.

Southaven Stables

Commissioner: Southaven Stables has been vacant for some time. Early on we did an RFP to try to find an operator. We were unsuccessful in getting any kind of proposal that we deemed appropriate for what we were looking for. We then had, with DPW's help, a structural study done of the place and what its functionality would be. It was deemed that the building could still be used but it was obvious that it would need some heavy investment to make it function in an acceptable way. County Executive Steve Levy appropriated \$500,000 to invest in the place along with a private sector partner to get it back up and running. We then issued an RFEI (Request for Expressions of Interest) for the private sector. We put the \$500,000 on the table and implied in the RFEI that more could be available if that was what was needed to make the proposal work. In the end, we received no proposals. We're back at square one. What's obvious here is that just the idea of trail rides and limited lessons is not enough to make a go of it by a private operator. We've been told that to make that place go it needs to be a larger building that will accommodate Class A horse shows. We have an equestrian advisory group that we talk to and we're going to meet with them and talk about some other possibilities. We have the Bohemia Equestrian Center. It has an outdoor ring, no restrooms, some parking and a network of trails on the property. Those trails spill over into Connequot State Park Preserve. It's 175 acres that is not restricted by any preserve status so it's possible something can be developed there.

Deepwells

Commissioner: We've had fewer programs at Deepwells since we ended our relationship with Friends for Long Island's Heritage. Fortunately, there's a budding group of supporters in the St. James area that's growing out of the St. James Chamber of Commerce who want to do more with Deepwells. A few of them have gone out to create a 501C3 organization to enter into a license with the county. On December 2nd they will be starting the holiday boutique. That's all under a permit because we don't have the license yet, but it's a good, positive sign that we'll be getting another one of these partnerships that benefits both the public and the group that's doing it.

Historic Structures Survey

We engaged a consultant to do a survey of our historic properties in our approximately 230 structures. We blocked off the top 50 and asked them to go out and look at those and give an analysis of condition, historic importance, and the cost for either stabilization, preservation or restoration. The report is nearly done for that first group of buildings. The County Executive has put another \$50,000 in our operating budget to continue to the next segment of buildings. The

costs for maintaining these places are high and we need to make careful choices about where we invest our money. This study will help us determine what's most important historically.

Sportsmen's Advisory Committee

Commissioner Foley: Bill Sickles and I discussed this yesterday. There are a couple of vacancies. It seems like it's fluid – people are coming on and off all the time. We went back and looked at the document that created this organization and it was created by a commissioner, it is commissioner appointments. This was done by John Sheridan whose goal, I think, was to have people engaged in the traditional outdoor sports of hunting, fishing, and things like that to have a place to advise people like Bill and me and others on our approach to licensed activities. It went on to talk about canoe and kayaking, hiking, bicycling. We're going to change the name of it from Sportsmen's Advisory to Sporting Advisory and make sure that representatives from those other activities are included. Right now it is dominated by salt water fishermen. There are vacancies, we're taking applications and we're looking at resumes to diversify it. We'll be filling those vacancies over the next couple of months.

December Board Meeting

Deputy Commissioner Bellone: The next meeting is scheduled for December 21st and since it's so close to the holidays, we wonder if there will be a quorum or if we should move the meeting to December 14th.

A motion to change the December Trustees meeting to December 14th, 12:00 PM meeting, 1:00 PM lunch, was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Pearsall. Unanimously approved by a vote of 12-0-0.

Commissioner: There is some concern about lunch and how we do it, who gets it, who it is intended for. Our theory has always been that Trustees are eligible for reimbursement for their reasonable and ordinary expenses and we felt that doing it the way we do it was the best way to deal with that. We may have to make some adjustments.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Corwin: I'd like to thank those of you that have been attending the Parks Committee meetings. I make as many as I can. Trustee Borden has been attending many meetings, as has Trustee Fritz and yesterday we had Trustee White and myself there as well. I am pleased to report that the three of us (Chairman Corwin, Trustee White and Trustee Fritz) were recommended for reappointment by the Parks Committee. As the end of your term comes near, don't wait until the last minute. There is a new reappointment process that I've mentioned before so please don't wait until the last minute. We should try to keep everyone's appointment as current as possible.

I had also received some correspondence on the dog issue, but we've covered that.

Trustee McKay: We still have to review the minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2006

Page 3 – first paragraph, third line – change admission to the museum to admission to the aquarium

Page 5 – third paragraph, delete "under DECL"

Page 7 – second paragraph, change state park to **skate** park

Page 7 – fifth paragraph – add last sentence – Parks staff will look into the issue

Commissioner Foley: In response to Trustee I.D. cards, we checked on that. All employee I.D. cards are issued by the Civil Service Department. When we checked with the woman who has

been in charge of that for a long time, she said yes, we used to issue Trustees I.D. cards along with a number of other categories of volunteer advisors, but that has been stopped. I thought perhaps we could do it with a green key card, but I think the right way to do this is to go to the legislature and say "here's the reason, the justification and need for this", and get it properly authorized. We need to talk to a Legislator, the Parks Committee - someone to say that Trustees should have an I.D. card that allows them free access to the parks to do their inspections and make their advisory visits. We need to get this properly authorized.

A motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Trustee Colina and seconded by Trustee McKay. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 12-0-0.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Foley: I'd like Colleen Hofmeister to discuss an RFP that is coming up for ice cream vendors.

Colleen Hofmeister: We have various ice cream truck concessionaires and we'll be going out with an RFP this year. In sites covered by a licensed food concessionaire, they have the exclusive rights. Trucks are contracted for alternate sites. We're also working on the RFP for the Indian Island Golf Professional.

Trustee White: I'd like to thank Colleen, Nick, Tracey and the Commissioner for their help on the GATR site proposal before the CEQ. I'd like to point out that Third House restoration is coming along wonderfully.

Trustee Fritz: About the Sporting Advisory Committee - when we had the Leisure Services Committee - at those committees, nothing ever got resolved. When you spread the different interests out so much it doesn't work so well. Going through my list here, has anything happened on Rt. 105

Commissioner Foley: Nothing has moved on that. We need to talk to DPW.

Trustee Fritz: FINS has signed off on the fishing pier so it's back in Fish and Wildlife?

Commissioner Foley: FINS permit for the fishing pier is back to the Corp. now. Every indication is they weren't going to take long.

Trustee Fritz: Shagwong's on an EIS when Nick has the time. What happened with the campground and the Cupsogue boardwalk after it went through CEQ?

Commissioner Foley: We had a preliminary drawing and we were debating whether to do it ourselves or farm it out. It's too big for us to do by ourselves, so we're going to go to DPW and work that out. There's one other thing. We've been working to get beach nourishment project funding and the County Executive agreed not only to fund it, but to double the funding because the bids came in so high. We're talking right now about a total of \$4.6 million for the dredging and beach nourishment project. We are bound up right now in trying to get approval from Fire Island National Seashore to move on the project.

Trustee Fritz: I've been asked - when there's a beach closure at Smith Point, there's no phone to call to get an answer whether it's opened or closed. Could a hot line be activated when the beach is closed?

Commissioner Foley: We'll see what we can do to solve that.

Trustee Hilary: There's newly acquired county land in Southold, 10.7 acres near Hashamomuck Pond. I don't know if you all know about it. It's a beautiful area.

Trustee Colina: The Town of Southampton just acquired the old Girl Scout Camp in Hampton Bays. I was very happy to see that happen. Fifty one acres for \$16 million. The town paid for it out of the Community Preservation Fund. It's a wonderful acquisition.

I just got back from 4 days in Albany (State Legislation for Retired Teachers for Long Island). You should all be aware that your pension funds are going to be under very heavy scrutiny and pressure and be very alert to what's happening in your pension fund, if you have one. The State Controller is the sole trustee for seven pension systems in New York State. The New York State Teachers Retirement system is a little different and it's not one of the seven. It's funded differently and administered differently. We do have some constitutional protections, but no one is sitting back and taking it for granted. Be cognizant of what is happening in your own pension fund.

Trustee McKay: Can we get an update next month on the where the ATV Task Force is in their deliberations.

Commissioner Foley: The ATV Task Force finished its work and filed their report with the Legislature in December of '05.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, December 14th, 2006 at 1:00 PM at Meadowedge. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon.

**The motion to adjourn was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Fritz.
Motion approved unanimously by a vote 12-0-0.**

Minutes submitted by Ann Rothenberg.