

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION
MINUTES OF AUGUST 18, 2016
SAGTIKOS MANOR
WEST BAY SHORE, NEW YORK**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Kathleen Gooding	Vice Chair, Trustee, 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
Terrence Pearsall	Member of the Board
Michael Rosato	Trustee, Town of Smithtown
William B. Sickles	Trustee, Town of Southampton
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

ABSENT

Gilbert Cardillo	Trustee, Town of Riverhead
Terence McSweeney	Trustee, Town of Babylon
VACANT	Member at Large

PARKS DEPARTMENT

Greg Dawson	Commissioner
Philip Berdolt	Anticipated Acting Commissioner
Adina Beedenbender	Executive Assistant to the Commissioner
Nick Gibbons	Principal Environmental Analyst
Terry Maccarrone	Coordinator of Community Based Programs
Richard Martin	Director of Historic Services
Barbara Rittman	Senior Clerk Typist

GUESTS

Faye Meurer	President, Sagtikos Manor Historical Society
Navy SEAL Museum Project	Dan Murphy, Paul Dobiecki, Vincent Calvosa, Eric Hofmeister, Jennifer Glover, Bryan Mastrangelo

PUBLIC PORTION

Robert L. Ford was present and reported on condition of Ladies Room facilities at Meschutt Beach County Park. He was at Meschutt on Sunday, August 14th and the parking lot was about ¾ full and the temperature was in the 90s. His friend who was with him used the ladies room and commented that the line was very long, there are only two stalls (one standard and one handicapped) and no ventilation in the building. The Beach Hut concession on the premises has about seventy tables and is growing in popularity. Mr. Ford stated that the men's facilities were fair and adequate, but requested consideration in making some improvements to the ladies' room.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 21, 2016

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 10-0-0.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chair Hopkins invited Faye Meurer to explain some of the history of Sagtikos Manor. Richard Martin stated that Sagtikos Manor is one of the largest county historical properties and the Historical Society has been working there since 2002. The new contract was just signed yesterday and the Historical Society will continue its partnership with the county for the next twenty years.

Faye reported that one of current projects of the society is to try to assess everything in the house. There are forty-two rooms and 244 years of descendants who left things behind. There are over five hundred pieces of artwork (not including prints). The society just received a partial grant with the Robert David Lion Foundation and a matching grant to do twenty-two prints which all relate to George Washington. Because the house wasn't air conditioned or heated for many years, there are issues with mildew and a lot of the artwork is foxed (spotted and brown due to years of deterioration). Several art pieces have been restored through grants from the Hudson Heritage Foundation. This past winter, electric was installed which has been helping to display the many dishes left behind at the manor. There is a Christmas program every year to help raise funds and with early darkness during the winter months, electricity was a necessity.

Faye explained that the society would like to use the carriage house to create a Visitor's Center. Because of the limited space available, the group has to use many of the rooms in the carriage house for storage of archival materials and a visitor's center for displays and expos would be very helpful. David Gardiner did architectural drawings and photographs for which he won prizes and many of the watercolors and drawings were done by Sarah Diodati Gardiner. All of the planning papers for the Gardiner Manor Mall are available and there are many other items that need to be conserved. Carpeting has been put down where the floors get the most wear and lighting installed in the cabinets for displays. Spotlighting for displays would be very helpful as well.

The cemetery fence on the property has been completed and since some of the trees nearby have been removed, the added light allows the headstones to stay clean and legible. Faye added that the group is also very connected to Gardiner's Island because Sarah Diodati Gardiner bought the island and conserved it for the proprietorship of keeping it in the family.

The society would like to hang new wallpaper to refurbish. With the change in temperatures during summers and winters, the old wallpaper is coming down off of the walls. They haven't found any one to do the work except the volunteers who already put in so much time.

Commissioner Dawson thanked Faye Meurer for her informative presentation. With the county staff available and the number of parks facilities to work with, the county relies greatly on its public/private partnerships to manage and maintain many sites. The Sagtikos Historical Society does a phenomenal job with the amount of people who continue to visit Sagtikos Manor. The wonderful events and programs it provides for the public and volunteer work is very much appreciated.

Commissioner Dawson responded to Mr. Ford's public comment regarding Meschutt Beach CP. The Parks Department recently entered into an agreement with the Beach Hut concessionaire and one of the plans is to increase the size of the restrooms at that facility. Before the project could be done, the size of the existing septic system had to be either increased or replaced with an alternate nitrogen-reducing system. That has been completed and now up and running so the restroom size will now be addressed.

Commissioner Dawson introduced Phil Berdolt who will be taking over as Parks Acting Commissioner until appointment by the Legislature in October and welcomed him aboard. Commissioner Dawson stated that he has had the opportunity to work with Phil, who is coming to the Parks Department from the Suffolk County Dept. of Public Works. Phil thanked Commissioner Dawson. He commented that the Newsday article about his appointment was not totally factual in that he came from the Town of Babylon where he was Commissioner of Public Works and also Buildings and Grounds. His office oversaw all of the facilities, including all parks. As far as maintenance and operations, all of the projects done in the county come through public works and Phil stated that he is very familiar with the parks individually. Phil added that he personally owned a charter boat for years and worked very closely with New York State Parks, which gave him experience of the operations of a government agency from a concessionaire's perspective. Phil stated that he looks forward to working with everyone.

Commissioner Dawson stated that he has been with Suffolk County Parks for nearly ten years, six years as a Parks Trustee and then as Parks Commissioner. He has worked very closely with the Trustees and thanked everyone for their support. He stated that it has been his pleasure to work for such a diverse and talented group of people and it has been very much appreciated.

Commissioner Dawson turned the meeting over to Jennifer Glover, Chair of the Building Committee for the Navy SEAL Museum project. She introduced Eric Hofmeister, from Senator Tom Croci's office who has been working with the Building Committee as well. Eric stated that there has been an ongoing relationship between Senator Croci's office and the Navy SEAL group because the Senator has committed \$400,000 in funding for the construction of the facility. That funding will go through the county but help to develop the overall site for the construction of the facility. The name of the facility will be the Lt. Michael P. Murphy Navy SEAL Museum and it will be constructed at the site in West Sayville near to where the main offices of the Long Island Maritime Museum are located. Eric introduced Dan Murphy who is Michael's father, John Murphy, Dan's son, Paul Dobiecki, architect of the concept, plan and specifications for the facility, Vincent Calvosa, a local developer and advisor with construction background and Bryan Mastrangelo, who is the direct contact with the local Sea Cadets. Eric stated that the facility will not only be a museum, but also a training facility for the Sea Cadets to preserve both the legacy of the Navy SEALs and Lt. Michael P. Murphy. The goal of the facility is to have both the museum and the Sea Cadets work in unison within the community and to benefit the community and region as a whole. A resolution was passed by the Legislature in May, 2014 allowing the Sea Cadets to be involved with and use the facility at the LIMM. That relationship already exists and the new facility will be an extension of it.

Eric introduced Dan Murphy. Dan explained that the Navy SEAL title stands for Sea, Air and Land special operations unit and is one of the most elite Navy forces. With the Navy SEALs, team work is stressed. Michael's unit, Operation Redwings is listed as the most highly decorated small unit in history. One Medal of Honor, 3 Navy Crosses, 16 Bronze Stars, 19 Purple Hearts and a number of air medals. Nineteen men were lost in Operation Redwings which has been incorporated into the architectural design by Paul Dobiecki. There will be an Avenue of Heroes with nineteen trees that will be marked and affiliated to the nineteen men who lost their lives in Operation Redwings. Loved ones of other fallen veteran heroes will be able to purchase trees to add to the Avenue as well. There are only two other museums in the nation involved with Navy SEALs. The main one is in Fort Pierce, Florida and a smaller one is located in Coronado, California. This will be the first museum in the northeast. It will be both an educational institution and a training facility for youth.

Paul Dobiecki explained that the hand-outs provided give a brief history about Michael Murphy, the Navy SEALs as a team, the Sea Cadets and then finally the building itself. The building would be approximately 8,000 square feet in size, include handicap accessibility and an asphalt parking area that will benefit the LIMM as well so that each can work in conjunction with the other. The height of the existing trees bordering the residential area on West Avenue is much higher than the new building or air tower. The second floor is

presently an attic for storage and includes an elevator and stairs to comply with codes. The occupancy will be a multi-purpose general assembly museum.

The outside materials of the building will be very low maintenance, grey in color and the Anderson windows will be located where the classrooms are. Riverhead Building Supply has advised that the Anderson Windows representative has committed to donating the windows to the project, in honor of Michael. An asphalt shingled roof will be matched to appear like a cedar roof.

Dan Murphy stressed that once completed the museum will become a national monument. Penn State placed a huge monument in honor of Michael in the middle of the campus. Penn State has been an educational institution since 1834 and Michael is the only Medal of Honor recipient who attended Penn State. He has been listed as a distinguished alumni. Dan stated that within the special operations community, Suffolk County is on the map because it treats its heroes well and honors its warriors. Paul added that the Ronkonkoma Rotary Club dedicated a memorial to Operation Redwings at MacArthur Airport last year on its tenth anniversary. The back of the memorial lists the Long Islanders who died in the global war on terror. The Ronkonkoma Rotary Club also started a small 4 Mile Run Around the Lake about 35 years ago. Dan Murphy asked if the rotary would rename the run the Lt. Michael P. Murphy 4 Mile Run Around the Lake. In the five years following the renaming, approximately 500-600 people participated each year. Last year, 2,500 runners, from 31 states and 2 countries participated in the event.

When Dan and his family went to the White House for the presentation of Michael's Medal of Honor, the Navy liaison was Lt. Tom Croci. Commander Croci suggested adding a Navy "grinder" at the new Navy SEAL museum/training site, which is a concrete-asphalt area where the students do their calisthenics workouts. Commander Croci and the state are providing funds to the county to start work on the site and the building. The Navy SEAL Foundation has a fundraiser every year on the USS Intrepid, which raises approximately \$4-6 million. There are many other foundations also very familiar with the Lt. Michael P. Murphy Navy SEAL cause. Funding is not anticipated to be an issue.

Bryan Mastrangelo explained that the Sea Cadet program is a national charter, similar to but a smaller version of the Boy Scouts of America and also a 501 3c non-profit organization. The group holds its own fundraisers to operate and hold field trips and programs for the cadets. Currently, there are forty-two cadets in training to become Navy SEALs. It is a fun program, while at the same time cadets are being mentored to become our future military. The cadets drill one weekend per month, similar to the military reserves. There is also winter training where the cadets go to boot camp. There is currently a waiting list of about fifty potential cadets for recruitment.

Richard Martin stated that there have already been two historic trust committee meetings pertaining to the proposed site for the Navy SEALs. It is an opportune location because the land is already cleared and currently only used for storage materials. It is close enough to the LMM campus so that activities can be tied in together. The committee meetings addressed the location, design and the materials to be used for the building. Another meeting will be held by the Parks Department to ask additional questions on the project. The next hearing will be with the Council for Environmental Quality which serves as the official historic trust review of the project.

Commissioner Dawson added that once the conceptual design is in place, the fundraising, building permits and actual building phases will begin. The parking lot at the West Sayville Golf Course can be utilized and coordination of fundraisers and events by Lessings and the Maritime Museum will be arranged. The agreement with the Navy SEAL organization will be similar to the other Parks Department agreements, which is that each is responsible for individual care, maintenance, and utilities. A new resolution has been laid on the table allowing Suffolk County Parks to enter into an agreement with the Navy SEAL group.

Parks Trustee White made a motion to approve the building of a Navy SEALs museum at the West Sayville facility and it was seconded by Trustee Leis. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 10-0-0.

Nick gave an update on the piping plovers. He reported that Smith Point CP is still largely closed due to remaining plover that have not yet fledged. The park is currently allowing approximately 400-500 vehicles on approximately 1½ miles of beach. The entire park is six miles long (five miles of it is outer beach). The remaining plover is 29 days old today and at worst, it will be about one week longer to full re-opening.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Hopkins' questions were pertaining to the piping plovers and they were already addressed by Nick.

ROUND TABLE

Trustee McKay will address some questions regarding an editorial from the Northport Observer at the next meeting. It is pertaining to maintenance of the Fuchs property in the Town of Huntington and the Arthur Kunz property in Smithtown. Trustee Rosato stated that he was contacted about the Arthur Kunz property as well. Commissioner Dawson reported that he is aware that the editorial was written by the constituent who formerly lived on the property and sold it to the county. Trustee Rosato reported that he spoke with Legislator Trotta who advised him that the house needs to be stained, window trim painted, deck repaired, stairs added and a broken window in the back of the house replaced. Commissioner Dawson stated that there are 50,000 acres of parkland to maintain and because of the lack of funding, the county takes care of all safety features, hanging wire and clearing debris first. There is already a work order in for the deck, but painting and staining is low on the priorities list.

Member of the Board Pearsall inquired as to how many buildings are located on Parks property. Commissioner Dawson stated that there are over 200 historic structures and 42 buildings in the rental program. The rent paid is based on fair market value as appraised by the Suffolk County Planning Department. All revenue generated goes to the General Fund and not into operating expenditures. Also, there are currently 20% fewer employees now than there was four years ago. The dedicated employees of the Parks Department do the best they can, and go above and beyond what is expected.

Trustee McKay commented that when Peter Scully was Parks Commissioner, creating a Parks Tax District moved pretty far along until it died up in Albany. In his opinion, with over thirty years of experience, that is the only long-range solution. Trustee Rosato added that there is also a ¼% sales tax that goes to preserving open space, ¼ to sewer infrastructure stabilization and ¼ going to the general fund. That ¼% tax already exists, should be used for open space, to maintain and add to our parks. He added that unfortunately, a lot of that money is going into the general fund to pay salaries, etc. and our parks are falling apart. Trustee McKay agreed that the subject should be continued in more depth at the next trustee meeting. He added that the editorial makes some good points and that it also mentions taking \$70 million from the environmental funds and putting them into the general fund.

Trustee Sickles inquired if there is any update on Legislator Hahn's proposal for a water/kayak trail. Legislative Aide Zach Baum reported that the consolidated funding application was submitted for the local waterfront revitalization program and they expect to hear back by late fall of this year or early winter of 2017. The task force is planning locally in the meantime and once the funding is received, further planning can move forward with Economic Development.

Trustee Sickles reported that he received an email stating that the Suffolk County Parks Foundation is, or is about to be disbanded and the funds in the treasury is going to be given to Suffolk County Parks.

Commissioner Dawson stated that he saw an email from Tom Malanga to the County Executive's Office. It is an independent board, there is no Executive Director for it and no funding for an Executive Director.

Trustee Sickles inquired regarding the Navy SEALs museum plans, if the Parks Department would be involved with ongoing maintenance of the grounds around the museum or if it would be covered under fundraising and volunteer work. Commissioner Dawson stated that it will depend on the maintenance agreement that is worked out with the group.

Trustee Gooding wished Commissioner Dawson the best of luck and that he will be missed.

Trustee Leis wished Commissioner Dawson the best as well and welcomed Phil Berdolt who will be stepping in to the position.

Trustee Leudesdorf reported that the Town of Southold is very enthusiastic about the blueway trail project and Town Supervisor Scott Russell submitted a letter in support of it. Zach Baum was very appreciative of Commissioner Dawson's support in moving the initiative forward and reported that over forty letters were received. Zach stated that Legislator Hahn will attend future meetings to report updates and progress.

Member of the Board Pearsall wished Commissioner Dawson well and welcomed Phil Berdolt.

Trustee Rosato had some funding questions regarding the Knox property and Blydenburgh CP. He will take them up at the next meeting. Commissioner Dawson commented that Blydenburgh CP does have some capital funding. Trustee Rosato wished the Commissioner the best of luck.

Terry Maccarrone reported that while the Trustees are meeting at Sagtikos Manor, to please take note of the new pathway, driveway, keyhole garden and irrigation, restoration of a lot of the brick work, and cemetery fence that was redone. The Visitor's Center that Faye Meuer spoke of earlier is planned for in the Capital Program and the funding is there to be appropriated.

The RFP for the camp store at Cedar Point CP was re-issued and went out. Terry inquired if Trustee White would be the representative on the RFP Committee and he accepted. Several parties have shown interest in downloading the packet.

Terry reported that over 200 Parks buildings are just historic. In 2007, the county embarked on a survey of historic structures. Forty to fifty buildings were surveyed by an outside contractor and just to stabilize them would cost tens of millions of dollars. Restoration of just the buildings would cost a significant amount of funds.

Commissioner Dawson introduced Adina Beedenbender to the group. She will be the Executive Assistant for Acting Commissioner Phil Berdolt. He thanked everyone once again, stating that it has been a pleasure working with the Parks Trustees.

The next Parks Trustee meeting will be held at Montauk County Park on Thursday, September 15, 2016.

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 10-0-0.