

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION
MINUTES OF JULY 25, 2019
BLYDENBURGH COUNTY PARK
SMITHTOWN, NEW YORK**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Christopher Bodkin	Member of the Board
Gilbert Cardillo	Trustee, Town of Riverhead
Dawn Hopkins	Trustee, Town of Brookhaven
Debra Kolyer	Member of the Board
Joseph Kukral	Member at Large
Peter Leis	Chairman, Trustee, Town of Islip
Daniel Lloyd	Trustee, Town of Babylon
Michael Rosato	Trustee, Town of Smithtown
William B. Sickles	Vice Chairman, Trustee, Town of Southampton
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

ABSENT

Kathleen Gooding	Trustee, Town of Shelter Island
James W. Wright	Trustee, Town of Huntington
VACANT	Trustee, Town of Southold

PARKS DEPARTMENT

Philip Berdolt	Commissioner
Don McKay	Deputy Commissioner
Emily Lauri	Community Relations Director
Richard Martin	Director of Historic Services
Tony Trotta	Senior Superintendent
Barbara Rittman	Senior Office Assistant

GUESTS

Alan Drost	Seasonal Employee, caretaker at Blydenburgh CP
Lauretta Fischer	Chief Environ. Analyst, Economic Development/Planning
Melissa Kangas	Planning Aide

PUBLIC PORTION

Charles Ciecirski was present to comment on the dump station at Indian Island CP. He stated that the fitting that allows connection to the water hose was removed at the dump station so you cannot clean out your tank, just your hose only. He stated that he spoke with Park Supervisor Mike LaBarbara who told him that he disconnected it because there have been instances in the past where the dump station tanks filled up very quickly. Mr. Ciecirski stated that his trailer takes 30 gallons of black water (which is the toilet) and 30 gallons of grey water (which is the sink). He stated that he only uses between 5-7 gallons to flush it out. He added that the bigger trailers may have bigger tanks but then you don't flush it every time either and it depends on your use.

Member at Large Joe Kukral inquired if Mr. Ciecirski carries enough water in his fresh water tank to dump a couple of full tanks down into the black tank after he empties it. Mr. Ciecirski stated that his fresh water tank holds 40 gallons. Member at Large Kukral explained that the reason the fitting was removed was because there are people who stand with that connection to the rinse tank connector on their trailer and just let it run which fills up the dump station tanks. Commissioner Berdolt stated that the fitting was taken out because people abuse it, the Parks Department doesn't have the tank capacity and it's very expensive to get a company to keep coming back to empty it when prices keep going up higher and higher. He added that camping fees were raised 3 years ago, but Parks can't keep raising the fees because everything is legislated. Prices have escalated to almost double in the last three years and it's an issue because the Parks Department can't get the company to come as frequently as needed to keep up with the use.

Member at Large Kukral suggested that Mr. Ciecirski carry a five gallon jug underneath in his storage area, or a small bucket and fill it up at the faucet and then dump it down the toilet. Mr. Ciecirski commented that he carries a lot of weight already in his camper to adapt to electric, water, etc. and added that the fittings haven't been removed at Cedar Point CP, Smith Point CP or the state parks either.

He added that the health code on the internet also states that it is required to have water and a hose at the dump station to flush the pad, in case any product gets on the pad so it's a violation not to have it. Commissioner Berdolt stated that he will contact the Health Dept. to check into it.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 27, 2019

Page 4, Round Table, Paragraph 3: **Trustee** Gil Cardillo commented.....

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Trustee Richard White and it was seconded by Member at Large Joseph Kukral. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 10-0-0.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Berdolt introduced Laurretta Fischer from Economic Development & Planning who announced that she will be retiring in August after 37 1/2 years of service with Suffolk County. She introduced Melissa Kangas who will be taking Laurretta's place and attending future Parks Trustee meetings to make presentations on properties that the Parks Trustees will be considering for approval/recommendation. Trustee Cardillo inquired if the lawsuit money will be returned before the County purchases more land. Laurretta stated that she hopes to get more funds that will be under the New Drinking Water Protection Program regulations. Laurretta reported that there is a site (historic) in Center Moriches that is being worked on and the acquisition will be in partnership with the Town of Brookhaven to maintain the historic building on the property. The acquisition should be coming before the Parks Trustees for review within the next few months. Laurretta thanked everyone for all of their support over the years and wished everyone well. Congratulations were extended to Laurretta and thanks for all of her hard work.

Trustee Sickles added that over the years Laurretta Fischer was most helpful and cooperative on many occasions when there were questions and/or concerns, and her assistance was very much appreciated.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that when Indian Island Golf Course originally submitted its bid for the golf course, it was to include a miniature golf course. It wasn't done at the time, but work is now going to move forward and completion is estimated by March 2020. The miniature golf course will be located on the western side of the parking lot. All of the required permits with DEC have been submitted and funds are available to begin building. Commissioner Berdolt added that it's a great idea to incorporate the miniature golf with the Indian Island CP camping. Parks currently runs a small handicap accessible SCAT shuttle bus at Smith Point

CP that goes from the camp site to the Tiki Joe's concession, and plans are to get a similar shuttle bus that will run from the Indian Island campground to the miniature golf course.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that the County beaches are doing very well. A record breaking number of piping plover nests are at Smith Point CP this year. Last year there was a record of 25 and this year there are 32 nesting pairs. Most of them have been successful and the outer beach was limited again this year to about 350 vehicles just past Cut 1A on some of the hottest days this year so far. As of today, Parks is open out to Cut 2 and Burma Road is open to fishermen-only all the way out to the inlet. Outer beach camping is about to be reopened as well. Since the last Parks Trustees meeting, some plovers nested on the Southampton side of Shinnecock East CP, causing Parks to have to shut down some of its campsites. A habitat conservation plan was created and submitted to DEC and Parks was able to keep all of the ocean camping open, except for 20 sites. Normally if there's a plover, no vehicle activity is permitted for 1000 meters, which is 3000 feet and would span the entire ocean front property at Shinnecock East CP. The habitat conservation plan was approved by the DEC and US Fish and Wildlife and permitted Parks to keep most sites (minus 103-85) open. The other twenty sites were closed down for about 3 weeks. Patrons who wanted to be accommodated were situated on the bayside, which is plenty wide enough. Some campers were placed against the dunes and some up against the rock jetty.

Trustee Sickles reported that he visited Shinnecock East last Saturday to see how the temporary campsites were set up and found it to be very well organized. A few people had walked to the closed campsite area but all of the fencing was up. Commissioner Berdolt added that the Park Rangers are in the area from 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. every day, and in different shifts at Smith Point CP from 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

A beautiful new \$800,000 ADA accessible walkway at Cupsogue CP has been completed and opened to the public. It has flower planting boxes built into it, regular stairs also and about seven switch backs to get up to the 17 foot height difference that exists from the ground all the way up. The walkway goes from the parking lot up to the main deck and there is also an ADA accessible walkway already in place that goes down to the beach.

This year, the Parks Department purchased a solo rider which is a golf cart for a handicapped person who doesn't have mobility in his/her legs. It's a single cart which straps in up to the shoulders and can be driven to any location. The seat turns, goes to an upright position, and enables the person to golf.

The Parks Department also purchased mobi mats for Cupsogue, Meschutt and Smith Point CPs. They are 6 feet wide, 75 feet long and run from the beach out to the shore. Additional surf chairs were also purchased for the beaches. This coming Friday there will be a press event to announce the new ADA additions at the parks.

Yesterday, there was a ribbon cutting ceremony at Gardiner CP where a dog park was built and completed with a grant from Senator Phil Boyle. Senator Martinez (former Legislator) sponsored the resolution to accept the funds for the project. A lot of the work for the project was done in-house by Parks Department staff. Fencing was installed and Parks staff built an extension to the parking lot closer to the dog park area. An agility course was built for the dogs in one section of the parks as well. It is a nice addition to the park.

Work at the West Hills CP stables is still progressing and the area looks great. The holes have not been filled in yet and have snow fence around them, but electric has finally been restored. The concession operators are working around it and doing a phenomenal job. Parks granted a waiver on one of the monthly fees since it was impossible to be operational without electricity.

The Parks Department has had record weeks of attendance with all of the great weather and it is reflected in revenue totals. Parks never receives the funds that it needs so Commissioner Berdolt is hopeful that with Parks doing its share, maybe more money will be added to its budget.

This weekend will be the Jerry Jam at Cathedral Pines CP and last week an AKC dog show event was held there.

This weekend is also the Montauk Film Festival, which will be offering environmentally themed films. It will be held outdoors on the fields at Third House CP, using portable projectors and two separate viewing areas.

A contract still hasn't been signed with the Warrior Ranch Foundation but an agreement is close to being settled. Commissioner Berdolt would like to hold a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Old Beagle Club property in Riverhead. The non-profit 501© (3) organization provides equine therapy for veterans, first responders and rescue horses, and will maintain the property as well.

Commissioner Berdolt announced that Parks has received a record number of film permits this year, which the Film Commission in Economic Development has been pushing for. Out at Cupsogue CP, the reality show Summer House on the East End came out three times to film. An entire film is also being planned at the Robinson Duck Farm in Brookhaven.

Glamping is doing well for its first season at Cedar Point CP. Trustee Sickles visited the site and he also spoke with the Park Supervisor Mike Greaves who said that the director of the site is very efficient in overseeing the operation. They've had two corporate Glamping events which filled most of the tents. Generally, there have been ten or eleven campers there on the weekends. Mike said there haven't been any problems so far. There was an issue initially with mosquitoes but Commissioner Berdolt reported that he was able to get Vector Control to do some aerial spraying for the entire park and also check on some of our other County parks. Glamping will be offered until Columbus Day.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Leis inquired if the new playground was installed yet at Smith Point CP. Commissioner Berdolt reported that the materials are being delivered tomorrow.

Chairman Leis inquired if there are any updates on progress at the Third House and Commissioner Berdolt reported that there is a kick-off meeting tomorrow for the sprinkler system and a majority of the structural work is complete. Richard Martin reported that the project should be finished next spring.

ROUND TABLE

Member at Large Kukral reported that he received a call from a fire department commissioner regarding probationary members and Green Key cards. Commissioner Berdolt reported that Parks has never permitted a probationary member to get a discounted rate until they become a full fireman because after two months they could drop out and still have the benefit of the discount for three years. Member at Large Kukral commented that a probationary member is still a member of the corps but they have a specific timeframe to meet the certain requirements. He suggested possibly issuing a discounted card, and making the expiration date the same as when their probationary period ends. Some departments are six months and some are a year so issue a card that they pay the regular fee for but take the end date on their probationary card and make that the expiration date of their Green Key. When they get off probation and become a full member they would have to go back and buy a new card to be good for the usual three years. Commissioner Berdolt stated that he would look into if the RecTrac system could do it and also look at the fee schedule which has to be legislatively approved.

Trustee Rosato inquired if the parts for the mill are still stored on the Blydenburgh CP property. Richard Martin reported that they are. There are some various odd lot parts that are not the original parts but items that were purchased at auction about thirty years ago. What is needed to move forward is to hire a mill expert to do a design and then supervise the construction, including a capital program to go with it. The Miller's house is Parks' next capital project. The brick east wall which is embedded in the embankment and caving in on itself needs to be rebuilt. The new roofing contractor will also need to take care of some leaking issues at the main

house, the Miller's house and the carpenter's shop, using operating funds. The mill building itself was restored and safeguarded.

Richard introduced Alan Drost who is a seasonal employee, resides in an apartment on the second floor and maintains/safeguards the Blydenburgh-Weld Farmhouse. The LI Greenbelt Trail Conference is also located on the second floor of the building. The Colonial Life Program is active using the kitchen and grounds, and Alan gives tours through the Greenbelt Trail on Saturdays. The plan for the Miller's House is to restore it, use it for exhibits and as a house museum for tours. Work on the mill itself is planned for the future. All of the structural work needed for the size of the mill itself and rebuilding of the bridge to the pond will cost at least \$500,000. Richard added that the amount of funding that Parks receives for projects is never enough and it has to be targeted for specific sites and priorities set in order to get things completed.

Trustee White commented that the problem is that Parks got very aggressive in buying a lot of properties and not financing the needed restoration work at the sites. He commended Commissioner Berdolt for making Third House a priority because the disrepair wasn't addressed for twenty-seven years.

Trustee Gil Cardillo inquired about the plan to get a waiver for the Glamping concession to take over the camp store. Commissioner Berdolt stated that Parks has the contract for them to operate the building as a storage facility for the present time. The waiver has not been submitted as of yet.

Trustee Cardillo commented that the new building at Indian Island CP is now open for use and a very nice job was done on it.

Trustee Cardillo reported that out on the point at Indian Island CP there were composting toilets and they are now gone and have been replaced with port-o-lavs. Trustee Sickles commented that around 2008-09, Parks invested in the composting restrooms with solar panels on the roof. For a period of time, Parks had port-o-lavs there but they became costly and needed constant maintenance. Trustee Cardillo commented that a port-o-lav is meant for temporary use according to the Board of Health and are not supposed to be used year round. Commissioner Berdolt stated that he'll look into what happened to them.

Trustee White reported that he was contacted several times by Dan Rattiner of Dan's Papers for information about the Glamping concession at Cedar Point CP. He went to Cedar Point to visit and commented to Trustee White that the concession has a twenty-five year lease. Trustee White advised him that he was not aware of Parks ever using a twenty-five year lease. He added that he anticipates that there will be a story in Dan's Papers about the theory of Glamping.

Richard Martin reported that the original Blydenburgh-Weld House was built in 1820 and some additions to the house, such as the bay window came later in the 1880's. The first mill structure was built in 1798 and was always called the "New Mill". It is the newest and also the last mill built at the headwaters of the Nissequogue River. The pond and headwaters were dammed up in order to power the mill.

Trustee Sickles stated that he'd like to hold the August meeting at the Shinnecock Canal County Marina. He has a 20' x 10' and a 10' x 10' tent which he will set up for shade. Arrangements will be made for a few picnic

tables to be moved there from Sears Bellows CP. If there's inclement weather, the meeting can be held at the Ducks Unlimited building at Smithers CP.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Parks Trustee Richard White and it was seconded by Trustee Lloyd. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 10-0-0.

The next Parks Trustee meeting will be held at Shinnecock Canal County Marina in Hampton Bays on Thursday, August 22, 2019. Weather permitting.