

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,  
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION  
MINUTES OF MAY 24, 2018  
SCULLY ESTATE  
ISLIP, NEW YORK**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Gilbert Cardillo	Trustee, Town of Riverhead
Kathleen Gooding	Trustee, Town of Shelter Island
Dawn Hopkins	Trustee, Town of Brookhaven
Debra Kolyer	Member of the Board
Peter Leis	Chairman, Trustee, Town of Islip
Arthur W. Leudesdorf	Trustee, Town of Southold
Daniel Lloyd	Trustee, Town of Babylon
Michael Rosato	Trustee, Town of Smithtown
William B. Sickles	Vice Chairman, Trustee, Town of Southampton
Josh Slaughter	Member of the Board
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

**ABSENT**

VACANT	Member at Large
VACANT	Trustee, Town of Huntington

**PARKS DEPARTMENT**

Philip Berdolt	Commissioner
Donald McKay	Parks Deputy Commissioner
Nick Gibbons	Principal Environmental Analyst
Emily Lauri	Community Relations Director
Terry Maccarrone	Coordinator of Community Based Programs
Richard Martin	Director of Historic Services
Tony Trotta	Parks Superintendent
Barbara Rittman	Senior Office Assistant

**GUESTS**

Kara Hahn	Parks Committee Chair, Legislator, District 5
Kristi Reynolds	Aide to S.C. Legislator William Lindsay

**PUBLIC PORTION**

Thomas Contello was present to discuss Smith Point County Park Outer Beach Camping access. Mr. Contello questioned why it isn't possible to flatten out Burma Road so that trailers can use that route to get in when relocations of sand frequently takes place to create dunes. Mr. Contello also suggested offering outer beach access through the camp ground and to Burma Road, just for checking in and checking out. Even though there's a safety issue of children playing in the camp grounds, campers have to get to that section of the camp ground by going through the entire camp ground anyway because it's one-way.

Commissioner Berdolt stated that the Parks Department has concerns with traffic going through the camp grounds because of all of the activities. Whenever there has been camping permitted on the outer beach, there

has never been an access problem. The reason that Burma Road was closed was because of the piping plovers. Steps were taken last year to maintain Burma Road and the birds/chicks got through anyway. When the birds get through to Burma Road it has to be shut down. If there is a death of a bird, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will require more habitat area.

The Parks Department extended snow fence up to where the birds get through, closed up the access and built stairs. The Parks Department is doing what it can with its resources to keep access open to the public. Another issue is the erosion. The area is narrow where the outer beach camping is, and there isn't much beach so regardless of when the plovers hatch, if they're on ocean side, Parks has to close down. If they're on Burma Road, Parks has to close. If there isn't enough area by cut two to do the outer beach camping, it also has to close.

Nick Gibbons commented that the Parks Department has already considered Mr. Contello's proposal a number of times over past years. The camp grounds have a lot of activity with children and riding bicycles, and campers do go through regularly anyway to set up but it's a lot different than several hundred vehicles going in and out on a daily basis on their way to the outer beach to fish. The Parks Department opened the new section of the camp ground almost twenty years ago, and it severed access to Burma Road. Cut 1A became the alternative access. The new camp ground severed what had been the traditional access to Burma Road. Nick added that the policy that Mr. Contello has requested Parks does make available as necessary during off-season in mid-October. If storm beach conditions preclude access through Cut 1A, Parks will allow access through the camp ground as a way to continue to get access to Burma Road and Moriches Inlet. However, that decision is made only on a case by case basis and is rarely needed because many times the weather is inclement, and Cut 1A and the entire outer beach has to be closed anyway due to safety concerns.

Nick reported that right now there are 16 pairs of birds at Smith Point CP. Last year, there were 20 pairs and there's still some time for that amount to rise higher this year. They are spread out equally among the entire five miles of beach, in the areas that are wide enough for them to nest and in the same areas that would have been used for outer beach camping. If it's too narrow for camping, it's also too narrow for the birds.

Commissioner Berdolt stressed that everything possible is being done to keep the beach open all the way to Moriches. The Parks Department is opposed to de-vegetation of specific areas of beach, however, the agencies must work together.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 26, 2018**

**A motion to approve the minutes was made by Trustee Richard White and seconded by Vice Chair, Trustee William Sickles. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

### **COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Berdolt introduced and welcomed Daniel Lloyd (representing the Town of Babylon) to the Parks Board of Trustees. All present introduced themselves to Dan.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that all county parks are preparing for the summer season. Weather and funding is always an issue for the Parks Department, but all looks good for the upcoming Memorial Day weekend. The crew is doing a great job working on the trails and beaches, after suffering through the last few nor'easter storms. Parks staff spent 2-3 weeks at Montauk, with assistance from LIBBA and local community members clearing several dumpsters of debris, smoothing out the beach and establishing about eighty 80 camp sites. There was a similar problem at Shinnecock East but with assistance from DPW, Parks crew was able to

get a bulldozer to smooth down a four foot sand drop created by the ocean waves. Approximately 100 camp sites were created there. Smith Point CP is still being worked on. It is narrow past cut 2 so outer beach

camping there is questionable. When it's high tide, it's very close to the dune line. There is an emergency dredge project planned at Moriches Inlet. Sand was originally going to be dropped down at Great Gun, but Nick Gibbons was able to get the location changed to the west which will be a big help for Parks. It will start at the pavilion and head east with all the dredge spoils from the Inlet being moved. 150,000 cubic yards of sand will be moved.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that a letter was received from a Sayville resident who belongs to a local homeowners association and he is seeking to dredge the Greens Creek canal for public use. Half of the underwater property is county property and the dredging will be of no cost to the county. The County Division of Real Estate requested that the association have the Parks Trustees vote on the action. Commissioner Berdolt stated that he doesn't see any issues with the request.

**A motion to move forward with dredging of the Greens Creek canal was made by Trustee Richard White and it was seconded by Chairman Peter Leis. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

Commissioner Berdolt reported that Legislator Krupski reached out to the Parks Department regarding the possibility of allowing a right of way/easement at the Strawberry Fields parcel in the Town of Southold. Nick Gibbons stated that at the time of the acquisition of the parcel, the county entered into an agreement with the Town of Southold to manage it. The property is parade/carnival grounds and also the site of the strawberry festival. Whenever there is trimming or improvement on the property, Nick reported that he normally reviews the proposals. At this time, SCWA would like to extend the irrigation water line onto the site which the Parks Department has no issues with. Trustee Leudesdorf stated that the parcel is used by many different agencies all year long and he has no objections to the project.

**A motion to allow an easement to extend the irrigation water line onto the Strawberry Fields parcel was made by Trustee Arthur W. Leudesdorf and it was seconded by Trustee Gil Cardillo. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

Commissioner Berdolt reported that the Beagle Club property in Calverton was acquired by the county approximately 6-8 years ago and it was originally a place that housed beagles that were trained to pick up the scent of foxes on the property. The site includes one main building which appears like a meeting hall and has been empty for a long time. It has a small commercial kitchen, restrooms, two separate rooms in the back that could possibly be bedrooms, and a dry basement. The Warrior Ranch Foundation does equine therapy for veterans with post-traumatic stress syndrome and the organization has shown interest in the property. The group takes horses that are going to be euthanized and has the veterans train them. They have a website with a video that shows how they teach the veterans to train the horses which is therapy for the veterans.

Commissioner Berdolt stated that it is a great opportunity and a great location for the program. The Warrior Ranch Foundation will be willing to make capital improvements to the property if the county enters into a ten year lease with them. Parks will not be seeking any rent from the group, only the capital improvements. Parks would like to enter into a contract with them (ten year lease) to make a minimum of \$100,000 of capital improvement through the ten year lease. The organization will use the facilities, including the two main barns for the horses and small indoor rings for inclement weather days.

Josh Slaughter inquired where the group gets funding from and Commissioner Berdolt stated that funding comes through private donations as a 501c3 organization. Trustee Sickles inquired if this type of use of the property would interfere with any hunting that goes on there. Nick stated that the group inquired about that

because there would be an issue with noise. He reported that only archery hunting is permitted there so it would not be a problem. Trustee Sickles inquired also if the local community is being made aware of the plans. Commissioner Berdolt reported that Parks has reached out to the community through Legislator Krupski's office so that they are informed of the pending plans.

**A motion to approve of the Parks Department entering into a contract with the Warrior Ranch Foundation was made by Trustee Cardillo and it was seconded by Trustee Hopkins. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

Commissioner Berdolt reported that several years ago there was a fire at Cupsogue CP that destroyed the beach pavilion. The Parks Department issued an RFP for the design of a new facility and deck. Because of funding reasons, Parks was unable to get the project completed. The Parks Department is now going to issue another RFP for architectural services for the design of a new concession building at Cupsogue CP. Trustee Sickles stated that he read an article just recently that said that two of the best beaches on Long Island (Caribbean-like) are Cooper's Beach in Southampton and Cupsogue Beach CP in Westhampton Beach.

**A motion to move forward with an RFP for the design of a new concession facility at Cupsogue CP was made by Trustee Hopkins and it was seconded by Co-Chairman Sickles. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

Commissioner Berdolt reported that there is a proposal by Legislator Kara Hahn for a walking path at Old Field Farm County Park. There are two options for the path and DEC approval must be obtained. The county property is an equine center that is used mostly by the people who maintain Old Field Farm. There will probably have to be an RFP for the walking path. It will need a 6-8 foot wide walking path and split rail fence, either on both sides of the path, or possibly just the side that faces the horse property. Parks will work on doing its own design in-house. If it goes out for bid through DPW, Parks has its own skilled draftsman who is familiar with all of the codes and he can do a lot of the design work. One of the options for the walking path hugs the shoreline closely and if there are any issues with the DEC, it can be moved in somewhat around the parking lot. There will also be welcome signage and a small parking lot with added gates for public access.

Legislator Hahn explained that there is a mile long Town of Brookhaven paved trail that runs from West Meadow Beach down to Trustees Road. Neighborhood residents currently use the winding curved trail for walking, biking, etc., but the new walking path will be much safer to use.

**A motion to go out for a bid for the new walking path at Old Field Farm County Park was made by Trustee Hopkins and it was seconded by Trustee Gooding. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

Commissioner Berdolt reported that a request was presented to him to issue an RFP for the management of the Parks Department rental properties within the Parks system. A property management company approached a legislator and proposed that they could increase the Parks rental income and take over the entire management of the properties, which would include maintenance of all of the buildings. There are some concerns and those concerns would be addressed in the RFP, especially for the historic sites which must be pre-approved by the Parks Department. Richard Martin is working with DPW on the language for the RFP to make certain that all Parks buildings are protected.

Commissioner Berdolt stated that a benefit of the idea is that if Parks found a company to take over the leasing and management of its rental homes, it would free up the Parks maintenance crew to work on other parks projects. Richard Wolff, who manages the maintenance staff, stated that his crew spends about 30% of their

time on maintenance of the rental properties. Whenever anything breaks down at the rental properties, staff has to drop everything else they are doing to take care of it.

A minus to the idea would be that the company would re-evaluate the properties and may fix them up a bit and increase the rent which would increase the revenue. It could at some point displace the employees (tenants)

who are living there. The first priority for tenants used to go first to the Park Police and now since there is no longer Park police, priority goes to Park employees, then all police, then all Suffolk County employees, and then the public. It is hoped that the renters, who are usually Park employees or police, keep watch over the park grounds as well. A renter from the general public may not show the same interest.

Commissioner Berdolt asked the Board for an opinion and a vote for an approval for the RFP for a property management company for rental properties within the Parks system. Co-Chair Sickles commented that he lived in a Parks rental property for ten years. Historically, when an employee moved into a park rental, it was always intended that the tenant was the eyes and ears of the Parks system and responsible to keep watch over it. A private company is interested in making money and a profit. Commissioner Berdolt was in agreement with that, but also stated that he is not sure that the tenants who currently rent within the Parks system feel that same responsibility for the well-being of the parks. Co-Chairman Sickles stated that he does not approve of the proposed concept.

Trustee White was in agreement with Co-Chair Sickles' view. He stated that in Montauk there is a house near the lighthouse that is owned by the state. The tenant lives there rent-free and he watches over the property. Visitors knock on his door multiple times all year long and it's his responsibility to be caretaker. Commissioner Berdolt added that New York State has an overseer at all state parks.

Trustee Cardillo questioned that if the Parks Department currently handles the rental management in-house and collects the rental revenue, and an outside management company starts handling it, and brings in more revenue to generate a profit for themselves, if someone would suffer from that change.

Member of the Board Josh Slaughter asked if the RFP would just free up the Parks maintenance staff by not having to make repairs at the rental properties. Commissioner Berdolt stated that the management company claims that it would also increase revenue by 10%. Richard Martin stated that if the management company changes a property to a different comparable level to a newer house/apartment locally, then they can raise the rent that much higher. If they can improve the conditions and amenities up to a higher comparable level, then you can ask for a higher rental fee that way.

Trustee Gooding stated that she was hesitant of an outside company taking charge of the historic rentals. Richard Martin stated that he would be working with those who write the RFP to make certain that the necessary language is included to make certain all historic renovation guidelines are enforced. The Historic Trust and CEQ review everything as well to make sure all requirements are met. Commissioner Berdolt added that a Parks Trustee would be on the review committee for the RFP as well.

Trustee Cardillo stated that he thought the idea should be tabled until there is more information. Commissioner Berdolt inquired about what further information would be required. Trustee Gooding inquired as to how the management company would plan to make money. Trustee Cardillo questioned where the profit would come from when the county currently collects a specific amount in rent, and a company comes in and collects just as much rent. Commissioner Berdolt stated that it would all be explained in the company's response to the RFP. He added also that going out for an RFP doesn't mean there's a signed contract.

Trustee White inquired where the idea came from to possibly bring in a management company to care for the housing rentals within the parks system. Commissioner Berdolt stated that Legislator Lindsay offered the idea as a possibility.

Trustee Leudesdorf stated that he would like to see it stipulated in the rental lease agreement that the tenant take up more of a caretaker responsibility for the park.

Trustee White suggested that possibly someone from Legislator Lindsay's office attend a Parks Trustee meeting to discuss how this idea would work, to further support it. Commissioner Berdolt stated that he would inquire, but was uncertain if those questions can be answered. He added that he can bring a copy of a previous RFP that could be re-designed into a new one as a sample for this proposal. Trustee White commented that what is questionable is how Parks could bring in another level of management who could make money on properties that are currently maxed out in rent. Commissioner Berdolt stated that there are also tenants who have been living in rentals for years without any increase in rent, which is not the normal standard. Trustee Cardillo commented that it isn't a normal rental situation since the grass gets mowed and the snow is cleared, etc. He asked if the management company would do the maintenance any quicker, do the snow plowing, empty the trash and mow the grass, because it all costs money? He asked for an explanation of how they will make money doing all this and if it's going to benefit the county more than the benefit the county already gets now from the rents without farming it out.

**A motion to table the proposal for an RFP for a management company for the rental properties within the Parks system was made by Trustee Cardillo and it was seconded by Trustee White. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

Commissioner Berdolt reported that there is a property within the county park system called the Shinnecock Commercial Fishing Dock, located on Dune Road in Southampton. It has been managed by DPW for many years and was a deal between the Town of Southampton and the County. There was a capital project for a building there and it was put up by the county. The dock has started to fall into some disrepair and there has also been a lack of oversight by the Town of Southampton. They have been collecting all of the rent and were supposed to re-invest it but little was done. Southampton would now like to take over the property and it is the general consensus that Parks transfer it over to the Town of Southampton Parks system so it would no longer be in the Suffolk County Parks inventory.

**A motion to transfer the Shinnecock Commercial Fishing Dock property to the Town of Southampton was made by Co-Chairman Sickles and it was seconded by Trustee White. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

Parks Trustee resolution signings were done to rename the Fuchs Pond Park to the Alexander G. McKay Preserve at Cranberry Hill, and approving the change of easement for the well field at Stephen Hands Path in East Hampton.

Nick Gibbons reported that representatives of SCWA made a presentation at the Parks Trustee meeting of March 29, 2018, for a project that had been approved conceptually to develop a well field in the Deerfield Section of the Town of Southampton on Deerfield Road. Nick stated that he had received no prior notice that construction had commenced which was unacceptable to the Parks Trustees. SCWA representatives apologized for the action and committed to better communication in the future. Since then, Southampton has proposed moving the parking lot off of the street and onto the parkland property. The parking lot was part of the original negotiated agreement and requested by the Parks Dept., but not to move it farther in on the property. Nick stated that both he and Commissioner Berdolt do not support moving the parking lot as it would be an

additional intrusion into the property. If a Park Ranger drives by the site, they can see any cars parked in the lot right from the road. It also helps to discourage unauthorized and/or undesirable activity.

**A motion to keep with the originally planned parking lot was made by Co-Chairman Sickles and it was seconded by Trustee White. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Leis inquired if there have been any updates with plans for Glamping. Emily Lauri reported that the RFP went out yesterday and the proposals are due back on June 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be a site visit next Thursday.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that the RFP for the Cedar Point camp store went out as well.

Chairman Leis inquired if the new concessions would be open full time after Memorial Day. Emily reported that the Smith Point concession will be open full time and Cupsogue and Meschutt will be open on weekends until it gets busy.

Chairman Leis inquired if there are any updates on the Smith Point bridge plans. Commissioner Berdolt reported that there is still a weight limit on the bridge, the same as last year.

Chairman Leis inquired about the plans for the Navy SEAL museum. Commissioner Berdolt reported that the building plans permit was approved, and the funding now has to be acquired to build it.

Chairman Leis passed a letter to the Parks Trustees, received from a constituent commending Suffolk County Parks on the excellent condition of the Makamah Park Preserve in Fort Salonga.

### **ROUND TABLE**

**Richard Martin** reported that he received a call from Trudel Corwin who is moving to Florida and would like to donate some items to be returned back to Southaven Lodge (two landscape paintings and two stuffed ducks). Trudel's late husband, Bud Corwin lived at and was caretaker of the Southaven property some years back.

**Trustee Hopkins** inquired about the status of the Gyrodyne property. Trustee Rosato reported that Avalon Park & Preserve officials were approached about purchasing the Gyrodyne property in St. James. Avalon recently purchased approximately 26 acres of farmland across the street (25A) from Gyrodyne, so it was thought that Avalon may be interested in acquiring the property to add to their preserve. However, the separation of the two sites by 25A did not appeal to them. Trustee Rosato added that he recently spoke with Smithtown Supervisor Wehrheim and he is committed to moving forward with the Gyrodyne development project.

**Trustee White** commented to Deputy Commissioner McKay regarding the complimentary letter about Makamah Park Preserve and noted that it was one of his dad's (Alex McKay) favorite parks.

Trustee White reported that the Third House Nature Center group has been holding some lectures on different topics at Third House in Montauk. He commented that they have been very well received, it's a wonderful use of the property and very nice to see a re-birth there. He thanked Commissioner Berdolt for his efforts.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that Camp Soulgrow was re-located to another building on the Third House preoperty this year. The director has proposed to only use the indoor property space one day per week and

negotiations on the decrease in use of the space are ongoing because it could be utilized for other purposes instead.

**Trustee Cardillo** inquired if the permits were all completed in a timely manner and concessions are in at Smith Point CP, Cupsogue CP and Meschutt CP. Commissioner Berdolt reported that all went well and thanked Trustee Cardillo for his time and efforts on the review committee. Trustee Cardillo commended Commissioner Berdolt and Terry Maccarrone as well for their work on the RFP for the new concessionaire.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that a “First Flush” press event was held for an alternative septic system to reduce nitrogen and be more environmentally friendly at Smith Point, Timber Point, Third House, Peconic Dunes and Cupsogue County Parks. Meschutt and Lake Ronkonkoma County Parks were the first to have alternative septic systems installed and the others will have different and larger systems. As the funding becomes available, the effluent systems will be installed.

Trustee Cardillo requested that when the re-naming at Fuchs Pond Park for Alex McKay is planned, to please notify the Parks Board of Trustees. Commissioner Berdolt stated that the latest resolution submitted will generate the next meeting of the Naming Committee. Trustee White suggested possibly having a meeting held at the Fuchs Pond Park when the re-naming to the “Alexander G. McKay Preserve at Cranberry Hill” becomes official.

**Emily Lauri** confirmed that Co-Chairman Sickles and Trustee White would like to be on the review committees for the Cedar Point Camp Store and Glamping RFP’s. Both are for Cedar Point CP.

The next Parks Trustee meeting will be held in the Red House Nature Center at Inlet Pond County Park in Greenport on Thursday, June 28, 2018.

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Richard White and was seconded by Trustee Arthur W. Leudesdorf. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.**