

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2018
MONTAUK COUNTY PARK, THIRD HOUSE
MONTAUK, NEW YORK**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Christopher Bodkin	Member of the Board
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
Daniel Lloyd	Trustee, Town of Babylon
William B. Sickles	Vice Chairman, Trustee, Town of Southampton
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

ABSENT

Peter Leis	Chairman, Trustee, Town of Islip
Arthur W. Leudesdorf	Trustee, Town of Southold
Michael Rosato	Trustee, Town of Smithtown
VACANT	Member at Large
VACANT	Trustee, Town of Huntington

PARKS DEPARTMENT

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

GUESTS

Alexandra DeRosa	Aide, S.C. Legislator Kara Hahn, District 5
Lew Johnson	Asst. County Architect, DPW
Ed Johann	Third House Nature Center

PUBLIC PORTION

There were no guests from the public in attendance.

Ed gave a brief summary of events at the Third House Nature Center since entering into an agreement with Suffolk County Parks about 1½ years ago. The Center has been open on Saturdays and Sundays and patrons can visit between the hours of 10 am-4 pm. There have been some lectures offered and film nights. In February, a young birders group came to visit Third House and the Montauk Lighthouse. The New York Botanical Society will be coming on October 27th and a walk is planned.

The Center has just completed its fifth quail release. A quail replenishment program was started and five places within the county park system were chosen (four of which are located in Montauk CP). The fifth release was

held last Sunday at Eddie Ecker CP. Good locations for habitat, cover and water are sought, and the birds are banded and registered working with the DEC. A five year commitment has been made to raise quail and this year the total number they will let go is about 160, keeping 40 quail to winter over. The goal is to see those numbers grow to between 300-500 birds.

Starting in 2019, a bird watching course and a writer's workshop will begin at the Center. There is no fee charged for the events.

The Nature Center has entered into an agreement with a group called Rubicon. It is a national organization and can be found in a lot of hurricane locations throughout the country. The group offered to help out in different areas of the park system and the trails are in need of a lot of clearing and refurbishment. Approximately twenty-five people from the group will participate and assist other local residents starting in March, 2019. They will work on the trail system to improve conditions and make them passable for visitors.

The docent program is continuing on weekends hopefully into November as long as there are volunteers.

The Center's intern program offers four students from East Hampton High School the opportunity to work at Big Reed Pond for three hours every Sunday from October until June. The Nature Center partnered with the East Hampton Garden Club who provides a scholarship and the Nature Center provides the program. Students who complete the program receive \$2,000 towards college. They gather data, study in depth what is happening with the blue-green algae problem and analyze the entire ecosystem, including invasive species. Anyone interested from the public is welcome to join to learn from the program and become more familiar with the park.

A Field Day is planned on October 14th. The event has been in existence for over forty years to raise money for such things as basketball programs in the winter time for the youth of the community. It is an old-fashioned event where there are 3-legged races, wheel barrow races, an egg carry, etc. There will be a bounce house and the fire department always participates with a hook and ladder display, and firemen who explain what happens during an emergency. There is music and food is served.

Ed Johann thanked Commissioner Berdolt for getting things going so that the Third House Nature Center could get re-established. Ed has been working with Nick Gibbons and Richard Martin, there has been a renewed community interest and the programs have been very successful both environmentally and socially.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 23, 2018

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Gooding. The minutes were approved by a vote of 7-0-1. Trustee Hopkins was not present for the August 23rd Parks Trustee meeting and abstained.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Berdolt reported that the summer season for the Parks Department went well, in spite of some poor weather conditions. The parks looked great and the staff did a great job.

The cleanup at West Hills CP will begin on Monday. Equipment and silk fencing is being brought in and mobilized at the park. The County has been to court with the responsible party to make certain that the cleanup is completed entirely, and not just a particular number of containers of material. The judge made it clear that the entire area has to be cleaned up to the satisfaction of the County. Commissioner Berdolt reported that Parks

is ready to go out to RFP (Request for Proposals) for a new vendor to go in, but unfortunately there is currently an injunction by the Comptroller's Office for all RFPs which will hold up moving forward.

At Cedar Point CP, there were some in-house management issues with the Glamping concessionaire and they pulled out of the agreement with the Parks Department. The Parks Department will issue a new RFP when possible. Emily Lauri added that Parks will have all RFPs reviewed by the Parks Trustees before they are advertised. Once the agreements are completed, they will be sent to the Trustees for review and the Trustees will be given the opportunity to comment. Commissioner Berdolt stated that everyone will be emailed a copy of the RFPs which are approximately 150 pages in length.

Trustee Cardillo inquired about the success of the concessions. Commissioner Berdolt reported that they did well during the summer months. The concession at Cupsogue was down a little in revenue in comparison to last year but the others were up from last year's numbers. A meeting is scheduled for next week with the concessionaire and the end of season results will be discussed, as well as what the expectations are.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that there was some resurgence in interest to rebuild the pavilion at Cupsogue CP and it was decided to do the design work for it in-house which will save \$250,000. The Parks Department has been working with DPW on a design for the bidding process.

Lew Johnson, Architect for Buildings/Design at DPW reported on difficulties that occurred with the Third House project. He stated that the public spaces of the building need work for some structural deficiencies, including fire alarms and sprinkler systems so that the building will be safe. Structural analysis has already been completed on the floors and replacement of some beams/columns. Restrooms will be added as well. Commissioner Berdolt added that 2 separate RFPs will go out, one for the firefighting system and one for the structural work, since the first RFP included both and there was nobody who had the expertise to handle both. A purchase order has gone out for some of the work and a November start is estimated.

Trustee White commented that the amount of time it is taking to get Third House back in shape has been very frustrating. He added that the same thing is happening at Second House with the Montauk Historical Society and the Town of East Hampton who are in a joint venture. The problem is the bidding process and paying the state labor rate. There are local contractors who would love to do the job but will not get involved with the bureaucracy that comes with bidding on a tax supported project. He stated that the Montauk Lighthouse is owned by the Montauk Historical Society, a 501 c3 private not for profit and is not hamstrung by all of the rules and regulations. The Federal Government de-commissioned the lighthouse and the Coast Guard continued to maintain the aids and navigation (light on top and fog signal), while the Montauk Historical Society received the fee title along with 3 additional acres of land. There is also a \$28 million FEMA project between the Army Corps of Engineers, the DEC and State Parks which will hopefully begin next year.

Co-Chairman Sickles inquired if any of the work that DPW is doing at Third House hinges on whether there would be a residence there year-round or an employee living on site on the second floor as park housing like there was at one time. Lew Johnson stated that there would have to be a separate permit for that and Commissioner Berdolt added that there isn't any work being done on the second floor at this time. The work currently planned is strictly for public use of the main floor of the building.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Co-Chairman Sickles inquired about the email the Parks Trustees received regarding seeking Parks Trustee representation on the Blueway Trail Committee which will be meeting quarterly. Commissioner Berdolt stated that there is supposed to be a presentation provided to the Parks Trustees at the November 29th Parks Trustees meeting and Planning Director Sarah Lansdale would explain details at that time.

ROUND TABLE

Emily Lauri reported on some upcoming events at County Parks. There will be a fall festival, Mourning at the Manor on October 7th from 10am-4pm at Sagtikos Manor which will depict a Victorian wake and funeral. The annual Deepwells Haunted Mansion will take place on weekends in October, starting October 12-13. The Priscilla's Downrigging event will be held on Sunday, October 7th from 10:00am until 2:00pm at the LI Maritime Museum.

Barbara Rittman reported that the October Parks Trustee business portion of the meeting will start at 11am at the Cranberry Hill Environmental Center (Fuchs Preserve) in Northport. Deputy Don McKay added that after the official Trustee meeting, the group will carpool to the location where the dedication for Alex McKay will be held and the sign will be posted. A reception will be held immediately afterward. On behalf of his family, Deputy McKay expressed their deepest gratitude to the Parks Trustees, Commissioner Berdolt and Legislator Hahn for all of their efforts.

Trustee White thanked Joyce Sickles for bringing dessert to the meeting. Everyone thanked Trustee White for hosting the September meeting in Montauk and Commissioner Berdolt for preparing the delicious clams.

Trustee Cardillo reported that he was at Indian Island CP that morning and the staff did a very nice job preparing for the planned race there. The grass was mowed low to help keep the ticks under control. He noted that there is some marking on the old dredge area in the wetlands and inquired if there was more dredging planned. Nick Gibbons reported that there has been some new surveying done and the issue at this point is the eventual fate of the material that is excavated for the project. At first, it was going to go to the Brookhaven landfill and then that fell through and then Staten Island but that also fell through. The latest plan is to move it upstate but it is becoming more and more cost prohibitive for the project to move forward. Trustee Cardillo inquired what the dredge material is made up of and Nick stated that it is composed of agricultural residual pesticides from the 1930-40s. Nick stated that if the material is not moved off site, it's perfectly legitimate and legal to stockpile it on site. However, as long as it's being excavated anyway, it's better to remove it from the park. Nick stated that he will have a better idea of the status on the project by the end of this year. If the project moves forward there will be an open box culvert created that can be driven over, with one way in and one way out.

Trustee Hopkins inquired about the Bavarian Inn site. Commissioner Berdolt reported that water service is being installed for plantings that are planned. Nick added that there are five locations and the meters/valves installation has yet to be completed.

Trustee Hopkins reported that there was a meeting held about the Islip-Ronkonkoma Railroad Station hub. Seventy to eighty people attended the meeting, and when attendees were asked how many people in the room supported the project, not one hand was raised.

Alexandra DeRosa reported that Legislator Hahn has been working on a policy where restaurants would not provide straws automatically to their patrons. When straws are provided, they must be made of biodegradable material.

Alexandra reported that there are a lot of beach and park cleanups planned. She added that Legislator Hahn will be very pleased to hear about the plans for a Blueway Trail Committee.

Richard Martin reported that the Yaphank fish ladder that the Suffolk County Planning Department worked on for several years with state funding is currently being finalized. It is going for public comment and review at the Yaphank Civic Association on November 14th and it will then be brought to the CEQ on November 21st.

The project creates a natural design for fish on the Lower Lake to be able to go up a natural incline and then go under the road to the other side. They are now doing more of the historic and archeological research in that area. The project had been on hold for a while until state funding was approved and it is now moving forward. This will eventually allow the fish to pass from the Great South Bay to the Upper Lake in Yaphank. The town is working on a fish ladder at the Upper Lake and there is already a fish ladder established at Hard Lake near Sunrise Highway. Nick Gibbons added that the design that was finally approved is for a rock ramp such as the one at Grangebél Park in downtown Riverhead at the traffic circle.

Richard Martin reported that there are ten items of Elias Pelletreau silver made in Southampton on exhibit on Pelletreau's whole life's work at the Long Island Museum in Stony Brook until December 30, 2018. The items are taken from the current Sagikos Manor collection.

Nick Gibbons reported that the plover season is over but Diana Sanford requested that he report that rather than there being 100 fledges this year, there were 101 fledges. There was one more at Smith Point CP, bringing us to 45 at Smith Point for the summer. 191 chicks were hatched and 101 made it to fly. 1.63 beats the 1.5 goal by 13 points, which is a record number. Nick added that Diana Sanford is very dedicated and brings an excellent enthusiasm and passion to the entire program.

Nick reported that he is currently working on three dredging projects. One project is slated to begin tomorrow at Smith Point CP. It's the emergency authorization to dredge at Moriches Inlet. The material is being pumped by a submerged line five miles down the ocean front beach. The fill area is at the outer beach entrance into the park, just east of the pavilion. It is approximately 125,000 cubic yards of material, and will only take about 5 or 6 dredging days. The project is made possible with federal funding through an emergency declaration by Congressman Zeldin.

The second project will also include deposition at Smith Point CP. It will be a little more than 100,000 cubic yards of material taken from the back side of Cupsogue CP and the fill area will be opposite Great Gun Beach on the ocean front side.

The third project is the re-nourishment at Meschutt CP. DPW is working on this project with a private contractor this fall.

Co-Chairman Sickles requested that the Parks Department notify the Parks Trustees if/when Legislator Lindsay or the Legislature decides to move forward, despite the vote of the Parks Trustees on the RFP for a pilot program for park housing. If there is a Parks Committee meeting that the Parks Trustees can attend and speak on the subject during the public portion, it would be appreciated. Commissioner Berdolt reported that Legislator Lindsay does plan to move forward.

Co-Chairman Sickles inquired about the Riverside Park Project along Flanders Road in Riverhead and how the county and the town are progressing with the project to improve the area. He inquired if the idea of a foot bridge across the river connecting the Flanders side with downtown Riverhead is still on the table and if the business about a bridge abutment on the county parkland is still being considered. Commissioner Berdolt reported that there is no funding for it at this time but it is still hoped that it can be completed sometime in the future. Funding only for the design conceptual plans to go out for bid was acquired, but not for the design build. Nick added that only half of the park has been approved. What has been approved by the County for installation by the Town of Southampton is a pedestrian walkway, passive recreational space, possibly some kayak launching ramps or docks with walks that would go into the water about 15 feet with decking that would be used for kayaking. Trustee Cardillo added that the area near MacDonald's and Grangebél Park are hot beds of drug activity.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that Parks is ready to go out for an RFP for the West Hills CP riding stable as soon as possible. Since there is currently no Parks Trustee representing the Town of Huntington, he asked Trustee Dan Lloyd (Town of Babylon) to represent the Parks Trustees on the RFP Committee. Trustee Lloyd agreed to represent the Parks Trustees through the RFP process.

Commissioner Berdolt added that there will be another RFP for Glamping and inquired if Co-Chairman Sickles would like to take it on again. Co-Chairman Sickles stated that he was very disappointed with the way the process is set up, having no time allotted to discuss applicants as a group with others on the committee. Commissioner Berdolt stated that there was an RFP review with the auditors and they stated that they interviewed people and received a similar reaction regarding not having an opportunity for discussion. However, the way the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) administrative policy is currently written, it is all about the score and it is an individual score. Trustee Cardillo stated that it puts the person who gives their presentation first at a disadvantage because you can't give them a perfect score, not knowing what the following presentations will be. Commissioner Berdolt stated that the score sheets don't have to be collected until all of the presentations have been made. Trustee Cardillo volunteered to sit on the Glamping RFP committee when it has been approved to proceed.

Emily Lauri stated that as a result of the audit, the Parks Department is composing a policy of how it handles RFPs from this point forward. All of the points brought up by the auditors are being taken into consideration, as well as the point of Parks not wanting someone's opinion to influence anyone else's decision.

The next Parks Trustee meeting will be held at Cranberry Hill Fuchs Pond County Park in Northport on Thursday, October 25, 2018 at 11AM..

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee White and it was seconded by Trustee Cardillo. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0-0.