

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,  
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION  
MINUTES OF MARCH 15, 2012  
MEADOWEDGE  
WEST SAYVILLE, NEW YORK**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Miles Borden	Chairman, Town of Smithtown
Gil Cardillo	Trustee, Town of Riverhead
Kathleen Gooding, Ph.D.	Trustee, Town of Shelter Island
Dawn Hopkins	Vice Chair, Trustee, Town of Brookhaven
Debra Kolyer	Member of the Board
Alexander McKay	Trustee, Town of Huntington
William B. Sickles	Trustee, Town of Southampton
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

**ABSENT**

Terrence Pearsall	Member of the Board
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**PARKS DEPARTMENT**

Greg Dawson	Commissioner
Jim Barr	Superintendent
Tony Trotta	Superintendent
Nick Gibbons	Principal Environmental Analyst
Colleen Hofmeister	Principal Contracts Examiner
Barbara Rittman	Senior Clerk Typist
Ann Rothenberg	Assistant to the Commissioner

**GUESTS**

Tom Young	County Attorney's Office
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**PUBLIC PORTION**

There were not any members of the public present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16th, 2012**

**A motion to accept the minutes was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee McKay. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0-0.**

**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Dawson reported that his title was confirmed at the meeting of the Legislature earlier this week and thanked the County Executive and Legislators for placing their confidence in him. Trustee Borden was in attendance at the confirmation and reported that Commissioner Dawson was received by the Legislature in a very positive light.

Commissioner Dawson announced that Superintendent Jim Barr will be filling in to assist during Deputy Commissioner Bellone's absence on maternity leave.

The Commissioner reported that the county is going through a financial crisis and new Parks Department policies and procedures have been instituted which are as follows:

- 10% cut in spending and a 30% cut in equipment.
- Seasonal staffing will remain the same as last year but we will not be bringing any employees on early. Most of the seasonal staffing will be from Memorial Day to Labor Day, with some exceptions to Columbus Day.

Commissioner Dawson stated that he sent a resignation letter as a former Parks Trustee to Supervisor Croci from the Town of Islip. He contacted Presiding Officer Lindsay regarding filling the vacant position with a new appointee and said he will also follow up on the open Trustee positions for the Towns of Babylon and Southold.

Commissioner Dawson reported that the golf courses opened earlier this week, starting the season with great weather.

Colleen Hofmeister presented copies of an RFP for a license to renovate, operate, maintain and manage a restaurant, bar and catering concession at Timber Point Country Club in Great River for the Trustees to review. Lessings will continue to be the caterer at Timber Point until the end of the year so there is plenty of time for negotiation on a new contract. We will be asking for capital improvements and Colleen asked for a Trustees Resolution to demonstrate their support of adopting this RFP.

**A motion to create a resolution in support of this RFP was made by Trustee Cardillo and seconded by Trustee White. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 8-0-0.**

Colleen asked also for a volunteer to serve on the evaluation committee. It was suggested we wait until there is a Trustee appointed from the Town of Islip. An RFP for the West Sayville golf course restaurant is planned to be implemented in the near future.

Nick Gibbons gave an update on Meschutt County Park and we are moving forward with environmental approvals. The plans have changed since the last Trustee meeting and instead of lining up campers along the Shinnecock canal, because of size constraints, it makes most sense to wrap around to the south and then to the east. The upside to this is that we are going from 10 units last year to 15 units this year. There will be some clearing and grading involved but since it is less than 2.5 acres of land, it is not considered a significant action under environmental law. We will also gain 60 additional parking stalls. The NYS DEC permit is going well. They have minimal jurisdiction in the area so there are no concerns in that regard.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Trustee Borden reported that he visited Blydenburgh County Park and that it was a very pleasant experience. He commented that the staff is to be commended for an orderly, well-run and clean park. He reported that at the Legislative Parks meeting, the Red House at Inlet Pond Park in Greenport was discussed. Commissioner Dawson reported that \$125,000 was appropriated for a handicapped ramp and renovation of the restrooms at the Red House. The resolution was passed to put the money into the capital funds for it.

Trustee Borden visited the Commerdinger property (Lily Pond) in Nesconset and stated that he has reservations about preserving the house located on the 100 acre property. It looks as though the cost would be very high.

Trustee Borden commented on what he thought was an excellent Newsday editorial entitled "Don't Give Up on Preservation". He hopes that the county can move ahead with preserving open space in spite of its major financial difficulties.

## **ROUND TABLE**

Trustee White updated everyone on the status of the Montauk Lighthouse. After six years and more than \$30,000 invested, the Secretary of the Interior has finally given the lighthouse landmark status which is the highest category for an historic property. There will be a ceremony in August to honor this momentous occasion and Senator Gillibrand has been invited to be the keynote speaker.

The Concerned Citizens of Montauk (CCOM) have continued to express interest to Trustee White about pursuing a controlled burn. Colleen Hofmeister advised that the Parks Department will be reaching out to the County Attorney for assistance in drafting a letter of intent that officially states that the county is in favor of the burn. Bruce Horwith (formerly from The Nature Conservancy) will oversee the process as an independent contractor. It is anticipated the burn boss will come from Maine to facilitate.

Trustee McKay stated that Resolution 1197 was brought up at the Legislature regarding strengthening the land preservation program and maximizing environmental protection. He commented that there's only \$15 million remaining in the open space program and that the county will have to proceed with land acquisitions on a 'pay as it goes' basis.

Trustee McKay thanked Nick Gibbons for his suggestion of putting an osprey pole at the abandoned gravel works out at Sand City and stated that the town board has just approved it.

Trustee Gooding inquired about the status of Coindre Hall Boat House. Commissioner Dawson advised that the county met with the Town of Huntington and it was determined that the project will cost much more than originally anticipated. The town requested a detailed analysis of exactly how much it would cost and DPW will be compiling the information so the town can make an informed decision on whether they will want their \$600,000 being held in an escrow account returned. They may opt to build a new boathouse for the Sagamore Rowing Club on their own property.

Trustee Cardillo raised the question of why the county isn't borrowing funds to purchase desirable land now since interest rates and real estate prices are so low at this time. Commissioner Dawson reiterated that the county is projected to have a \$520 million deficit in 2013. He stated that at present, land acquisitions haven't stopped but are under review.

Trustee Sickles inquired about any further movement on the historic structures pilot program and restorations such as Black Duck Lodge, the Commerdinger House and the Elwood Schoolhouse. Colleen Hofmeister advised that DPW must do a specific analysis first on each property before Parks can develop an RFEI.

Trustee Sickles asked if the Town of Southampton has posted beach markers for emergency services vehicles. Nick Gibbons stated that he hadn't heard from the town as of yet but that Parks will be fencing off parts of the beaches in the next two weeks for piping plovers and there will be no vehicular access after that.

Nick gave an update on the proposed land acquisitions at the Beagle Club in Riverhead and the Williams Estate in Cold Spring Harbor. He expressed concern that the Williams Estate is an expensive acquisition which involves a partnership between the county, town and a private, not-for-profit land trust. The major issue is that unless an additional 4 acre parcel is purchased by the trust, there will be no real public access. The county will not move forward until the parcel has been acquired.

Trustee Borden announced the reappointment of Trustee Dawn Hopkins by Resolution 1205 and extended well wishes.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at Cathedral Pines, Middle Island, New York.

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