

MORE Commission Meeting

July 25th 2018, 11:00am-3:30pm

North Point State Park

Commissioners present: Mark Belton Cathy Bramble, Hamilton Chaney, Rick Decker, Joel Dunn, Paul Edwards, Walter Ficklin, Liz Fitzsimmons, Steve Green, T.J. Jenkins, Deanne McCue, William Pickrum, Brian Raines, David Sutherland

Commissioners absent: Matt Liddle, Sean Mann, Tamika Newkirk

Staff: Bob Iman, Diana Carroll, Kelly Collins Choi, Scott Knoche, Nita Settina, Joanne Throwe

Welcome & Introductions – Mark Belton, Secretary, DNR

History of North Point SP – Bob Iman, Park Manager

Local Opportunities & Issues Panel

Kristi Williams, MNCPPC – Review of Montgomery County parks inventory. Woodlawn Manor Underground Railroad Experience Trail, Josiah Hanson museum as a major new heritage tourism destination. Pursuing IMBA Ride Center Certification, expecting designation soon, creating a major destination for mountain biking vacations. NRPA report cites strategic public/private partnerships as top priority. Opportunities: Parks departments can drive economic development in communities by building product development, business retention and expansion, and talent attraction (business owners visit as tourists first).

Molly Gallant, Baltimore City Recreation & Parks – Baltimore City parks and outdoor opportunities. Outdoor Recreation Program built through partnerships, ie. NPS, DPW, DOT, Sanitation, etc. Using historic legacy park system, ie Gwynns Falls “trodes”. Opportunities: Baltimore City Captain John Smith trail connections. Outdoor programs expose youth and beginners with little access or skills, how do we get them to the next park – next generation of users.

Hal Ashman, Baltimore County Tourism Board, Ultimate Watersports – Company growth over 25 years to 3 locations, worked in State and County Parks. Tourists coming from Philly/DC/N.VA, driving 90 min for 2/3 hours water time. Partnerships with NPS/Aquarium/Living Classrooms, more demand than supply for programs in Baltimore, ie. Fort McHenry paddle. Waterfront parks at capacity. Opportunities: State brand is Chesapeake Bay, need to build unique experiences around the Bay, especially easy beginner on-water experiences that tie in heritage resources, ie Hart-Miller Island access. Huge growth potential in outdoor recreation tourism and jobs. Need to kill red tape for businesses, establish outdoor recreation industry office or POC to help small business navigate state processes and permits.

Mike Lofton, Anne Arundel Water Access Committee – History of AA Water Access Committee. Until 2016, no public boat ramps or swimming beaches in AA County, need to increase public water access. Queen Anne’s County good model for funding ramps & piers. Opportunities: Enhance public access at Beverly Triton Park, Sprigs Farm Park, Franklin Pt Park, South River Park. Speed up process by which POS properties are opened to the public, develop and

implement plans for public access upon acquisition. HB797 required SHA to develop water access opportunities at bridge/road water crossings; few if any completed to date, assess process. Investigate why Maryland down 13% in boat registrations (2015 data), majority trailered boats account for decline.

Discussion – Why does AA County have limited public access? Often NIMBY, private landowners don't want public access adjoining, traffic concerns. How can we reduce red tape for small businesses? Procurement process for new concessionaires in state/county parks is difficult. Multiple state agencies involved in waterfront business permitting. Need an office to build relationships with local government, state, and federal (NPS) to streamline process and help vendors/industry. Need more inclusion of business community, government capacity limited. MNCPPC has 25 public/private partnerships to provide public access.

Public Health & Workforce Development Presentations

John Henderson, Park Rx America – Park prescriptions help treat chronic disease through outdoor recreation. Partnering with NPS Healthy Parks/Healthy People programs and state governments to input parks into prescription database. Working with healthcare community to promote the use of park prescriptions. Challenges include no random controlled trial studies on benefits, need to show program works to increase buy-in. Opportunities: Partner with MD State Parks to get park data into the prescription database.

Susan Zellers, Marine Trades Association – 15,000 marine industry jobs in MD, but graying workforce coupled with growth means career opportunities. EARN grant to address shortage of skilled labor in maritime industries. Marine Trade Industry Partnerships, 63 marine business partners looking for mechanic skilled workers, provide training and placement, 120 participants to date. Opportunities: Support EARN funding, continue Marine Trades Industry Partnership Training Practicums. Work with American Boat and Yacht club to put marine service technology program into at least one community college. Build marine apprenticeship in the industry.

Joanne Throwe, DNR – Work2LiveWell program provides 8 weeks technical training, personal and professional development, mentors, job connections. Cambridge provides water training and Baltimore provides land training. Opportunities: jobs prevalent in restoration, stormwater remediation, and construction. Funded through EARN (DLLR) and DNR. Industry can contribute through sponsoring meals, donating time, professional opportunities.

Recreational Boating Panel

Chris Edmonston, Boat US Foundation – Boating participation increasing, 17M new boaters nationwide, 32% increase in Hispanic boaters. 250K new boats sold, 170K taken out of service, 6-7% growth in boat sales. Average age of boat is 21 years. Opportunities: Register paddlecraft for education, tracking, potential revenue.

Carla Fleming, DNR – Waterway Improvement Fund ranges based on 5% excise tax from boat titles, so fluctuates from \$1.5 – 20M annually. Major source of funds for dredging statewide, 62 ACOE channels and DNR dredges 14 of them. Recently increased cap on local WIF projects from \$100K to \$250K to allow quicker project completion. Funded over \$300M and 4,500 projects to date. Boating Infrastructure Grants now allow private facilities to apply. Challenges: Limited funds to meet needs, especially state and local facilities, sea level rise impacting infrastructure, increasing need for dredging, lack of alternative fund sources and increased costs. Opportunities: Pursuing Boating Access Needs Assessment, partnerships with state and federal programs.

Dan Cowens, Oasis Marinas – Built marina operating company to include Snag-a-slip and Marina Life magazine. BIG grant in Baltimore brought in large yachts, multiplier in local economy. Need to provide better service/hospitality in marine industry, would increase occupancy in marinas. Opportunities: Support small business growth, need step-by-step model. Offer Valtec fuel, 40% boats skip MD because it's not available. Bring recreational boating industry into modern space/technology. Industry brainstorming groups.

Rhonda Bollinger, Outstanding Marine – Workforce development needed for marine trades, especially engine maintenance. Opportunities: Make vocational schools more attractive to young people and build mechanical skills. Need more host training for marina owners.

Discussion: How can we use technology? Marine industry behind, need to modernize. How long does WIF project take? Approximately 1.5 years depending on scope. Money available immediately, but permitting lengthy. If grant funding is returned, it's put into emergency dredging fund. What would be ideal funding for WIF, and how do we increase federal funding? Federal priority meetings with congressionals. Working to make efficiencies, ie dredging to restoration projects. Water quality issues are key to boating industry. How do we prioritize access? POS prioritizes water access. Any acquisition must have managing responsibility, but little funding for planning or management.

Wrap-up: Next meeting will be focused on the Eastern region of the state at the end of September. Sub-committees will be forming soon to focus on recommendations. EO allows experts and others not on the MORE Commission to be included in sub-committees.