

**Baltimore County
Board of Recreation and Parks
September 12, 2007 Meeting Minutes**

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, September 12, 2007, at 5:27pm at Marshy Point Nature Center. In attendance were Chairman Jim Emerick, Vice Chairman Steve Verch; board members Althea Page, Jacob Smith, David Smylie, and Mike Weber. John Markley, deputy director, also attended.

Bob Stanhope, naturalist at Marshy Point, gave a history of the facility followed by a very enjoyable tour of the new canoe launch and other renovations.

Approval of Minutes:

The board did not have a quorum at the August meeting, and therefore, could not vote/approve minutes from the June meeting. At this time, Jacob Smith moved that minutes from the June meeting be approved, and Althea Page seconded the motion. The June minutes are hereby approved.

Minutes from the July are FYI because there was not a quorum.

Althea Page asked if the board would be meeting at the Ravens facility. John Markley said we are not sure if we can use the facility for a meeting at this time.

Jim Emerich met with Walt Savoye. Mr. Savoye is interested in everything at Cromwell Valley Park. Mr. Savoye thinks that the longer you wait, the more it will cost. Jim Emerich was invited to go to a council meeting. Bob Barrett and John Markley have also met with Mr. Savoye.

Lutherville-Timonium Recreation Council (LTRC) has concerns about parking at Orchard Hills, which has been put on hold. The department is trying to work out community concerns. The project would be to improve off-street parking.

Another issue at LTRC is the flea markets held at Lutherville Timonium Elementary School. There are citizens in the area who want to end the flea markets. They say they want a nice, quiet weekend with no commotion.

Liberty Road Recreation Council has two basketball programs (Liberty Road East and Liberty Road West); the council wants to make it one program. Jim Emerich called Marty Stoelting, Northwest area coordinator, to discuss the issue. Part of the issue is facilities, some of which are under construction. Rob, Chet, Marty and the coaches met; one side brought a proposal, and the other side did not. David Smylie thinks this issue will work itself out, that basketball has never had access to the high schools, and it has always been a problem.

Haase property has old house that burned down. The county is just now getting the property after almost ten years of negotiating.

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The Middle River Recreation Council is still interested in a wrestling/cheerleading facility, maybe at the Giant store on Stemmers Run Road. Althea Page suggested using the new regional park. Because of programming on site, they feel a separate facility would be best. Jim Emerich stated that most programs cross lines. The cheerleading competition at Eastern Regional was so successful that people were parking on roads.

Jacob stopped by Reisterstown Regional Park. The skating rink is coming along. Jim Emerich said he is hearing the it will open in January. Recreation & Parks is in the process of hiring as is the Revenue Authority.

Mike Weber asked what is happening at Kingsville. Jim Emerich told him that a new well was drilled, but the other was left in service. We are now yielding three to four gallons per minute. Judy Sibel, president of the recreation council, has complaints about the new ice machine drawing water. Mike Weber wants to make sure the council is grateful for what the county has done for them.

David Smylie attended the Randallstown Community Center groundbreaking – a 55,000 square foot facility that should open in June, 2009.

A question was raised about the Northwest lighting issue. David Smylie said he has been there, and the lights have been off by 9:30pm. He thinks it's just an issue of the neighborhood not wanting the lights in the first place. Jacob Smith thinks this is the county's fault because when the park was being built, the community was told that there wouldn't be lights. The department talked to the community about lights at Northwest Regional Park to accommodate programming. Jacob Smith said the community meeting was only to make community feel as if they had a say in the decision, even though the decision had already been made. Jim Emerich stated that he had not hear any complaints since the lights were installed besides the one or two neighbors who had called, and the department fixed the problem.

The Department is moving its headquarters on Friday and Saturday, September 21 and 22 to the 3rd floor of the Jefferson Building, 105 West Chesapeake Avenue. There is parking under the building, two parking garages behind the building or parking at the old building (301 Washington Avenue).

The purchase of 3.1 acres property available on Hazelwood Avenue has been taken to council.. Add this to seven acres, and this will give us access to Hazelwood Park. There are no immediate plans or money available to build anything on this property, but this is normal. Property needs to be acquired as it becomes available.

The Randallstown event was a huge success. About 100 people were in attendance. It is the largest community center. There are two full-size basketball courts and seating as well as an available track.

With regional parks, participation rates went up. This will probably happen in Randallstown. David Smylie said the community center is revitalizing the whole shopping center on the southwest side of Liberty Road. Between now and then, we will work out all programming and staffing issues.

Wilson Point Park will be dedicated on Wednesday, September 26th. The community will have an event on Sunday, September 30th at the park. Middle River Band will provide music.

Belmont Park will be dedicated on Thursday, October 11th at the park. 75 parking spaces, two pavilions and two sand volleyball courts were added.

Hannah More Dog Park is finished. The dedication is being planned for an upcoming Saturday. There is three acres of fenced in ground as well as water fountains for the dogs. The dog park will be run by a group of volunteers who will monitor activity and know those who come in.

The county will be taking over Robert E. Lee Park. The park will be closed for the winter; construction will start on the bridge in March. While the park is closed, the department will start forming a recreation council. There will be security at the park also. We need to enable our people to cite people for off-leash dogs. DEPRM has the ability to cite people if they don't abide by the rat eradication rules. A monitored dog park like the one at Hannah More will be included.

On September 18th, the Park Pride initiative was introduced at Reisterstown Regional Park. The initiative emphasizes community and park maintenance and the prevention of vandalism. Community members are encouraged to report vandalism. There will be surveillance cameras with night vision at the regional parks. There are also signs posted at all of our parks with a phone number to call to report vandalism. The Police Department is involved as well. There was \$251,000 in vandalism costs in the last year alone – playgrounds were burned to the ground and chemicals were poured on a slide. In that instance, a child was permanently burned. Our regional parks are not built in neighborhoods, so there aren't neighbors to report vandalism.

The board still has not received Dundalk Recreation Council by-laws. The council is working to get their by-laws to the board.

Baltimore County Sailing Center is officially part of the Back River Recreation Council. Their program alone is larger than all other programs at Back River. There are some conflicts. The Sailing Center wanted to do things their own way. Their busy season is ending, so the board should be getting the by-laws soon.

Althea Page questioned the lack of lights on softball fields when all baseball fields are lit. John Markley said the old lights need to be fixed before we add new lights. Althea Page thinks this has been an on-going request, and that nothing has been heard about new lights.

Gough Park will have two new diamonds....not sure if they will be skinned or not. John Markley stated that all existing lights do not meet safety standards, so they will need to be upgraded.

A joint use agreement meeting was held on June 18. The agreement is being re-drafted. There are problems with getting bumped out of facilities. We have not heard if the Board of Education has approved the turf field agreement, but all staff has.

We have not heard from Essex regarding the joint use agreement. John Markley emailed CCBC a month ago. Construction will not start until March or April. If we use POS money to build the field, POS will require a joint use agreement. Bud Chrismer has been asked to give orientations to the principals. A follow up meeting should be scheduled in October.

Is there any interest in artificial turf fields for next year? John Markley stated that there is talk of building more artificial turf fields for spring season.

Dave Goodwin retired on August 31. He is working for Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation now.

NW is being designed now for artificial turf. A bid is in place to get a contractor to build artificial turf fields.

A representative from Cockeysville will attend the October board meeting for their by-law revisions.

We are working on a compromise for Shelley Fields on Middletown Road. It's been offered to give the recreation council 70 acres. Randy Shelley has proposed to build six athletic fields and a recreation facility, parking, and lights. The compromise is to cut some parking, lights and the recreation building.

The Yarema property has not gone away. The county has been working with him for two years, but he is difficult to work with. We have contacted people in Hereford, but they have no interest in selling. Steve Verch stated that the issue with some property is access, not money.

Announcements:

None noted.

Board Member Activities:

The next board meeting will be held on October 10th at 5 pm at Recreation & Park's new headquarters at 105 West Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 302 (Jefferson Building).

Reports:

- A. Information Technology – Dunbar Brooks, David Smylie and Jacob Smith – no report
- B. Budget and Enterprise – Jacob Smith, Jim Emerick and Emmet Davitt – no report
- C. Incorporation and Liability – Wayne Definbaugh, David Smylie and Dunbar Brooks – no report
- D. Land Acquisition and Capital Projects – Steven Verch, Emmet Davitt and Wayne Definbaugh – no report
- E. Programs – Althea Page and Dunbar Brooks– no report
- F. Legislation – Wayne Definbaugh, Steven Verch and Emmet Davitt –no report
- G. Policy –Jim Emerick and Jacob Smith – no report
- H. Facilities –David Smylie and Althea Page –no report

Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter