

**Baltimore County
Board of Recreation and Parks
November 12, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, November 12, 2008, at 5:15pm at the Department of Recreation and Parks administrative offices, Towson, Maryland. In attendance were Chairman Steve Verch; Vice Chairman, Wayne Definbaugh; board members Emmet Davitt, Jim Emerick, David Smylie, Althea Page, Dunbar Brooks, Mike Weber and Jacob Smith. Staff included Bob Barrett, director; Bud Chrismer, deputy director; Marty Stoelting, chief of recreation services and John Eubank, community supervisor for the Pikesville area.

Approval of Minutes:

Emmet Davitt motioned to approve the September board meeting minutes, with the exception of one correction to be made per Chairman Steve Verch, withdrawing the sentence stating Mr. Verch assured Mr. Kauffman there would be record of his objection, because Mr. Verch stated this was not a hearing; Jacob Smith seconded, and all were in favor.

Mr. Smith motioned to approve the October board meeting minutes, Mike Weber seconded and all were in favor.

Announcements:

The Red Run Stream Valley Trail ribbon cutting is scheduled for November 20th at 11am, at the intersection of Dolfield Road and Pleasant Hill Road, in Owings Mills.

Bob Stanhope's retirement party is November 20th.

Judy Mongan's retirement party is November 22nd.

Joe D'Adamo's retirement party is December 3rd.

Mr. Smith informed board members about the Baltimore Saints Hockey program. The program just started the first Saturday in October. They meet every Saturday morning for two hours. There are 45-50 kids, most of which have autism or downs syndrome. It is a very neat program and is only the second of its kind in Maryland.

Director Bob Barrett reported that the Bant Shell at Hannah More is almost complete and is going to be very neat!

Mr. Barrett reported that the Randallstown Community Center is scheduled to be complete in March. Dave Smylie stated he would like a tour of the facility and suggested having a board meeting at the site.

Old Business:

There were several people in attendance regarding Pikesville and they were as follows: Jayne Lee, Erwin Burtnick, Max Rozga, Chick Veditz, Gary Bliabaum, Brian Friedlander and Marc Horwitz.

Mr. Bliabaum addressed the board stating that everyone is making an effort to keep all programming going, without disruption, during the transition from the Pikesville Recreation Council to the Greater Pikesville Recreation Council and that this is their goal during this entire process. The plan is to have each program start under the new recreation council, with each new season. There is currently no certified council in this area and the group from Pikesville has concerns regarding priority for field use. The board assured them that while both groups are moving forward with forming a new recreation council that they would still have priority for field use.

Mr. Smith inquired about the existing funds within the Pikesville Recreation Council and whether or not these funds would be transferred to the Greater Pikesville Recreation Council. Mr. Bliabaum responded stating that these funds will stay with the Pikesville Recreation Council, to pay their liabilities. The Greater Pikesville Recreation Council will start accumulating funds with the addition of programs as each new season starts and these programs then fall under the Greater Pikesville Recreation Council. The Greater Pikesville Recreation Council will honor the debts that Pikesville Recreation Council has to existing vendors/small businesses but they do not want to take on the liabilities of the Pikesville Recreation Council; they want to remain separate. If there are funds left over within the Pikesville Recreation Council, the money must be donated to another 501 (c) 3, which could be the Greater Pikesville Recreation Council.

The Greater Pikesville Recreation Council will be certified contingent upon the submission of the Constitution & By-Laws and their 501 (c) 3. Mr. Horwitz has coached lacrosse for the last 20 years. He stated that once the board has certified the Greater Pikesville Recreation Council, he will resign as President and will coach again.

Mr. Smylie inquired as to how things came to this point with the two groups now working together. Those in attendance responded stating that they all have the same interest, children and recreation. There has been too many leaving Pikesville and they don't want to see this continue. The group is hopeful to have their entire package ready to present to the board in January (although they don't have control over how long it may take for their 501 (c) 3). A copy of the proposed Greater Pikesville Recreation Council's Constitution and By-Laws will be given to board members prior to the December meeting, to be discussed at the December board meeting. Jim Emerick commended both groups for getting things together and moving forward.

New Business:

Wayne Definbaugh informed the board that the Parkville Recreation Council Board is terminating their bookkeeper. Mr. Definbaugh stated that independent contractors must run their money through the recreation council, not the County. When each recreation council does certifications, we need to include this information. The recreation council is requesting information on how to request books; they need a trail of what is going on. If recreation councils don't pay vendors timely they come to the County asking for their money. This has been an issue.

The question about whether there are volunteer CPA's for the recreation councils arose. Mr. Weber said there is a group and it gets filtered down. Mr. Verch stated that an outside audit may be a big expense for a recreation council and questioned whether there was another option. Mr. Weber responded stating that it would be very difficult to find a firm to come in every three years. Mr. Weber thinks there are a lot of issues there. Mr. Smith said it would be cost prohibitive to force a small recreation council to pay for an outside audit, which can cost upwards of \$25,000 to \$30,000,

they simply can't afford to do this. Because they can't afford the cost of a full-blown audit, it may work to have someone look over their books and see if everything looks right. Mr. Weber stated that the board should be able to come up with a list of things the recreation councils need to do as opposed to what is currently expected. Mr. Verch stated that he has concerns regarding the volume of money coming in and then moving out for expenses. A checklist should be kept so someone can go in and see everything and then, if additional documents are needed, the board can ask for them. Althea Page told the board that Bengies Chase is a small recreation council, one of which could not afford to pay for an audit. The recreation council president appointed three people to look over everything. For the small recreation councils, an outside audit is too difficult and will drain their account. Mr. Definbaugh commented that it is very important to have transparency. Mr. Weber stated that it might be possible to have a volunteer come in and help make sure there is a system in place. Mr. Verch spoke with board member Steven Kroll and Mr. Kroll indicated that there is a lot that needs to be looked at regarding recreation tournaments. There are many issues that may exist and folks might not comply, as they should. Mr. Verch also mentioned that Mr. Kroll had suggested the idea of bidding on tournaments to prevent things from happening.

Director's Comments:

Mr. Barrett stated both the Board and the Department are doing well. Mr. Barrett then went on to thank the board for all that they do.

Mr. Barrett reported that the Department is getting ready for another budget. He further stated that the Department is getting ready to take over Gunpowder Falls Golf Course, the first of the year. This property consists of approximately 130 acres and the possibility of the recreation council running this, has been discussed. Mr. Barrett reported that the building is ready for use immediately; he also mentioned the idea of turning the cart paths into walking trails. Mr. Barrett did state however, that there is no gym on site. There will be a community meeting scheduled to discuss the various ideas for this site.

Sollers Point is being considered for a community center. Dunbar Brooks replied stating that there is \$90 million to be spent and an effort underway to build a new school, Dundalk High School. Sollers Point is half empty; the capacity is 600 students and there are currently only 300 students. Mr. Brooks stated that Sollers Point will be empty but the thing to do would be to build a new community center. There is a community meeting scheduled for November 24th.

Mr. Barrett reported that POS funds are prioritized and accounted for. The Department will have spent all funds, if everything comes through as planned. Mr. Barrett stated this is exactly what the Department wanted to do. Mr. Barrett reported that POS funds are dwindling because of the real estate market but the Department has a couple of projects they are looking into and we are in good shape.

Mr. Barrett reported that the County Council has approved the purchase of Perring Racquet Club. The environmental survey test has been completed and settlement is to happen next year. Renovations are expected to take a couple of months and include the cleaning/refurbishing or the replacement of the playing field (on the soccer side), upgrades to HVAC and making the building ADA compliant. The Department hopes at some point, to convert the tennis courts into basketball courts. Mr. Barrett reported there are currently many recreation council programs going on there now.

Mr. Verch reported that in June 2007, the County acquired half of the Karll Trust property and on November 25, the County will acquire the eastern portion consisting of another 24 acres. As for Hazelwood, Mr. Verch reported that Phase 1 of the environmental study is underway as is the survey and this should be wrapping up soon. Mr. Verch further stated that POS is an important funding source from the state and it is drying up. The last time this happened, the state diverted POS money and were to reimburse this diverted money when economic times improved; this never happened. We are hopeful that if this happens again, there will be a different outcome.

Mr. Barrett mentioned the Essex Community College artificial turf field agreement. Marty Stoelting reported that the document is with their law office now, with our terms included in the document. Mr. Barrett stated that they have been very cooperative. Mr. Smith wants these agreements in place before the fields are completed.

Mr. Barrett reported that Belmont Park would not be getting a turf field; it will not fit at this location. Furthermore, there is also a DEPRM issue regarding the stream, at this site. Honeygo Regional Park is close by and this site has a turf field. Lights are being considered for Belmont Park.

Board Member Activities:

Ms. Page attended the Captain John Smith Fall Festival at Marshy Point Nature Center. She said it was a wonderful event and stated that the additions look great!

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Emerick moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Davitt seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter