

**Baltimore County  
Board of Recreation and Parks  
February 11, 2009 Meeting Minutes**

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, February 11, 2009, at 6:20pm at the Department of Recreation and Parks administrative offices, Towson, Maryland. In attendance were Chairman Steve Verch; board members Steven Kroll, David Smylie, Althea Page, Dunbar Brooks, Mike Weber and Jacob Smith. Staff included Bud Chrismer, deputy director and Marty Stoelting, chief of recreation services.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Dunbar Brooks motioned to approve the January board meeting minutes, Althea Page seconded and all were in favor.

**Announcements:**

Jim Emerick has resigned from the board to enjoy retirement and spending time with his family.

Gunpowder Falls Park Community Meeting is scheduled for March 4 at 7 pm at Kingsville Elementary School to discuss community “wants” and “don’t wants.”

The Third Annual Popsicle Plunge will be held on March 7 at Gunpowder State Park's Hammerman Area.

The next board meeting is the Annual Dinner Meeting between the Board of Recreation and Parks and the County Council Membership. The County Executive will be in attendance as well.

**Old Business:**

Steven Kroll informed the board that GPRC is moving along nicely and stated that no child missed out on programming. All programs are running as expected. Jacob Smith referred back to minutes from the previous board meeting and inquired about the statement from Mr. Kroll that he was not allowed to make a motion for something if it was not on the agenda. Mr. Smith wanted to know if this was true, wanting clarification for the future. Chairman Steve Verch responded stating that Mr. Smith did make his motion and was entitled to do so. Mr. Smith did not have to withdraw his motion like he did. This was something Mr. Kroll was making an argument for, not something that was stated by the chair. Mr. Smith stated that he, as well as other board members, were blindsided, not knowing that there was an issue with Pikesville and both groups. Mr. Verch stated that Mr. Smith's motion was not out of order.

**New Business:**

Mr. Verch informed the board that the Wilson Point Community would like to have lights at the park. They want to form a park watch but would like the lights in place before this begins. The Stansbury Apartment complex has agreed to contribute money towards this project.

David Smylie stated that he has received many calls regarding the Randallstown Community Center, especially since the article about the Y managing the pool. Mr. Smylie has concerns that the Y will

charge fees, too high for the average citizen. Deputy Director Bud Chrismer stated that they are still in negotiations with the Y and can't throw numbers out at this point. Mr. Chrismer stated that part of the lease states the Y must make the pool available to the Department of Aging and to the recreation council for programming. Therapeutic Recreation is to use the pool as well. During the summer months, the recreation programs are to use the pool in the afternoons. The Y is to supply lifeguards, and the department is to supply supervision. Mr. Smylie stated that the community is not sure how they will be able to use this facility and the pool and inquired about the recreation councils' use. Mr. Chrismer replied stating Liberty Road Recreation Council will have primary use of the facility. The Y has not signed the lease as yet. The Y will have to meet with the Department of Aging and Recreation and Parks. Mr. Smylie would like the board to take a tour of the facility before it opens.

Board members discussed the Annual Report to the County Executive, reviewing the outline on the agenda. Mr. Verch stated that if any topics are of particular interest to board members, they should write up a paragraph to explain their position.

The board reviewed the Joint Use Agreement and clarified #4 and #5 and further discussion ensued. Board members discussed issues they have heard regarding joint use. Mike Weber and Mr. Kroll stated that the principal at Loch Raven said the field was closed due to maintenance and that Recreation and Parks cannot use. Mr. Smith stated that the agreement should be for artificial turf, not natural turf, because there is a maintenance issue with natural turf. Mr. Smith stated that you are not going to get as many games on natural turf without tearing up the field. This is why a field would be closed for maintenance and recreation councils are unable to play on them. Marty Stoelting responded stating that the agreement states that no more than 4 games in one day can be played on a natural turf field.

Mr. Kroll brought up an issue regarding a coach not allowing play and having the support of the principal in doing so. Mr. Kroll stated that this should be covered in the agreement. Mr. Kroll looks at the current joint use as a work in progress. Mr. Chrismer stated that the principal is not the one with final say. Althea Page inquired about whether there were high schools giving the recreation councils a hard time about using fields. The answer is yes, and these schools are as follows: Hereford, Loch Raven and Franklin (before artificial turf).

Mr. Verch inquired about whether programs make use of non-stadium fields. Mr. Chrismer responded that they do in fact make use of these fields. Mr. Verch asked whether or not there was a written agreement regarding use of other fields, stating the concern is for maintenance of the middle school fields. Ms. Stoelting responded stating that the Board of Education knows that middle school fields are their responsibility. Mr. Verch stated that Middle River Middle School does not receive maintenance, and nothing is done there. The joint use is not just about access to fields but also about sufficiently maintaining them. Ms. Stoelting stated that Stemmers Run and Middle River Middle Schools have been brought to the attention of the Board of Education. The Board of Education states that they do not have the resources or the money to do the work. Ms. Stoelting further stated that our maintenance division is looking into doing the work.

Mr. Smylie stated that the fields at Meadowood are being over used and look awful. Ms. Stoelting responded stating that the department is going to start closing fields for rest. Mr. Chrismer stated that the fields are looking bad because they are being used for practice every night and then used for play from morning to evening.

Mr. Verch inquired about what the department's plan is to convert natural fields to artificial turf fields. He inquired as to whether this is something the department plans to do or whether it is considered only when resources are available. Mr. Chrismer responded stating that the department does not have a long-term plan. After this last group is done, the department has no plan to do any more. We currently have 10 artificial turf fields costing \$800,000 plus liability. Baltimore County has more artificial turf fields than any other county. Ms. Stoelting stated that by the time we are done, we will have a total of 13 artificial turf fields and further stated that, economically, it may not be beneficial to go completely all artificial turf fields. Mr. Chrismer stated that the department will certainly continue the study of artificial turf fields, but there are no plans for more or any money available in the budget to install any additional fields.

Mr. Kroll led a discussion regarding tournaments and the fees associated with them. Ms. Page mentioned the participation fee and Mr. Kroll reiterated the department policy that there will be no child left behind. No child will be turned away from a program because they can't afford the fees. Ms. Stoelting responded stating that all recreation councils are aware of this. Mr. Verch inquired into the use of proceeds from a tournament. Ms. Stoelting responded stating that the county does not get anything from a tournament, the recreation council does. Mr. Kroll is interested in who is running what and where the funds are going. Mr. Kroll inquired about private vendors coming in during these tournaments and whether this money is going to the recreation council as well. He inquired about whether the department is using their resources efficiently. Mr. Chrismer responded stating that if a private vendor is not working with a recreation council then it has to go to bid. Mr. Kroll motioned to withdraw this discussion until the next meeting.

Mr. Kroll brought up the role of the board and asked the question about whether board members feel their role should expand or decrease, asking board members where they thought the board stands now. Mr. Weber inquired about whether the board serves only in an advisory capacity. Mr. Weber stated that, with Pikesville, the board s learning as they go along. There was a difference of opinion amongst the board as to what their role is, and Mr. Weber stated that board members need to know what their role is, exactly, so if this does happen again they know their role. This can be discussed further at the next meeting. Mr. Verch encouraged board members to discuss this with their councilman to get their thoughts. Mr. Kroll stated that the board could be an advisory board, a board to certify and de-certify recreation councils, or a regulatory body with minutes and hearings. Mr. Kroll addressed the board and asked them where, as a group, they want to be.

### **Director's Comments:**

We are in the middle of the budget cycle, looking to have everything submitted by the end of this week. In addition, the department is hoping to pick up a couple additional program positions.

The Joint Use Agreement for High School Stadiums has been signed. The department can now receive POS reimbursement.

The Department is to take over Perring Racquet Club on June 1, and construction is to start on this date. Tennis is not part of this phase; there is no funding in place for this right now. The Tennis Patrons, a non-profit organization, currently use the facility. Ms. Stoelting stated that we could work with this group. Bids are not in yet, but the plan is to completely re-do the large field, put heat in and fix up the other field. Ms. Stoelting stated that the facility might re-open in October for a November

start. The department is unsure when money will become available, but the plan is to add basketball courts to the other side. The facility must be closed to the public during the time of the renovations for safety purposes. Further discussion of this facility took place among board members.

**Action:**

Steven Kroll motioned to accept the GPRC Constitution and By-Laws, as submitted and amended, Dunbar Brooks seconded and all were in favor.

Steven Kroll motioned to ask the director to have each community supervisor report to the board on what tournaments they have had in the previous year and what the fees were for each. Mike Weber seconded.

Steven Kroll was elected Chair of the Nominating Committee for the election of chair and vice chair for the Board of Recreation and Parks. Jacob Smith was appointed to the committee. They spoke to board members regarding nominations. Steven Kroll motioned to close the nomination process and bring to an election vote. Dunbar seconded and all were in favor. Dunbar Brooks motioned to elect the existing platform of officers. Mike Weber seconded and all were in favor. (On a side note, the election took place at this meeting so that the newly elected officers were instated in time for the annual meeting with the County Council.)

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Mr. Verch moved to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Page seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter