

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

WAYNE DEFINBAUGH, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2011

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, July 13, 2011, at 6:16 p.m., at the Department of Recreation and Parks administrative offices, Towson, Maryland. In attendance were David Smylie, vice chairman; board members Mike Milani, Leslie Monfred, Althea Page, Dunbar Brooks, Mike Weber and Jacob Smith. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director and Marty Stoelting, chief, Recreation Services.

Announcements:

Director Barry F. Williams directed board members to the line in the June meeting minutes regarding timely responses and asked them to keep this in mind. Mike Milani responded stating if he does not reply he plans to attend.

Jacob Smith announced the Baltimore Area Special Hockey Program scheduled a family skate on Saturday, August 6 from 4:15 – 5:45 p.m., and anyone (5+years) interested is welcome to attend. This program is geared towards those with autism, cerebral palsy and down syndrome. The program begins October 1 and runs through the end of March. Mr. Smith stated the program schedules a family skate every two months, offering information to those interested.

Approval of Minutes:

During the review of the minutes, Mr. Smith and Vice Chairman David Smylie pointed out that the minutes state Reisterstown Recreation Council is 501(c)(4) when, in fact, someone at the Region 2 meeting stated Reisterstown Recreation Council is 501(c)(3). Board members wanted to know which statement was correct. Marty Stoelting responded stating the minutes are accurate, noting she did make this statement at the last board meeting, but Ms. Stoelting further stated the council is actually 501(c)(3), making the statement made at the Region 2 meeting correct.

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

Chairman's Report:

Mr. Smylie stated the regional meetings went very well. Mr. Smylie commended everyone for their participation, especially those on the committee who worked very hard – Mr. Weber and Mr. Smith.

Director's Comments:

Mr. Williams stated he thought the meetings with the recreation council representatives went very well, and with the exception of a few councils, all were represented. Mr. Williams stated the first

group seemed rather inquisitive, asking several questions; this allowed for discussion amongst those in attendance. As the meetings went on, Mr. Williams stated each seemed to get shorter. Mr. Williams stated he felt everyone did a nice job and further said that the notion of best practices will catch on. Mr. Williams stated the board should be very clear as to their role in respect to the councils and the department.

Mr. Williams handed out a copy of the updated regulation (which included suggestions by Bob Frank) for board members to review. In addition, this document was sent to Fred Homan and Mike Field for review. Mr. Williams stated there would be a formal announcement for people to give input and further stated that, once adopted by the county council, the document could be amended. Board members reviewed the regulation and had some concerns. Discussion ensued. Mr. Weber suggested inviting Mr. Field to the next board meeting so board members could ask Mr. Field some of their questions regarding the regulation. Dunbar Brooks motioned to invite Mr. Field to the next board meeting, Leslie Monfred seconded the motion but a vote was not taken. Mr. Milani interjected stating Mr. Field should be in receipt of the questions prior to attending the next board meeting. The previous motion was amended.

Mr. Williams reported he spoke to Pat McGregor about FAQ's for councils and stated Mr. McGregor is working on this.

Mr. Williams discussed key distribution stating, in the past, some councils had keys to access an office or different parts of a building. Board of Education plans to issue only six keys to each site and only to those who are employed by Baltimore County. Mr. Williams stated this is a safety issue and announced that this would be re-examined in three months. Ms. Stoelting stated she has not had any push back in regards to this decision. Mr. Smylie responded stating the need to make sure staff is accessible; otherwise, this will hamper the programs. Mr. Williams stated the need to take responsibility that staff will be there at the appropriate times; things get magnified, and we need to be made aware of this. In regards to the six keys, Mr. Williams stated the department was not consulted on this decision. This was the decision of Board of Education. Mr. Williams informed board members about the quarterly meeting members of the department had with staff from Board of Education yesterday. The mission of those meetings is to try to foster a better understanding/relationship with Board of Education and in turn with Recreation & Parks. Mr. Williams reported on the discussion with the Board of Education regarding addressing principals and how to work better in the community. After some discussion, Mr. Williams stated he takes the boards' comments under advisement.

Old Business:

In regards to the proposed revisions to Kingsville Recreation Council's Constitution and By-Laws, Mr. Weber reported he spoke to the council regarding some of the changes but has not been in touch to see if these changes were made. Mr. Weber requested to table this issue until the September board meeting.

New Business:

Mr. Weber attended a meeting with the Perry Hall Recreation Council and stated the topic of conversation was key distribution. Mr. Weber reported that Jerry Soukup is very agitated about this. At the meeting, Mr. Soukup stated the department has been doing things a certain way for the last 61

years, and now decided to change the policy. Mr. Soukup and other volunteers need to be able to access buildings for equipment and such, and by not having keys, Mr. Soukup thinks this will be an issue. Mr. Weber reported that Mr. Soukup stated there is a genuine concern amongst councils about this. Discussion ensued amongst those in attendance.

Board members reviewed the proposed revisions to the Greater Pikesville Recreation Council's Constitution and By-Laws. Board members had concern with some of the proposed revisions and discussion ensued. Mr. Williams suggested viewing the documents in their entirety. Ms. Stoelting responded stating the documents are on the council's website.

Mr. Smith reported there are several people in the Reisterstown area who are very upset about not being able to access the track at Franklin High School. Ms. Stoelting responded stating this is a Board of Education decision, not a decision made by the department. Mr. Smith suggested discussing this at the next quarterly meeting with Board of Education. Mr. Williams responded stating Franklin High School has a new principal, for whom he has a great deal of respect. Mr. Williams stated he has plans to discuss issues with him; being cognizant that a principal's first concern is to the safety of the students and then the academic program.

Mr. Brooks inquired about use of facilities and why recreation and parks programs trump PTA activities. Althea Page responded stating PTA is not under Board of Education, but is, in fact a separate organization. Mr. Williams informed board members of plans to re-evaluate the Joint Use Agreement with the re-signing initially suggested for August 18. However, this was not a good date. Mr. Williams stated in the absence of real information, people tend to make up their own. Mr. Williams stated they plan to use this opportunity to inform everyone of the process. Further discussion ensued regarding joint use.

Action:

Mr. Brooks motioned to invite Mr. Field to attend the next board meeting, providing the list of questions to Mr. Field prior to the meeting. Mr. Weber seconded and all were in favor.

Mr. Smith motioned to table the GPRC agenda item until all board members are able to view the by-laws in their entirety. Mr. Brooks seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Comments by Individual Citizens:

Dr. George Lazar was in attendance and addressed the board and department staff in regards to his concerns about Robert E. Lee Park. Dr. Lazar stated Baltimore has been blessed with this lake, and its citizens have been jailed out for 2 years now. Dr. Lazar voiced his concerns regarding neglected trails, cost of the bridge, contaminated soil and operation procedures during this time. Dr. Lazar stated he wrote two letters and never received a response. In addition, Dr. Lazar reported about a church group wanting to develop a trail to utilize the east side of the park and further stated this was denied. Dr. Lazar stated there are very influential people who live in the area and use this park as an extension of their backyard. Dr. Lazar stated this would have been a gem in Europe. Mr. Williams inquired about whether or not Dr. Lazar has spoken to the Robert E. Lee Park Council, and Dr. Lazar responded stating he spoke to the city. Mr. Williams offered to provide contact information for the council, stating there is mis-information out there. Mr. Williams addressed some of Dr. Lazar's concerns but encouraged Dr. Lazar to speak to the council. Dr. Lazar went on to state his desire to

cross the bridge, stating it is safe. Mr. Williams responded stating he appreciates Dr. Lazar's compassion for the park and reiterated he would provide Dr. Lazar with contact information, encouraging him to speak with the council. In addition, Mr. Williams informed Dr. Lazar that the park is closed. Mr. Williams stated construction is 95% complete and scheduled to be finished in September. Board members thanked Dr. Lazar for coming to the meeting. Dr. Lazar responded stating he is very angry about being jailed out of the park during this construction period. Mr. Williams responded stating the department does not have a choice in this matter; this is a safety issue. Mr. Williams further stated that the citizens had opportunity to give input at the community meetings, which were held prior to any concrete plans made for the park.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Smith moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Milani seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter