

# BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

WAYNE DEFINBAUGH, CHAIRMAN

## Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Monday, March 5, 2012, at 5:46 p.m., in the Historic Courthouse, Room 118, Towson, Maryland. In attendance were Wayne Definbaugh, chairman; David Smylie, vice chairman; board members Mike Milani, Leslie Monfred, Eric van den Beemt, Althea Page, Mike Weber and Jacob Smith. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director, Bud Chrismer, deputy director and Denise Spurrier, community supervisor, Gray Charles/Berkshire-Eastwood/Patapsco Neck-Norwood Recreation Office. Katie Carter, president, Gray Charles Recreation Council and Fred Theiss, aide, Senator Stone's Office were also in attendance.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Eric van den Beemt motioned to approve the February board meeting minutes, Mike Weber seconded, and all were in favor.

### **New Business:**

In regards to the Baltimore County Sailing Center (BCSC), Vice Chairman David Smylie reported that he spoke to Bill Fannon, point of contact, regarding the constitution and by-laws. Mr. Fannon told Mr. Smylie that the BCSC has had no contact with the Back River Recreation Council regarding their desire to become their own council. Mr. Smylie reported that the Back River Recreation Council is not in favor of this, stating that there were no issues between the two. This began in 2009 but has fallen by the wayside. The president of the Back River Recreation Council told Mr. Smylie that, if the BCSC started their own council, they would not be permitted to take any equipment with them as it belongs to the Back River Recreation Council. Mr. Smylie stated that this is probably the number one concern. Mr. Fannon gave no indication as to why they want to do this, and Mr. Smylie stated that the BCSC has very little interaction with the council.

Mike Milani stated that he thinks the board should be careful with establishing new councils when groups are part of a council being serviced. Mr. Smylie stated that the BCSC has a \$150,000 budget, their own website, and the money is run through the recreation council. Director Barry F. Williams stated that if all parties are in agreement and there is a need, then that is one thing. Mr. Williams recommended tabling this indefinitely unless the BCSC comes back with other information. Jacob Smith discussed funding and stated that no program should be paying to support another. Others in attendance responded stating that many councils use money from one program to help another. Mr. Williams stated that neither the BCSC president nor the Back River Recreation Council has thought about having a discussion on this subject; at a minimum, they need to do this. Mr. Smylie will write a letter.

Mr. Weber reported that Larry Shackelford, president, Lutherville Timonium Recreation Council, sent him an email about doing 1099's for referees. Mr. Weber responded stating that recreation

councils must do what the law states. There was brief discussion regarding some issues surrounding this subject, and Mr. Weber stated that he would like to work on this. Mr. Weber plans to invite Mr. Shackelford to the next board meeting to discuss this matter. Mr. Shackelford wants the board to push the issue so that all councils comply. Discussion ensued regarding what other recreation councils do in addition to payment options. Mr. Weber stated that he would like the board to inform the recreation councils of the right thing to do and assist them to help facilitate the process.

Mr. Weber told board members that he received an email from Elaine Katz that Bryan Sears, investigative reporter for The Patch, wanted to do a wholesale for all financial disclosures submitted by everyone in the county, with redaction of some information including a home address. After speaking to someone in the Ethics Commission Office, Mr. Weber's understanding is that the county was encouraging legislation in Annapolis that financial disclosures would be less onerous and not prevent folks from volunteering on boards such as this. Mr. Weber stated that it sounds like this has moved in the right direction.

Mr. Milani mentioned Mid Atlantic and inquired about whether or not there was anything like this in the recreation councils. Mr. Milani explained, stating that if a person misbehaves in one recreation council, they cannot show up at another. Mr. Williams responded stating that nothing formal exists within the recreation councils such as this.

Althea Page inquired about when recreation councils would need to have their finances done if they are merging, asking if they need to be complete before the council representatives come before the board with their by-laws. Deputy Director Bud Chrismer responded by stating that the two councils Ms. Page is referencing are working on getting their constitution and by-laws together. Mr. Smith replied stating that if a 501(c)(3) disbands then funds must be transferred to another 501(c)(3).

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

Mr. Williams reported that Dunbar Brooks is making progress and he hopes to see him again soon.

Mr. Williams stated that he has been engrossed in the reorganization. Mr. Williams acknowledged that change is challenging for many, but further stated that it is happening countywide. Confident in the direction we are going, Mr. Williams reported that a number of folks are pleased with the choices made. Mr. Williams stated that this is a work in progress and we may be tweaking some things. Mr. Williams stated that employees would have to step up; we will have to do more with less. Mr. Williams stated that we might be hiring in some isolated cases. In addition, moving people around allows another look at your surroundings. Mr. Williams describes this as someone living in a house for so long that they no longer see the cracks; it takes a set of fresh eyes to then point things out.

### **Announcements:**

Chairman Wayne Definbaugh announced that the KISS Hunt is scheduled for April 6 and the Easter Egg Hunt on April 7.

Ms. Page spoke to Councilwoman Bevins and notified her that she would need to step down from the board as she has received a promotion at work. Ms. Page stated that she would be around to help the board and is not leaving just yet. Ms. Page is still working on the by-laws; she has not forgotten.

## **Old Business:**

In regards to the financial review, Mr. Weber reported that there were some minor changes, but this has since been circulated and Mr. Smith has reviewed. There is a need to determine who will be on the committee other than board members. Furthermore, board members need to figure out a way the committee can be available and a plan on how the committee will go out and conduct reviews. Mr. Weber asked board members to think about this for the next meeting.

Mr. Smith looked at the last application for certification and stated that he may be able to revise this document. He asked board members to look this over and send comments his way. Discussion ensued regarding the document and possible changes.

Mr. Milani discussed the 990 and stated that he thinks the board should require the council to send something to them as an oversight so they don't lose their status. Discussion ensued.

Katie Carter, Denise Spurrier and Fred Theiss were in attendance to discuss the issues surrounding the Gray Charles Recreation Council. Mr. Definbaugh stated that the board was recently notified of issues with the recreation council and sent a letter to Ms. Carter requesting information. Mr. Definbaugh attended the last recreation council meeting and requested minutes from the last year, which he received, and financial P&L statements from 2004 to present. Mr. Definbaugh recommends that the board rescind their request for documents because it is in the process of being done. Mr. Definbaugh also stated that the council should not be decertified. Mr. Definbaugh stated that he does not think they are hiding anything. The council had a CPA do their taxes. A 990 was not filed longer than six years, but the federal government is working with the recreation council. Mr. Definbaugh stated that their 501(c)(3) status is good from 2009 to present. Mr. Definbaugh suggested doing oversight instead of decertification, as they are moving in the right direction.

Mr. Theiss stated that he has been involved since December 2011 and has found that this is a result of poor management of a big council. The recreation council was successful, with a large football program that generated lots of money. Although there was less money coming in, the spending continued. In regards to the debt, Mr. Theiss stated that the vendor took a year to produce invoices, but the council is working on a payment plan now. Lately, the council has received lots of participation and Mr. Theiss believes this is thanks to Mr. Pettyjohn. Mr. Theiss stated that many have supported the council's efforts to move forward. Mr. Theiss stated that the council has a CPA reviewing finances. Mr. Theiss briefly discussed issues such as returned checks and gifts and grants, which got out of hand. Mr. Theiss stated that the council meetings consisted of only a handful of people and now there are lots more. In addition, the by-laws are very outdated, but the council has a committee working on this and they are almost ready to present them to membership. Mr. Theiss stated that he doesn't get the feeling that anyone has done anything, but stated that the financial information must be provided and books looked over. The group that was very vocal about the council's issues has not done anything including participating in fundraisers, but Ms. Carter has stuck around. Mr. Theiss suggests that the board work with the council; he is going to. Mr. Theiss is involved because of the initial email that was sent to "everyone" and believes that the council is headed in the right direction, and with oversight this is probably the right thing to do.

Ms. Carter stated that the council has a Ways and Means Committee, which they never had before. They have taken \$450 and paid some of the debt and are working on fundraising. In May, registration will be increased by a few dollars, as no one had ever put a percentage into the general

fund. Mr. van den Beemt inquired as to where the council was if they ceased all operations and paid bills. Ms. Carter stated that \$20,000 of the council's debt is from the football program. The registration fee for this program is \$75, and at Edgemere, the fee is \$120. Mr. Milani suggested that the council might want to take a look at their fees.

Ms. Carter stated that programs are doing well. Basketball was run down, but she took over and doubled registration. Ms. Carter stated that football would have an issue this year. Mr. Definbaugh spoke to Ms. Carter about restructuring program fees. Mr. Smith stated that program fees should cover your cost; you cannot rely on fundraising to balance your budget. Mr. van den Beemt stated that the council should come up with a plan to pay off the debt. Mr. Theiss stated that they are waiting to hear back from the person reviewing the finances.

Mr. Williams stated that Ms. Spurrier's role is to assist, not to supervise. Mr. Williams stated that the board wants all councils to be successful, and thus, they are here to assist. Mr. Theiss stated that Mr. Brooks was involved actively and, if he had not been ill, would have probably had more information to the board earlier.

Mr. Smith inquired about the window in which BCPS will allow recreation councils to submit their permits. Mr. Chrismer reported that BCPS is in agreement that we need to do this twice a year: summer for fall and winter programs, and winter for spring and summer programs. Mr. Chrismer stated that Bill Wingard is going to meet with PTA people because they are a little ahead of us in the priority order. Mr. Weber informed Mr. Chrismer that there was a council that had been soliciting PTA's programs in an attempt to gain priority access to fields. Mr. Chrismer stated that fall sports will find out in August, at the latest, if they have fields; this will not be opened up until we get what we need. Discussion ensued regarding the time frame in which councils are notified whether they are approved. Mr. Chrismer stated that there is historical knowledge as to who needs what fields. Mr. Smylie inquired about whether or not we had something consisting of bullets on how to process this so councils have an overview. Mr. Chrismer responded stating that there is nothing at facilities level; the community supervisors and regional coordinators have been trained. Mr. Chrismer stated that nothing is going to change. Mr. Weber inquired about how the councils would be made aware of the timeframe. Mr. Williams stated that as soon as we know the dates we will communicate this to all. Mr. Weber requested that Mr. Williams and Mr. Chrismer let board members know when this is if it is determined before the next board meeting.

### **Actions:**

Mr. Definbaugh motioned to rescind the board's initial request for documentation from the Gray Charles Recreation Council and instead, provide oversight as needed until at such time oversight is no longer needed. Mr. Smylie moved to accept this motion; Mr. Milani seconded, and all were in favor.

Mr. Smith spoke on behalf of the nominating committee reporting that they nominate Mr. Smylie as chair and Mr. Weber as vice chair. Mr. van den Beemt motioned to accept the slate, Mr. Milani seconded, and all were in favor.

**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 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter