

# **Board of Recreation and Parks**

MICHAEL WEBER, CHAIRMAN

## **Meeting Minutes**

**December 11, 2013**

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, December 11, 2013 at 6:27 p.m. at Edgemere Elementary School, located at 7201 North Point Road, Sparrows Point, Maryland 21219. In attendance were Mike Weber, chairman; Eric van den Beemt, vice chairman; board members Mike Milani, Leslie Monfred, Chuck Munzert, David Smylie, and Brian Weir. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director, Beakta Davis, chief, Recreation Services, Mike Schneider, community outreach liaison, Don Kuklinski, regional coordinator, Region 4 and Bob Smith, community supervisor II.

Director Barry F. Williams welcomed everyone to the Edgemere School and introduced Bob Smith who provided information about the Edgemere Sparrows Point and Bear Creek Recreation Councils, as well as South East Regional Recreation Center (SERRC) and programming that takes place at CCBC Dundalk Turf Field. Mr. Smith provided a hand-out detailing the variety of programs and participation statistics through the various councils and facilities. Chairman Mike Weber thanked Mr. Smith for his presentation.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Vice Chairman Eric van den Beemt motioned to approve the November board meeting minutes, Mike Milani seconded, all were in favor.

### **Chairman's Report:**

Chairman, Mike Weber deferred any reports to be discussed during the course of the meeting.

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

Director Barry F. Williams suggested that Board meetings for the months of January, February and March 2014 return to the Cockeysville headquarters office. Starting in April, these meetings will take place in designated sites as originally planned; this will allow Board members to see the other sites by the light of day to gain a better perspective of the facilities and programs that take place. There were no questions and it was agreed this was to be the action for those next three meetings.

[At this point, Board Member Leslie Monfred asked if the members of “Dundalk United” wanted to speak now, instead of waiting for the end of the meeting as scheduled for “Comments by Individual Citizens”. A spokesperson for Dundalk United agreed to wait until their designated time to speak.]

**Board Member’s Activities:**

No comments were made.

**Old Business:**

*Coverage for Volunteers – Perry Hall Recreation Council Q & A’s:*

Discussion regarding the Legal Office responses to the questions from Perry Hall Recreation Council. The question was raised as to whether the council financial resources are at risk based on the responses offered in response #2. Motion was offered by Mr. van den Beemt: Return Law Office responses to Perry Hall Recreation Council with a note that these are the answers to their questions. Chuck Munzert seconded the motion with the addendum that the questions and answers concurrently be sent to Board member Charles Gilman with the question “are they answering the concerns?” Vote was taken, 5 approved motion as shared; none opposed; 2 abstentions.

*1099 Issues:*

Eric van den Beemt indicated there are no issues; with the Board’s approval this discussion was tabled.

*Smoking Ban:*

Question was asked about follow up to letter Board sent to the County Executive and County Council regarding smoking ban. It was stated that Councilman Marks was planning to introduce a county council bill banning smoking at all recreation and parks locations and facilities. It was suggested that every board member should know (or find out) where their respective county council member stands on this issue.

*Background Checks:*

Chairman Mike Weber shared that it is important to not be rash with respect to what is being recommended. There is a distinction between policy and details of how to implement background checks. Detailed discussion ensued.

Board member Mike Milani suggested a motion to drafting a letter from the Board to the County Council and the County Executive recommending Background Checks be required for Recreation and Parks volunteers. Leslie Monfred seconded the motion.

Further discussion indicated that respective Board member council members be lobbied about this topic. This is a similar approach as was taken with regards to smoking ban. If a letter is written, this would be “historic” in nature and it is a good first step.

A final motion was offered by Mike Milani that a letter should be drafted to the County Council and County Executive to require background checks for all volunteers. Seconded by Leslie

Monfred, the motion passed with five votes and two abstentions. Mike Weber stated that he would draft the letter and circulate it to all board members for their input before sending it forward.

*Discussion on Changes in Recreation Facilities:*

Chairman Weber shared that the Vanguard proposal was accepted by the county with no discussion. Discussion ensued:

- Board was encouraged to offer assistance to Councils.
- Board should be active in PUD process.
- Needs of Councils need to be addressed; need to get most out of property to benefit Councils.
- Need to find a consensus of what is needed for planning.
- Next President's meeting start putting together what Councils would like.
- The only Councils that need to be a part of this process are the ones directly using the facility – Dundalk - Eastfield.
- Recreation and Parks made recommendations – what is needed is what the two most involved Councils want.
- Chuck Munzert and Brian Weir are to work with Councils and report back to Board of Recreation and Parks

**New Business:**

- Chairman Mike Weber shared with the Board that they are charged with being more involved with Councils. The use of social media might help facilitate this process. Suggestion is to set up a FaceBook account with the intent to have a dialog with Councils to know what problems they are facing and to help each other solve problems and to monitor Councils. This would address issue of being more in touch with Councils. The question was asked how to implement this process. Response included getting volunteer from the community. It was acknowledge that this has to be monitored and the question of who has access to this account? It was pointed out that not all Council Presidents have access to e-mail. It was suggested that Board Members talk to the Councils in their region to gauge their interest in using social media to communicate.
- Board member Chuck Munzert asked about the Huber property and if it was purchased by the county. Director Williams responded that this was not the case, that the property was determined to not be lucrative for the county.
- Board member Brian Weir queried the Board with the statement, "We keep bringing up things we want to see. We need to see a hard copy of what the county will provide." Mr. Weir explained he wanted a hard copy of the policy that dumpsters will no longer be provided, nor pick up of trash. He asked for the policy that is explicit stating what the county will no longer offer or provide. Mr. Weir explained that a member of one of the Councils said that he would make arrangements for a dumpster. Response from Director Williams was that for every policy, there is going to be an exception. The Department of Recreation and Parks cannot speak for what it can't control; this is a Property

Management decision. Ms. Davis indicated that the information requested by Mr. Weir would be sent to the Board by the coming Friday.

**Comments by Individual Citizens:**

Representatives of *Dundalk United*; Ms. Patricia Paul, Ms. Karen Cruz and Mr. Bob Staab were present to discuss the North Point Government Center. Chairman Weber asked if there was any response to Dundalk United regarding the letter sent by the Board. They responded that no formal response was offered.

Ms. Paul shared there was still concern over the 15 acres that will be missing from the revised plans of the Government Center plans. She expressed concern over the Government Center property not being defined as a “park”, when in fact, she shared that it meets the definition of a “park”. Ms. Paul shared that she was concerned that the plans offered will not meet the needs of the community.

Ms. Cruz shared her concerns about the planning and if the plans were to give more open space as needed by the community.

Mr. Staab shared his appreciation to the Board of Recreation and Parks for their involvement and willingness to see the North Point Government Center previously. He, too, raised concern that the site did not meet the definition of a park and questioned how anyone could interpret the site as anything but a park. The loss of 15 acres was a point of concern shared in his presentation. Mr. Staab was asked by a Board member what he expected from the Board given the fact that this was addressed earlier in the meeting that the conclusion of the County Council was that this was approved without discussion. Mr. Staab replied he wanted to see a freeze on property sales to avoid this issue in the future. He felt this was a role the Board could play in the case of future sales of park properties. Ms. Paul concluded it was important that the Board work hard to protect park lands.

Chairman Weber acknowledged and thanked the members of Dundalk United for their presentation.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Mr. Weir moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Milani seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael L. Schneider