

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

MICHAEL WEBER, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2014

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, February 12, 2014 at 6:06 p.m. at the Department of Recreation and Parks administrative offices, Cockeysville, Maryland. In attendance were Mike Weber, chairman; Eric van den Beemt, vice chairman; board members Leslie Monfred, David Smylie, Greg Heitner, Chuck Munzert and Brian Weir. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director, Kara Burman, regional coordinator, Region 1, Don Kuklinski, regional coordinator, Region 4 and Lenny Camphor, community supervisor, Turner Station/Watersedge/West Inverness/Sollers Point Recreation Office.

Chairman Mike Weber welcomed new board member Greg Heitner. Mr. Heitner will serve as the 5th Councilmanic District Representative.

Mr. Weber thanked Wayne Definbaugh for all he has done and for his long time service on the board.

Mr. Weber announced that Mike Milani was going to be here tonight but asked to attend the Spring Grove meeting instead.

Approval of Minutes:

Brian Weir motioned to approve the January board meeting minutes, Chuck Munzert seconded, and all were in favor.

Comments by Individual Citizens:

David Stickell came before the board as the new acting president for West Inverness Recreation Council. Also attending with him was Douglas Harding and Steven Smell. Mr. Stickell informed the board that the former president recently passed and since then, he has been trying to get things in order. He has coached with the council for the last seven years. He found out in August 2013 that the council was not 501(c)(3) nor were they certified. Immediately after finding this out, he said that he had hired an accountant. Mr. Stickell presented the chairman with a letter from the accountant. He stated that certain documents requested by the accountant were not found in the recovered paperwork. They are working with the bank to obtain this needed information.

Mr. Stickell stated that he is very ambitious and remarked that what happened in the past will not happen again with regard to the council. Mr. Weber responded stating that he appreciates Mr. Stickell's efforts. Brief discussion ensued regarding the council's growing programs, having enough people to fill the executive board and the need for only one account. Mr. Stickell stated that the accountant anticipates going through all pertinent documents from the past six years by late

spring/early summer. In addition, Mr. Stickell stated that the council is not in debt to anyone at this time. Mr. Weber thanked them for coming before the board and stated that if they should need any assistance, they should reach out to Mr. Weir.

A couple of individuals came before the board as concerned parents. **Their** boys were participants of the under 8 football program (part of the GBYFL) with the Perry Hall Recreation Council. **They** reported several issues with the coach, that the coach was: cursing and threatening the children; denying water during practice; smelling of alcohol while working with the boys; making inappropriate comments to the parents; and possibly misappropriating funds. **They** have talked to the program commissioner (who **they** believe has ties with the coach), met with him four times and have also met with the executive board of the recreation council. The executive board ruled in favor of the coach and his staff. **These** concerned parents were accused of having issues with the coach because of his ethnicity, an accusation which **they** strongly denied. **One** of the individuals who came before the board spoke to the coach about the boys being denied water and as a consequence, **this** individual's son was punished, forced to sit on the bench, and faced threats that he would be cut to the B team. The coach admitted to cursing at the children and found this humorous. Other parents have already left the program and **one** of the concerned parents who came before the board has since removed **their** son from the team. This was an action the son was in favor of. **These** concerned parents would like the board to look into this, not only for them but for the many other children who will be participants of the program some day. Mr. Weber stated that the board would discuss this and would be in touch with them.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Weber thanked the board for all of their hard work. He stated that their next initiative as a board is protecting their assets from school re-districting. Mr. Weber asked if there was anything Director Barry F. Williams could help them with to have their voice heard to protect recreation and parks. Mr. Williams responded with the idea of someone from this board serving on the nominating committee for school board members.

Director's Comments

Mr. Williams stated that there is strong evidence that the board has made a difference. He referenced their efforts in advocating and lobbying their council representatives. He referred to the smoking ban stating that although it is watered down, it will still pass. He also referenced background checks and further stated that the County Executive has shown interest in this. Both he and Bryan Sheppard plan to brief the County Executive on the efficacy of background checks. Mr. Williams stated that this was initiated because of the board's advocacy; their efforts have not been in vain, but rather very positive.

Mr. Williams informed the board of a recent issue regarding ice skating on county property. It has been a much colder winter this year and lakes/ponds have frozen over, thus prompting people to go ice skating. In the past, Baltimore County had protocols for this but has since stopped. We have run into an issue at Lake Roland where people were ice skating. Neighbors contacted local police. Mr. Williams met with the community and explained that this is a safety issue and skating is not permitted on county property. He is sharing this information with the board with the thought that someone may come before the board and/or when they are out in their respective communities.

Mr. Williams announced that he will be meeting with an individual who is interested in serving as the student representative for the board.

Old Business:

Mr. Weber was in receipt of a letter from the Perry Hall Recreation Council regarding the response they received from the Law Office. He suggested drafting a letter for Mr. Williams to forward to Mike Field requesting he respond to the council. Mr. Weber will draft and circulate a letter for comment by the board.

As a direct result from board member's actions, a smoking ban will be introduced before council. The ban was described as broken up and language of the letter was discussed. Leslie Monfred, Mr. Munzert and Mr. Weber met with some of the council members and then attended the work session. There were concerns regarding enforcement and board members described what Howard County does. The board may have to go back because of the limitations of the ban; they are prepared to do that. If this was a blanket ban, it would be easier to enforce.

With regard to background checks, board members discussed what to do to move this forward. Board members agreed to respond to issues as they come out of the County Executive's office. In talking with members of the County Council, they want information from the County Executive. Vice Chairman Eric van den Beemt stated that he thinks it would be helpful to provide Mr. Williams with information he could present to the County Executive such as number of volunteers, how to monitor, who to pay and so on. Mr. Williams stated that recommendations would be very helpful. He stated that Mike Schneider has pulled together information regarding what other counties have done. Further discussion ensued. Mrs. Monfred stated that, if you educate parents not to leave their children unattended, you could almost eliminate background checks. Mr. Heitner was the chair of the Board of Athletics for Towson University and stated that this was a big issue. He spoke of his experience and stated that it took almost two years to get something in place for ~400 people. In addition, the state had to assist because they needed a significant amount of legal information. Mr. Weber stated that the county has a surplus and they need to move to get this done while the surplus is there. Mr. Williams stated that he conveyed to the County Executive that this is an issue with the board and that they would like to address/discuss this with him. Mrs. Monfred stated that some of the board members met with the executive director of Baltimore Child Abuse Center, who provided a lot of information as to why background checks should be done.

New Business:

Mr. Weber stated that he thinks the board needs to do a better job reaching out to council presidents and thinks that social media could help with this. This could consist of limited groups, not a blog free-for-all. Mr. Heitner agreed to work on this and report back to the board.

Mr. van den Beemt announced that he was contacted by a vendor trying to interest the recreation councils in allowing their truck to be parked when they have games. They would donate 15% of the money proceeds to the council. Discussion ensued. Mr. Williams suggested directing them back to the recreation councils, stating that this has to be a contract with each individual council. Mr. Schneider stated that he has attended many council meetings and this vendor has been making their rounds. Mr. van den Beemt will relay the message to the vendor.

Mr. Weir inquired about the Joint Use Agreement. Mr. Williams informed board members that he would be attending the county-wide principal's meeting with Dr. S. Dallas Dance next week to discuss the Joint Use Agreement. The regional coordinators will attend as well and he will conduct a power point presentation. Mr. Weir stated that the board would table this issue until after Mr. Williams' meeting.

Mr. Weber stated that he thinks the board needs to address the concerns regarding the Perry Hall Recreation Council football program. Discussion ensued. Everyone agreed that someone from the board should attend the council meeting and that a request should be made to see football program accounting for the past year.

Action:

Mr. van den Beemt motioned to have Mr. Munzert and Mr. Heitner attend the Perry Hall Recreation Council meeting (providing notification to the council president) and during this time request football program accounting for the past year. Mr. Munzert seconded, and all were in favor.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. van den Beemt moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Heitner seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter