

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

MICHAEL WEBER, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2014

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held immediately following the annual dinner meeting with the Baltimore County Council Membership, at 5:50 p.m. The meeting was held at the Old Courthouse –Room 118, located at 400 Washington Avenue, Towson, Maryland. In attendance were Mike Weber, chairman; Eric van den Beemt, vice chairman; board members Mike Milani, Leslie Monfred, Greg Heitner, Chuck Munzert, Brian Weir, Charles Gilman and Robbie Palmisano. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director, Beahta Davis, chief, Recreation Services, and Chris McCollum, executive director, Agriculture, Nature & Special Facilities.

Chairman Mike Weber welcomed Robbie Palmisano. Mr. Palmisano was appointed as the teen representative to the Board of Recreation and Parks.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Weber requested to redact the names of the individuals who came before the board regarding the Perry Hall Recreation Council football program. Leslie Monfred motioned to approve the February board meeting minutes, with Mr. Weber's requested change, Vice Chairman Eric van den Beemt seconded, and all were in favor.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Weber thanked the board for all of their comments tonight with the Baltimore County Council membership.

Director's Comments

Director Barry F. Williams stated he thought it was a good discussion tonight between the board and the county council membership and praised board members for making contact with their representatives. He noted the importance of this and stated that it seems to be working very well.

There are two upcoming events that Mr. Williams invited board members to attend: the Soukup Arena Groundbreaking is scheduled for March 29 at 10:00 a.m. and the Perry Paw Dog Park Ribbon Cutting is scheduled for April 5 at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Williams commented that it is important for the general public to know that the board members are there.

Old Business:

Mr. Weber informed board members that the Perry Hall Recreation Council submitted additional questions regarding the responses they received from the Office of Law. Mr. Weber drafted a letter and gave it to Charles Gilman for review. Mr. Weber read his letter (addressed to Mr. Williams)

aloud. Brief discussion ensued. Mr. Gilman stated that he doesn't believe the questions were answered sufficiently.

Regarding background checks, Mr. Weber stated that he was happy with the discussion the board had with the county council membership. Mr. Williams informed the board that the administration requested more information, which he provided - including the letter from Adam Rosenberg. At this point we are waiting, and Mr. Williams stated that the administration may have some additional questions for him. The administration is in the midst of finalizing the FY15 budget so it may take a bit longer to hear back from them. Mr. Weber thanked Mrs. Monfred for getting as many people involved and as much information as possible.

Mr. Williams stated that there are 4 out of 24 jurisdictions in Maryland that are not performing background checks.

Mike Milani discussed a problem they have encountered in Howard County where an individual is involved in the PTA and the council, and both are paying for background checks. This is something they have not yet found a solution to. Discussion ensued regarding what background checks could entail, the number of people to be checked (~30,000), the cost factor (\$1.5 mil), and the staff needed to handle this. Beahta Davis stated that this is based on the Anne Arundel County model and would be very expensive. Board members discussed different scenarios and asked Mr. Milani how Howard County handles this. Mr. Weber stated that the funding for background checks would need to come from the Executive Office. Mrs. Monfred inquired about the timeframe to see background checks in place. Mr. Williams replied stating that he was surprised at how quickly the smoking ban happened and stated that this could possibly happen much faster than originally thought. He further discussed the department staff needed to handle the administration of the background checks and stated that they would be located at the regional offices. Board members discussed the importance of making sure parents/people are aware and educated. Mr. Williams stated that as soon as he hears something from the administration he would share with the board.

Board members inquired about viewing the smoking bill in its entirety. Chris McCollum stated that the bill is online under the list of 2014 bills.

Chuck Munzert inquired about the Joint Use Agreement (JUA). He reported that he was approached at the last president's meeting regarding issues taking place at the schools. Mr. Williams responded stating that he did discuss the JUA at the principal's meeting but, due to time constraints, there was no discussion with the principals. All principals received a copy of the agreement. He thinks there will still be some individual issues, but stated that 90% of the time the JUA works. Mr. Weber replied stating that the board is scheduled to meet with the Board of Education in June and can take this opportunity to discuss these issues with them. Mr. Williams suggested getting the board's questions to Board of Education in advance so they have time to investigate. Ms. Davis informed board members not to hesitate contacting her when they come across or are contacted about various issues.

Brian Weir reported that Bear Creek is upset that they are not on the list of certified recreation councils. Mr. Weber stated that he would check his notes on Bear Creek, and if they should be added to the list of certified councils, he will let Lisa Liupaeter know.

Mr. Munzert stated that the Bengies-Chase Council was turned down in their request for a 501-C-3 status. He has tried to contact Laura Bockner, but they have not connected.

New Business:

Mr. Munzert and Greg Heitner were scheduled to attend the Perry Hall Recreation Council meeting last month but, it was cancelled. Mr. Munzert stated that he contacted Football America and was told that there are three programs that did not honor background checks. Mr. Milani reported that he saw the stipulation of what was agreed upon by both sides. (Mr. Williams recently forwarded this to Mr. Weber.) Based on the statement of facts, the board discussed what they should do. Mr. Heitner looked into the allegations, talking with people in the community (some who have children in the program and others who do not), and reported that all have heard these allegations. Mr. Weber was informed that there are several parents that want their stories heard. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the situation and the action to be taken. Mr. Williams recommended the board confront the council for tolerance of certain kinds of behavior – ask them what they are going to do to remedy this – give suggestions. Mr. Weber will provide all board members a copy of the notes from Perry Hall. He further stated that he would contact Paul Amirault and thinks that Mr. Heitner and Mr. Munzert should be involved as well.

Action:

A motion was made to have a subcommittee of the Board of Recreation and Parks meet with a group of interested parents – outside of the board meeting – regarding the Perry Hall Recreation Council football program. This motion was seconded and passed 5:3.

Mr. Heitner motioned to have Mr. Munzert and himself speak with the Perry Hall Recreation Council Board, Mr. Milani seconded and all were in favor with the exception of Mr. Gilman who abstained from voting.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Heitner moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Gilman seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter