

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

ERIC VAN DEN BEEMT, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, January 14, 2015, at 6:00 PM at the Department of Recreation and Parks administrative offices, Cockeysville, Maryland. In attendance were board members Eric van den Beemt, Leslie Monfred, Greg Heitner, Chuck Munzert, Brian Weir, Robbie Leonard and Rob Palmisano. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director, Beahtha Davis, chief, Recreation Services, and Mike Schneider, community outreach liaison.

Call to Order:

Eric van den Beemt, conducting the meeting as vice chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM.

Board Member Activities:

Brian Weir announced that the North Point Government Center (NPGC) plans have still not materialized. In addition, he stated that the tap and ballet programs are still without facilities for their recitals. Beahtha Davis replied stating that staff have secured facilities for all of these programs. She noted that Denise Spurrier is out of the office and Joe Law is filling in during her absence.

Greg Heitner commented that Gough Park looks absolutely beautiful and he looks forward to the opening this fall. Ms. Davis stated that she asked Property Management to look at this and give her a firm date. Mr. Heitner stated that he knows this will be a gorgeous park *if* it is maintained and left alone; he knows that it is not ready to open yet. Ms. Davis stated that it will most likely open late fall (November). Mr. Heitner gave kudos to all involved.

Rob Palmisano reported that there was a BB gun shooting at the track at Hereford HS. Ms. Davis replied stating that the department was aware of this incident. The department's new Emergency Action Plan should address any future issues. On another note, Mr. Palmisano inquired about new fields at Sparks ES and whether there was any new information about this. Director Barry F. Williams replied stating that there is no new information at this time.

Robbie Leonard introduced himself as the recently appointed At-Large representative and stated that he looks forward to working with everyone. He provided background information about himself including how he grew up playing football and looks forward to having his children participate in recreation council programs.

Leslie Monfred stated that she has nothing new to report since the background checks.

Mr. van den Beemt reported that he recently attended the Liberty Road Recreation Council Meeting. He discussed how most meetings are held and indicated that this was *not* the case at this council meeting. He encouraged folks to recognize what people are trying to do. Brief discussion ensued.

Approval of Minutes:

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

Chairman's Report:

Mr. van den Beemt stated that he knows there is a sense of frustration for all – feeling like they cannot get things done. He encouraged everyone, in the coming year, to have a positive impact with the things that are within their boundaries, and leave the frustration and things the board is unable to do, to someone else. He stated that he is relying on Mr. Williams and Ms. Davis to provide guidance to the board, enabling them to be as effective as they can.

The state is going to give less money to the county and thus, the county will give less money to Recreation and Parks. Mr. van den Beemt stated that board members can lobby their councilmen in an effort to keep them from taking money away from the department. He encouraged board members to be proactive.

All board members should make an attempt to visit each of their councils at least once a year. If ever an issue should arise, the council can contact the appropriate board member instead of contacting the director of the department. It is important to make sure they know their representative and how to reach them.

Director's Comments:

The Cockeysville Community PAL Center ribbon cutting was held on Tuesday, December 16 at 11:30 AM. Mr. Williams reported that Mrs. Monfred was in attendance. He stated that this is a very nice building and a great collaboration between Board of Education and Baltimore County Government. Shortly after opening, attendance at the PAL Center tripled. Mrs. Monfred stopped in the center a few nights after the ribbon cutting ceremony and stated that it was booming.

A ribbon cutting ceremony for Soukup Arena has been scheduled for February 19 at 11:30 AM. Lisa Liupaeter will send out invitations to this event. All board members are invited to attend.

Mr. Williams announced that he will soon have his next round of President's Meetings. Ms. Liupaeter will schedule these meetings for March and all board members are invited to attend.

Mr. Williams reported that he attended the Opening Session today and met the Governor Elect. He stated that the Governor Elect seems to be a nice man.

Old Business:

Regarding the financial review, Mr. van den Beemt referenced the list of recreation councils that, to date, have not submitted anything. Mr. Weir replied stating that Don Kuklinski should have paperwork from Essex-Stembridge Recreation Council. Ms. Liupaeter will check with Mr. Kuklinski. Mr. Munzert stated that he called every recreation council that had not yet submitted paperwork and spoke with all but five of the council presidents, who did not return his call. In addition, he spoke with five councils that informed him that they were not going to comply. Board

members reviewed the list of non-compliant councils and determined which councils were within their representative districts. Ms. Liupaeter will provide board members with telephone numbers for the recreation council presidents on this list. Mr. Palmisano offered to assist Mr. van den Beemt with Hereford and Seventh District Recreation Councils. Mrs. Monfred stated that she would contact the Woodlawn Recreation Council since this board member vacancy has not yet been filled. Board members discussed sending a letter to all recreation councils on this list detailing the consequences of non-compliance. Mr. Williams encouraged board members to document their attempts to contact the recreation councils. He suggested that board members forward their documentation to Ms. Liupaeter. In addition, Mr. Williams will notify Fred Homan and the Office of Law of the board's plans to decertify all non-compliant councils.

Mr. van den Beemt discussed the issue regarding the Greater Loch Raven Recreation Council. The information was cleared up with the president and the individual looking for reimbursement. A check was finally issued.

Mr. Heitner drafted a letter stating what the Facebook account is and what it is meant for. He sent this to Mike Weber, but had not heard back from him. He will forward this letter to Ms. Liupaeter for distribution to all councils. Mr. Liupaeter is to add information regarding the submission of names, of two Executive Board members from each council, that the president would like added to this account. She will then forward these names to Mr. Heitner.

Mr. van den Beemt questioned where the county is with regard to background checks. Mr. Williams replied stating that they are looking at the RAPTOR system, which is used by Baltimore County Public Schools. They are looking at a modified version of this. He has not heard or received anything more. He stated that we had a group of faculty working on this for 5-6 months and are now going in the direction of the county administrative officer. Mr. van den Beemt inquired into whether or not they need to remind them that this should be run by the board, as was originally stated. Discussion ensued and Mr. Heitner explained how the RAPTOR system works in the schools.

Mr. Weir inquired about the carpet at the Southeast Regional Recreation Center. Mr. Williams replied stating that this is now with the Office of Budget and Finance – Purchasing and Disbursements division. They plan to replace the carpet with what was used at the Northeast Regional Recreation Center. He emailed for an update today.

New Business:

Board members received a clean copy of the constitution and by-laws, with suggested revisions included. Brief discussion ensued and board members voted to approve the document. (See Action item.)

In Mike Milani's absence, Mr. van den Beemt asked Ms. Liupaeter to share the nominees for chairman and vice chairman of the board. Ms. Liupaeter reported that Mr. van den Beemt was nominated as chairman and Mr. Munzert as vice chairman. The board voted on the proposed slate of officers. (See Action item.)

Mr. van den Beemt referenced the email that was sent from Rhonda Fox-Jones to the board regarding the Liberty Road Recreation Council election appeal. This was discussed last month and further discussion ensued. Mr. van den Beemt stated that there are three sets of bylaws – the one set was last approved by the board in 1997, then there is a revised version from 2011 that was never

approved by the board, and the latest revision, which was made in 2014 was never approved by the board. Board members discussed the issues raised by Mrs. Fox-Jones and Mr. van den Beemt recommended the board reject her appeal. (See Action item.) Ms. Davis announced that she has spoken with council president Lawrence Brown and he would like him and his board to meet with her and Kara Burman. Mr. van den Beemt will write a letter to the council president and to Mrs. Fox-Jones informing them of the board's response.

Regarding the revised Liberty Road Recreation Council Constitution and Bylaws, Mr. Munzert stated that he would review this and report back to the board. Mr. van den Beemt reported that Mr. Weber reviewed this document and had some concerns; Mr. Munzert may want to speak with him.

Mr. van den Beemt reported that a letter was drafted to the Board of Education, requesting a meeting. Discussion ensued. Mr. van den Beemt stated that he does not want to go into this meeting arguing, but rather stating that there were cases in which they feel things were not handled properly. Mr. van den Beemt will send this letter to the chairman and see what their response is. Ms. Davis voiced concern that the recent issues surrounding the wrestling tournament are not case for referring to violation of the Joint Use Agreement. This was in poor taste, but was not in violation. She stated there should be specifics directly related to the Joint Use Agreement. Furthermore, she stressed working through the process and improving communication all the way around. Mr. Munzert replied referencing the issue of the Hot Shots Day Care program that was bumped after a permit was issued. Ms. Davis had not heard about this and stated that she would look into this. Mr. Williams commented that he agrees with Mr. van den Beemt's approach that we can afford a better relationship moving forward.

Mr. Williams reported that he spoke to Councilman Julian Jones today about the board vacancy, and also spoke to Michelle Wilson in the county executive's office.

Mr. van den Beemt informed board members that he would be out of the country on the originally scheduled meeting date in February, and asked if anyone would mind changing the date from February 11 to February 18. All board members were okay with this change. In addition, the second Wednesday of the month, in November, is Veteran's Day and the county will be closed. Mr. van den Beemt asked if November 18 worked for everyone. All board members were fine with this change.

Mr. Weir mentioned the NPGC and asked Mr. Williams and Ms. Davis if they have seen any new plans. They both replied stating that they have not. Mr. Weir stated that the recreation council is looking at retractable seating, and Bryan Sheppard said they are looking at adding a bathroom behind the stage. Mr. Williams replied stating that once we get the chance to look at these plans we will see what they have.

Mr. Munzert reported that the Bays Soccer Club are using Eastern Regional Park and are paying leadership but nothing else. He wanted to know why this was the case. Ms. Davis replied stating that it depends on which group he is talking about. The only group not paying rent is the council run program. All others are outside organizations and are using the facility accordingly.

Mr. van den Beemt thanked everyone for donating their time and stated that they are all here for the same reason.

Action:

Mr. Weir motioned to approve the revised Board Constitution and Bylaws, Mr. Heitner seconded and all were in favor.

Mrs. Monfred motioned to accept the proposed slate of officers, Mr. Heitner seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Mr. Munzert made a motion to reject Mrs. Fox-Jones' appeal, Mr. Weir seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Munzert moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Weir seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter