

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

ERIC VAN DEN BEEMT, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Thursday, April 23, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at Cromwell Valley Park – Sherwood House, Baltimore, Maryland. In attendance were Chuck Munzert, vice chairman; board members Greg Heitner, Brian Weir, Chip Hiebler and Rob Palmisano. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director, Beahta Davis, chief, Recreation Services and Mike Schneider, community outreach liaison.

Also in attendance were as follows: Darvin Green, Chante Green, Darvin Green, Jr., Michael Langston, Patricia Novak, Mike Pierce and Michael Ruby.

Chip Hiebler commended Mike Schneider on an article he wrote regarding volunteers, stating that he did a great job!

Call to Order:

Vice chairman Chuck Munzert called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m.

Mr. Munzert recognized the many non-board members in attendance and went straight to “Comments By Individual Citizens” in an effort to hear their concerns. See below for dialogue.

Approval of Minutes:

There were not enough board members in attendance to constitute a quorum; therefore, the March 16, 2015 meeting minutes were not approved at this time.

Old Business:

Regarding the financial review, Mr. Munzert reported that there are still a couple of councils that we have not heard from and a few that have some issues. Discussion ensued regarding these councils and the status of what has been received.

Greg Heitner provided an update regarding social media stating that there have been nineteen (19) names provided for the Facebook group; however, only four (4) have joined the group.. He stated that he would draft another letter, including the actual link to the page, to make it easier for those involved. Mr. Munzert asked Mr. Heitner to draft this letter prior to the Region 4 President’s Meeting. Mr. Heitner stated that he would do so.

Comments By Individual Citizens:

Michael Langston introduced himself to the board as a resident of Dundalk, involved with little league baseball. He stated that up until this year, he and his son have had no problems keeping a

group of children, now 9 – 10 years old, together. However, Chris Burns, program chair with the Dundalk-Eastfield Recreation Council (DERC), instructed them to take the team to North Point Village Recreation Council (NPVRC) to prevent them from being split up. After the team registered with the NPVRC, Ada Freyer, program chair with NPVRC, claimed that Mr. Langston's son was trying to circumvent the system by recruiting players (because some have played travel baseball). Initially, Mr. Langston was told that his son was suspended for a year, and thus, he would coach the team. Now he is being told that he cannot coach the team and they divided the eleven (11) children amongst other teams within the league. Mr. Langston discussed the level of playing skills of these children to point out that they were not recruiting players. Mr. Langston would like to be able to register his team at NPVRC and play this season. He reported that he has appealed to the Region 4 President's Board; however, they do not meet until May 14 and will not prior, to hear his appeal. Mr. Langston stated that allowing these eleven (11) children to play together on the same team will not disrupt the other teams. Beahta Davis reported that she has met with Mr. Langston twice now. She stated that DERC already has a 9 – 10 year old team, which means that if he wanted to play with this council they would have to hold a draft (which is the rule). A draft would mean this group of children would not remain together. Mr. Heitner replied stating that the board would need to hear the other side to the story before coming to any conclusion. Mr. Weir stated that this should have been appealed to the DERC Executive Board. Mr. Weir will contact the president of the council and email the board with his findings.

Darvin and Chante Green and their son Darvin Green, Jr. came before the board to appeal the disciplinary action against them. The Green's son played basketball for Turner Station Recreation Council (TSRC) and Mr. Green was the coach. The situation started last year when their team won a game and another coach stated that they did not play all of their team members for the required period of time during the game. Mr. Green alleges that as a result, Maurisha Graves-White pulled the team out of the championship one (1) hour before the game was to start. Out in the parking lot, Mr. Green and Ms. Graves-White began to argue, both using foul language and then parting ways. Mr. Green later found out that he, his wife and their son were suspended indefinitely. Mr. Green stated that he never received anything regarding the suspension. He met with Gloria Nelson and Celo White (Ms. Graves-White's husband) and was told that he violated #5 of the Code of Conduct. Mr. Green stated that if this were the case then the disciplinary action taken against him is not what the outcome should be. Mr. Green stated that he has lived in this area for fifteen (15) years and his children have played recreation council sports. Mr. Green wrote an appeal letter to Ms. Nelson and to Recreation and Parks (which was inadvertently sent to the wrong address). His son is now playing for Shut Down, a league sponsored by the TSRC. Ms. Graves-White is stating that The Green's son cannot play because of the suspension invoked upon him. Mr. Green stated that there is a game going on right now that his son is missing, and he has done nothing wrong. The TSRC meets on May 11; Mr. Weir stated that he would call Ms. Graves-White and request that they all meet with the executive board prior to the start of the council meeting. Mr. Weir stated that he would plead that the child be allowed back into the programs and the parents remain on a one (1) year suspension. Ms. Davis stated that the suspension has been longer than a year and thus would be over. Mr. Green stated that he has had no prior incidents, nor has he had any prior accusations against him for not playing the children for the appropriate period of time in a game.

Mike Pierce addressed the board as the co-chair of the Tobacco-free Baltimore County Coalition. He discussed tobacco sales to minors and is asking the board to forward a recommendation to the County Council to completely ban tobacco use in county parks. Mr. Pierce stated that most colleges have a ban against smoking on campus and so do hospitals; this is common to do in outdoor areas. He distributed a letter to board members, which requests this ban. Discussion ensued regarding

smoking and vaping. Mr. Peirce would like to adopt the same rules the schools have on smoking and vaping. Director Barry F. Williams encouraged Mr. Pierce to have more data to correlate his request. Patricia Novak, Cromwell Valley Park Nature Council (CVPNC) president, introduced herself to the board and stated that the council passed a vote at their meeting on April 6 to bring a letter to the board regarding a complete prohibition on the use of tobacco at county parks. (Letter was distributed to board members.) Ms. Novak stated that they have a lot of wildlife at CVP, and although she sees very few people smoking at the park, there are cigarette butts on the grounds. This debris hurts the park and the wildlife. Ms. Novak stated she thinks that if this was prohibited, people would comply. She stated that the council is in favor of banning smoking in county parks. Mr. Williams mentioned the idea of having CVP as the test park for the ban. He suggested gathering data, which would go a long way to move towards the idea of a ban. He suggested they develop a pilot idea with a way of measuring it. Mr. Williams suggested they put something together and submit this to Mr. Munzert.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Hiebler moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Heitner seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter