

# BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

ERIC VAN DEN BEEMT, CHAIRMAN

## Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, May 13, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. at the Department of Recreation and Parks administrative offices, Cockeysville, Maryland. In attendance were Eric van den Beemt, chairman, Chuck Munzert, vice chairman; board members Mike Milani, Leslie Monfred, Brian Weir, Charles Gilman, Chip Hiebler, Robbie Leonard and Rob Palmisano. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director and Beahtha Davis, chief, Recreation Services.

### **Call to Order:**

Chairman Eric van den Beemt called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Mr. van den Beemt apologized to board members for not being at the last meeting; he was very sick.

### **Board Member Activities:**

Vice Chairman Chuck Munzert discussed the plans for the complex to be built on Route 43. (He attended a meeting as president of the Middle River Renaissance Corporation.) Mr. Munzert stated that this facility is not county owned; however, the plan is to turn this over to Recreation and Parks in thirty (30) years. With seven (7) turf fields, this facility will be used 365 days a year, and will be a huge money maker. According to plans, the facility should be up and operating by next summer. This is the first of seven (7) facilities to be built.

Mike Milani reported that the Catonsville Recreation Council is feeling the crunch over losing some sites. Beahtha Davis replied stating that the council is upset that construction has not started at Bloomsbury.

In light of recent press coverage with his organization, Rob Palmisano stated that he is receiving more donations than in the past. He stated that if board members know of any councils or individuals in need, please let him know.

Brian Weir discussed the Turner Station Recreation Council issue stating that he and Don Kuklinski met with the board, and Darvin and Chante Green, last week. He stated that the meeting was moved up and he thought it was so they could reinstate the child, but this did not happen. With regard to the Dundalk Recreation Council issue, Mr. Weir stated that he spoke with Joe Tusa who said he would uphold the suspension. In addition, Mr. Weir discussed the North Point Government Center and surrounding project/issues. He stated that Bryan Sheppard informed him that the ground had to be tested for lead paint, from the water tower being there for so long (50+ years).

Leslie Monfred attended a Greater Pikesville Recreation Council meeting and reported that their tax ID was stolen. In addition, she stated that the council would like to build a dance studio – financially, they are doing well. Mrs. Monfred also stated that she recently attended a meeting at

Liberty Rec and Tech with the focus of healing in Baltimore. She thinks the board could lend its advice and expertise to rebuild/improve recreation centers in the city. Mr. Palmisano replied stating that this goes back to what he stated. Mr. van den Beemt asked Director Barry F. Williams to reach out to his counterpart in Baltimore City and ask how the board could help.

Mr. van den Beemt attended the grand opening of Soukup Arena and stated that there were many in attendance. He reported that the recreation council contributed \$1.5 million to this wonderful facility. With that said, Mrs. Monfred stated that she thinks the by-laws should be changed to limit the amount of money a council can have in their account – they should not be sitting on \$1 million. Mr. Milani replied stating that he disagreed. Discussion ensued.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Milani motioned to approve the March and April board meeting minutes, Robbie Leonard seconded, and all were in favor.

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

Mr. Williams reported that the Soukup Arena Ribbon Cutting Ceremony went well, and he thanked Mr. van den Beemt for attending.

Mr. Williams informed board members that the County Executive received 55-60 letters from students at Prettyboy Elementary School, requesting fields and parks in the north county. Mr. van den Beemt provided background information on how this came about. Mr. Williams was asked to respond to the letters on behalf of the County Executive – by going to the school and speaking to the students. He is scheduled to do this tomorrow. He has a lesson planned; he discussed this and his response.

Regarding background checks, Mr. Williams announced that he attended the Work Session and this went right through. He is hoping this will go for vote on May 21. The County has decided to go with SSCI. The intent is never to have volunteers pay for this service. It will be an online application, no fingerprinting. The money for this is in the Office of Information Technology's budget. Recreation and Parks will not receive money for extra staff; however, this will be revisited. Recreation and Parks staff and a handful of council presidents will go through training. Discussion ensued. Mr. Williams stated that July 1 is when they want to roll this out.

Mr. Williams reported that he received the tentative schedule for the start of the new artificial turf fields. He went over this with those in attendance.

### **Old Business:**

Regarding the financial review, Mr. van den Beemt reported that there are still a couple of councils that the board has not heard from, and a few that have some issues. Discussion ensued regarding these councils and the status of what has been received. Mr. Munzert stated that the president of Back River Recreation Council does not have much help and is struggling to keep the council going. He is working on the by-laws; however, they currently do not have a treasurer – someone has stepped in to assist in the meantime. Mr. Munzert stated that he is not sure if the council is going to make it. Discussion ensued regarding the theft issue. In addition, the council discussed fundraising to get back on their feet; however, there is a fear of turning the money over right now. Mr. Williams

suggested giving them a year (~March 31, 2016) to see what progress they make, while actively supporting them. After this time, the board can then reevaluate the council. There was brief discussion regarding the possibility of merging this council with another, but Ms. Davis stated that she does not think this is a good idea. Regarding the Baltimore Highlands Recreation Council, Mr. Milani stated that he told them they had to complete the financial review and recertification. As for Lansdowne-Riverview Recreation Council, Mr. Milani stated that the council is a mess. He stated that they need to get their by-laws together first. Discussion ensued regarding the last election, and it was reported that a new slate of officers are scheduled to be elected in June. Further discussion ensued. Mr. van den Beemt stated that he plans to follow up with Greg Heitner about Towson Recreation Council.

### **New Business:**

Mr. Munzert reported that he reviewed the Liberty Road Recreation Council's constitution and by-laws and made necessary changes. He will contact the council and let them know they need to make these revisions.

Mr. Williams stated that the Joint Use Agreement was discussed at the last meeting with Board of Education. For the most part this works; however, there is a small percentage that there are issues with. Mr. Williams informed board members that he and Ms. Davis discuss specific issues at the quarterly meetings with Baltimore County Public Schools. Ms. Davis urged the board to encourage the council presidents to use the charts she previously provided, and contact the regional coordinator or her to get the issues resolved. She will email the charts again, to board members.

Regarding the Liberty Road Recreation Council refund issue, Ms. Davis announced that the refund has been issued. As for the cheerleading issue, Mr. van den Beemt stated that he has not heard anything more about this.

Mr. van den Beemt reported that the last time he spoke with the president of the Greater Loch Raven Recreation Council he was told that a refund would be issued. He has not heard anything more.

Mr. Weir reported on a recent issue regarding the Bread and Cheese creek clean up. There was 750 students from Towson who arrived on busses at Stricker Middle School and were told they could not conduct the clean up because it was opening day. Mr. Weir stated that the students were not even near the opening day festivities. Ms. Davis replied stating that she has not heard anything about this and would like to get more information.

### **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Mr. Milani moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Leonard seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter