

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

ERIC VAN DEN BEEMT, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2016

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, January 13, 2016, 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, Isaac Manjoe, Brian Weir, Robbie Leonard and Lexie Lieberman. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director, Beahta Davis, chief, Recreation Services and Michael Schneider, community outreach liaison.

Call to Order:

Chairman Eric van den Beemt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Brian Weir motioned to approve the December board meeting minutes, Mike Milani seconded, and all were in favor.

Comments by Individual Citizens:

Richard and Christa Keffer and Don Aro (Bobbi Aro was unable to attend) came before the board to appeal the suspension against them, instituted by the Bear Creek Recreation Council. Ms. Keffer began by stating that her daughter is no longer a participant of the Bear Creek Recreation Council; she is now with Gray Charles Recreation Council, with Mr. Keffer as her coach. They are done with this council; however, are appealing to the board in an effort to clear their name. Ms. Keffer provided background regarding their situation stating that two separate meetings have been held in an effort to resolve this matter. With that said, Mr. & Mrs. Keffer and Mr. & Mrs. Aro were suspended for one (1) year. Ms. Keffer stated that the accusations made against the family are false and they did nothing to warrant this suspension. The family appealed the suspension to the executive board to no avail. Mr. van den Beemt thanked them for attending and stated that the board would be in touch regarding their decision.

Christopher Fabyan, president, Bear Creek Recreation Council, addressed the board to share the council's side to the story. Mr. Fabyan provided a summary of what took place, which included the first attempt of resolution, two weeks into the season, to switch the child to another team. This was declined by The Keffer's. Mr. Fabyan stated that he conducted an investigation, which revealed what he deemed to be poor and inappropriate behavior by Mr. & Mrs. Keffer and Mr. & Mrs. Aro. Mr. Fabyan informed them of the allegations against them and reminded them of the Parent's Code of Conduct, which was given to them again. Mr. Fabyan stated that the behavior continued, and thus, the suspension was upheld. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of a reduced suspension.

Board Member Activities:

Mr. Milani reported that the sewing program at Catonsville Recreation Council was informed that all instructors must be county employees and not independent contractors. Beahta Davis replied stating that there are requirements when utilizing independent contractors and went on to discuss these requirements. Mr. Milani stated that he would follow up with this program.

Mr. Weir announced that they should soon have the finalized plans for the playground at Eastwood.

Director's Comments:

Director Barry F. Williams referenced the conversation that took place at the last board meeting regarding open meeting rules/regulations. Since the last meeting, Mr. Williams stated that he spoke with the Office of Law. He reported that the Board of Recreation and Parks must abide by the "Sunshine Laws," which includes advertising the meetings and having them open to the public. However, the recreation/nature councils do not have to abide by this – they can have closed council meetings and closed executive board meetings. Mr. Weir replied stating that he would relay this information.

Mr. Williams reported that the county is following through with the investigation regarding theft at Arbutus Recreation Council. He stated that the county has zero tolerance for this, and announced that he, Ms. Davis and Chris McCollum have a meeting with the State's Attorney. He will keep the board apprised of this.

Old Business:

Regarding social media, Mr. Weir reported that Greg Heitner posted the letter regarding best practices, which was sent to all council presidents.

Isaac Manjoe announced that he has tried to reach the president of the Liberty Road Recreation Council, but has not heard back from him. He stated that he was supposed to have received a revised copy of the constitution and by-laws, but he has not. Mr. Manjoe stated that he believes the council is making a real effort; he will stay on top of this.

Mr. Milani reported that he and Chip Hiebler were going to assist the Lansdowne-Riverview Recreation Council; however, Mr. Hiebler is out of town. Mr. Milani commented that nothing has changed to date; Ms. Davis agreed and brief discussion ensued. Mr. Milani stated that he plans to attend the next council meeting and will report back to the board.

Mr. Weir stated that the Back River Recreation Council has not received the document with board member's comments. Lisa Liupaeter reported that not all comments were included in the document, and some of the side notes may not be necessary. Board members decided to wait for Mr. Hiebler to return, to continue this conversation.

Mr. Williams announced that he met with Mike Field about John Cox's concerns with the Office of Law's policy on defending recreation/nature councils with regard to background checks. Mr. Field indicated that he knew Mr. Cox and told Mr. Williams he would contact him. Mr. Williams stated that he has not heard anything more. Mr. van den Beemt stated that the board would need to follow up once some sort of resolution is reached. Mr. Williams replied stating that he would send Mr. Cox a note requesting an update, to be shared with all councils.

Mr. Weir reported that Turner Station Recreation Council has not sent their by-laws back to the board.

New Business:

Board members discussed the financial review process and decided to send out information regarding recertification on August 1, with a due date of October 1, 2016.

Mr. Milani volunteered to be the chair of the nominating committee for the upcoming board elections; Mr. Manjoe volunteered for the committee as well. They presented the slate of officers, which is as follows: Eric van den Beemt for chairman and Chuck Munzert for vice chairman.

Ms. Davis reported on the 2016 Speaker Series and discussed the brochure. Information was sent to all council presidents; however, a few changes need to be made to the brochure, and then this will be posted on the website. Leslie Monfred asked Ms. Davis to get this to Mr. Heitner so he could post it on the Facebook page.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Weir moved to adjourn the meeting, Robbie Leonard seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Liupaeter