

# BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

ERIC VAN DEN BEEMT, CHAIRMAN

## Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2018

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Monday, March 5, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. at the Historic Courthouse, Towson, Maryland. In attendance were Chuck Munzert, chairman, Greg Heitner, vice chairman; board members Mike Milani, Leslie Monfred, Eric van den Beemt, Skip Hammond, Chip Hiebler, Robbie Leonard and Dylan Sloan. Recreation and Parks department staff included Chris McCollum, executive director, Agriculture, Nature & Special Facilities, Bob Smith, chief, Recreation Services and Mike Schneider, community outreach liaison. Michael Ruby from the Country Chronicle was also in attendance.

### **Call to Order:**

Past Chairman Eric van den Beemt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. At this time, Mr. van den Beemt discussed board member term expiration dates. He instructed board members to contact their county council representative, if interested in reappointment. Lisa Winters to provide board members with a list of term expiration dates.

### **Board Member Activities:**

Mr. van den Beemt reported on his ongoing discussion with members of the Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council – regarding the library project. He informed board members that a bid, for approximately \$8,000, recently came in from Property Management, for modifications to the library. However, the council found a licensed plumber that provided them with a quote of \$2,000. Brief discussion ensued. Mr. van den Beemt stated that the council wants the board's support in getting the project done at low cost. Chris McCollum stated that he has not seen the specifics, since the email on March 1 regarding cost estimate. This would be a Citizens Generated Project, which has been filled out and is moving along. Mr. van den Beemt stated that he presented this for information purposes.

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

Bob Smith addressed the board in Director Barry F. Williams' absence. Mr. Smith informed board members of the proposal, from Parkville Recreation Council, to name a ball diamond [at Belmont Park] in honor of long-time volunteer Ed Pinder. Brief discussion ensued. See item under "Action." Mr. Smith will begin working on the next step.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Vice Chairman Greg Heitner motioned to approve the February board meeting minutes, Mike Milani seconded, and all were in favor.

### **New Business:**

Regarding board elections, board members voted on the proposed slate of officers, which were presented by the nominating committee at the meeting on February 15. See item under “Action.” Leslie Monfred extended a huge thank you to Mr. van den Beemt for doing an excellent job as chairman, and stated that she really appreciates all of his hard work. Board members echoed Ms. Monfred’s praises.

Ms. Winters reported on discussion at the last meeting, about best practices and standard operating procedures for all recreation/nature councils. Discussion included creating a best practices document that councils would include in their by-laws, with Skip Hammond referencing the two page document that Edgemere-Sparrows Point Recreation Council has. Board members discussed collecting information from councils that currently have something in writing, reviewing this information, and creating a document to be distributed to each council. Mr. van den Beemt inquired about the next round of presidents meetings, stating that the board could ask councils about this, at that time. Ms. Winters informed board members that she is in the process of scheduling these meetings and would notify board members once dates were secured. Robbie Leonard stated that the board sent an email to council presidents two years ago, regarding minimal best practices; he will send this email to all board members for review.

### **Action:**

Mr. Leonard motioned to approve the dedication of a ball diamond at Belmont Park in honor of Mr. Pinder. Mr. Milani seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Chip Hiebler motioned to approve the slate of officers presented by the nominating committee at the February 15 meeting: Chuck Munzert, chairman and Greg Heitner, vice chairman. Mr. Hammond seconded the motion and all were in favor.

### **Comments by Individual Citizens:**

Mike Weber and Laurie Taylor-Mitchell were in attendance to address board members about poverty in Baltimore County. Mr. Weber introduced Ms. Taylor-Mitchell, president, Loch Raven Network (soon to be called Student Support Network). Mr. Weber stated that there is a severe poverty issue in Baltimore County, which he referred to as “an entrenched systemic issue.” Mr. Weber provided a hand-out to board members, which included various statistics. He stated that this is affecting so many schools. Mr. Weber pointed out the huge presence recreation councils have in schools, and stated that they are here to discuss a cooperative way to help these children. Discussion ensued. Mr. Weber said he wanted to make the board aware of this issue and stated that they are in need of an organization, with a volunteer base, and structure in place, that has access to these children in need. Mr. Weber reported that Loch Raven and Parkville have a room, with supplies gathered by volunteers, where children are permitted to go throughout the day (supervised) to get what they need. He stated that they are trying to raise awareness; they are looking for people to help in different areas. Mr. Weber would like to discuss this at the President’s Meetings. Mr. Hammond replied stating that they should attend each recreation/nature council meeting. Ms. Monfred suggested they attend the President’s Meetings, in addition to drafting an email to be sent to all council presidents. Mr. van den Beemt stated that My Neighbors Foundation (founded by John Hawks), in the Hereford Zone, sounds similar to what Mr. Weber is discussing. Mr. van den Beemt reported that this foundation covers the cost of reduced meals. Ms. Taylor-Mitchell replied stating that she is in the process of discussing this with Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS). Discussion ensued. Ms. Taylor-Mitchell stated the need of a partnership between government, private sector and the school system. She reported that response from Board of Education and County Council has not been very good.

BCPS focus is in technology, with these issues secondary. Mr. Weber stated that BCPS is supportive of the model, but have not come forth. Discussion ensued regarding the necessity to get this in the areas most in need. Mr. Hiebler replied stating that they should talk to each council; the councils in his area are currently assisting with uniforms, meals, etc. Mr. Weber stated that they started with one school (Loch Raven) and found out that Parkville's need was much worse. Mr. Weber stated that they are trying to get the message out – this is really a big issue.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Mr. Hiebler moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Hammond seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Winters