

# BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

CHUCK MUNZERT, CHAIRMAN

## Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2018

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, November 14, 2018, at 6:00 p.m., at Oregon Ridge Lodge, Cockeysville, Maryland. In attendance were Chuck Munzert, chairman, Greg Heitner, vice chairman; board members Mike Milani, Leslie Monfred, Eric van den Beemt, Isaac Manjoe, Robbie Leonard, Chip Hiebler and Dylan Sloan. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director and Bob Smith, chief, Recreation Services. Michael Ruby from the Country Chronicle was also in attendance.

### **Call to Order:**

Chairman Chuck Munzert called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

### **Board Member Activities:**

Vice Chairman Greg Heitner stated that a number of people [from two different organizations in his area] approached him with concerns about programs sub-letting fields. Mr. Heitner stated that apparently, this has been happening, and he wanted to make everyone aware so all could keep an eye on this.

Eric van den Beemt reported on his visit to the Ag Center, stating that both Chris McCollum and Fred Homan were there. Both spent a great deal of time talking about their plans, and how open they have been. In addition, a passing reference was made about the outdoor riding ring, and how expensive it would be due to drainage. Mr. van den Beemt stated that two weeks later, bull dozers were on site starting this work. Mr. van den Beemt commented that he thinks anything you hear from Mr. McCollum or Mr. Homan should be taken with a grain of salt.

Robbie Leonard inquired about the possibility of painting the tennis court lines different from the pickleball lines. Director Barry F. Williams replied, stating that the tennis court lines are white. He further stated that staff have met with Karen Williams, and are trying to be as accommodating as possible. Mr. Williams stated that the color of the tennis court lines would not be changed; however, when we have the lines repainted, we will try to make them a more vibrant white. These lines *are* a different color than the pickleball lines. Mr. Williams commented that pickleball has really taken off.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. van den Beemt motioned to approve the October board meeting minutes, Chip Hiebler seconded, and all were in favor.

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

Mr. Williams reported on the quarterly meetings between members of Recreation and Parks and Baltimore County Public Schools, stating that these meetings have gone fairly well. There are fewer issues being discussed, which he believes is a result of good communication.

On another note, Mr. Williams stated that he is cautiously optimistic, regarding the new administration. He stated that he is pleased that County Executive-Elect John “Johnny O’ Olszewski won. He stated that both candidates were interested in making Recreation and Parks better. Mr. Williams stated that as part of the transition, all departments were tasked with completing a transition report, and a hot button item list. In addition, Mr. Williams reported that County Executive-Elect Olszewski is very much aware of what is going on at the Ag Center. Mr. Williams stated that he is hoping, under this new regime, that Recreation and Parks, as well as other agencies, will have more control over capital expenditures.

### **Old Business:**

Standard operating procedures for recreation/nature councils was not discussed, as Skip Hammond was not in attendance.

Mr. Munzert reported that he attended court on Thursday, regarding the theft from Back River Recreation Council. The defendant was sentenced to five years; however, this was reduced to a two-year probation. The defendant’s employer attended, along with the company’s auditor, guaranteeing a check, twice a month, sent directly to Middle River Recreation Council.

Mr. Williams reported that things are pending regarding Bengies-Chase and Owings Mills Recreation Council concerns. Brief discussion ensued.

Regarding Liberty Road travel basketball, Mr. Hiebler reported that he attended the October 17 meeting, and brought forth the strong recommendation of an external audit. The executive board voted, and passed this action. Mr. Hiebler reported that the accountant is working on the 1099, and will then start on the audit of the two travel basketball programs.

### **New Business:**

Mr. Munzert announced that recertification is forthcoming for all recreation/nature councils. He plans to mention this to attendees, at the meeting this evening with Assistant State’s Attorney Adam Lippe. He asked board members to review recertification documents, previously distributed, to see if there are any necessary revisions. Discussion ensued. Board members discussed the strong recommendation of being bonded, and background checks. Mr. Williams stated that when background checks were initially budgeted, it was for the figure of ~20,000 volunteers. We started with ~10,000 volunteers, and have been hovering around 8,000. Mr. Williams stated that we have enough information to ask about revisiting this; he will be glad to take this to the administration. The question was raised about how the background check policy can be enforced. Bob Smith replied, stating that we can [and did] pull permits.

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

Jeff Miller, president, Loch Raven Badminton Club (LRBC), addressed the board. Mr. Miller stated that the club currently has 222 members: 150 adults and 72 children. The LRBC began playing at Loch Raven High School (LRHS). However, for the past seven years, the club has been playing at Northeast Regional Recreation Center (NERRC). Last Friday, the LRBC was told they are being moved back to LRHS, effective January 2019. The group is very upset about this. Mr. Miller stated that they are on the schedule at NERRC until June 2019. However, they were thrown out of this facility. Staff relayed this information, stating that it was not their decision – it was the decision of someone higher up. Mr. Miller stated that this is not fair. When inquiring about this, the group was told that the move to NERRC was temporary. Mr. Miller stated that he does not believe this to be the case. Mr. Miller stated that he was available for any questions.

Lily Li handed out a letter to all board members, which she read aloud. She emphasized the significance of the LRBC to the Asian community, and requested the program remain at NERRC.

Liyan Song spoke to board members, stating that she is upset, shocked and disappointed about the decision, which was made without consulting members of the LRBC. She discussed the wide age range of club members, and echoed the statements made prior to her.

Jenny Zhou (and children) addressed those in attendance. Ms. Zhou stated that she has been the coaching director for LRBC for six years. She discussed the benefits of the club, to the children and other participants, and asked that the children be given the opportunity to continue with what they have. Andre Tigas spoke about how he feels about the club, and the decision that was made.

Maria Espinas is a schoolteacher. Her words echoed what those before her have stated. Ms. Espinas commented on the good play time, courts, lighting and coaching, and referred to the LRBC as family.

Ryan Tideemie, a freshman at Dulaney High School, heard about NERRC and the LRBC, and decided to check it out. He stated that he ended up doing very well. Mr. Tideemie stated that the move to LRHS would not be able to support the club the way it is now, stating that they would not be able to play on the weekends or during the summer; this move takes away too much. Mr. Tideemie reported that prior to the move to NERRC, membership had to be limited to 100 participants.

Mr. Williams thanked all who chose to speak, and identified himself as director of the Department of Recreation and Parks. He admitted that how the group found out about the move was poor on our part, and stated that he would address this with staff. Mr. Williams reported that staff are scheduled to meet with Mr. Miller and Ms. Li tomorrow at 2:00 p.m., at the Loch Raven facility. He would like to have this meeting, as scheduled, and would like them to look at the facility. Mr. Williams stated that he wants to keep everything intact. He is supportive of good, thriving programs that support individuals and families – he heard all of this. Mr. Williams announced that he is delaying this decision until June 30, 2019. This will give staff time to look at all options. Mr. Williams stated that he is committed to figuring out a good plan, a win-win.

Kristine Santos told those in attendance about the charity tournament the LRBC holds each year. The LRBC has been able to raise over \$68,000 for the Red Cross. In addition, Ms. Santos stated that the club has 64 mats, which cannot be stored at a school.

### **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Isaac Manjoe moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. van den Beemt seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Winters