

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

MICHAEL WEBER, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2013

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, September 11, 2013 at 6:05 p.m. at the Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum, located at 300 Oella Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland. In attendance were Mike Weber, chairman; Eric van den Beemt, vice chairman; board members Leslie Monfred, David Smylie, Mike Milani, Chuck Munzert, Brian Weir and Charles Gilman. Recreation and Parks department staff included Barry F. Williams, director; Chris McCollum, executive director, Agriculture, Nature & Special Facilities; Beahta Davis, chief, Recreation Services and Justine Schaeffer, community supervisor, Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum.

Director Barry F. Williams welcomed everyone to the Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum. He then introduced Justine Schaeffer who provided background information regarding the site and gave those in attendance a tour of the facility.

Approval of Minutes:

Vice Chairman Eric van den Beemt motioned to approve the July board meeting minutes, Charles Gilman seconded, and all were in favor.

Announcements:

Chairman Mike Weber stated that he and Mr. van den Beemt plan to meet before the next board meeting to finalize sub-committees in an effort to help with the work load.

Director's Comments:

Mr. Williams reported that the department received significant funding in the capital budget, which is contrary to year's past. He further stated that there are many things going on around the County. For example, the groundbreaking for Katie and Will's Trail at Marshy Point Nature Center was held on Tuesday, July 23, and WAGS Dog Park in Saint Helena officially opened on Saturday, August 24. The dog park was open in June without any locks and an incident occurred, thus resulting in the closing of the dog park. The department was then consulted and an official opening took place. In addition, the groundbreaking for the Perry Paw Dog Park at Honeygo Regional Park is scheduled on Tuesday, September 17 at 11:30 AM. This is a great site, but parking is an issue. Board members are invited to attend.

Mr. Williams informed board members that he had a meeting yesterday regarding Spring Grove, a site consisting of a little less than 9 acres. Bryan Sheppard also attended this meeting. Mr. Williams announced that Kara Burman will lead a small group that will meet at least twice each quarter before the project gets underway. The site could possibly consist of two multi-purpose fields and parking. The project would probably not begin until 2015; however, Mr. Williams anticipates there will be a

public meeting in the spring for anyone to attend to convey their opinion/input. The meeting would most likely take place at one of the schools in the area. Mr. Williams stated that the most significant and first piece is to obtain the lease agreement with the State.

Mr. Williams announced that Acorn Hill, the playground project proposed for Robert E. Lee Park, is back on.

Old Business:

Re 1099: Mr. van den Beemt reported that he received an email from Steve Cammarata who runs the Central Maryland Soccer Association. This association is complying with the 1099 issue by having a number of recreation councils incorporate referee fees as part of the overall league fee. The association remarked that it would be more difficult to get referees knowing they would be taxed. In addition, Mr. van den Beemt stated that some of the other associations are not in agreement, including the Baltimore Beltway Soccer League. Mr. van den Beemt is looking for guidance as to what to tell these leagues and the recreation councils.

In regards to football, Mike Milani stated that all of the Baltimore County groups decided to pay cash on the field but to keep track of who they have paid. Mr. Milani questioned the board's authority on this issue and what the next step would be. Mr. van den Beemt stated that we can't have a situation where some programs are complying and others are not. The risk is that the recreation council would be audited and found that they are not following the law. The board can only make a recommendation to the recreation councils; they do not have the power to enforce. Mr. van den Beemt stated that the Central Maryland Soccer League is not going to comply next year if the other associations are not in compliance. Mr. Weber stated that Mr. van den Beemt and Mr. Milani should continue discussions on this subject and keep him involved. They should address the board when they have some resolution. Mr. Williams stated that he thinks the board has done all that they can do; they do not have the power to enforce. Mr. van den Beemt stated that, if we do not obtain a higher compliance, we would end up with less compliance. Mr. Weber inquired about re-sending the 1099 memo, and include documentation available through public record regarding the Howard County audit. Mr. van den Beemt stated that he would draft a letter clarifying what, why and the risk of non-compliance. He will send the letter to Mr. Weber once it's prepared, with the intent of taking a vote on this at the next board meeting.

In regards to the Baltimore County Sailing Center (BCSC), Mr. Weber stated that he had spoken with John Markley. However, the information that outlined what the BCSC needed to do to move forward was sent to Brent Ostbye, former president. Wayne Definbaugh previously said that the BCSC was working on their 501(c)(3). Mr. Weber will reach out to Mr. Markley to make sure they are moving forward with this.

Mr. Weber announced that all the recreation councils have agreed to cooperate and are working with the board to become re-certified. Mr. Weber thanked the board for their hard work and stated that he would form a sub-committee to work on financial review in the future.

Brian Weir discussed the West Inverness Recreation Council and questioned whether they should be absorbed by another council. Beahta Davis responded stating that she believes the West Inverness Recreation Council has outstanding bills, which makes this a different situation than Patapsco Neck-

Norwood Recreation Council (PNN). Mr. Weir stated that he would look into this. Discussion ensued regarding the merger of recreation councils and dissolving of a council.

Mr. Weir stated that the majority of recreation councils he has dealt with thus far have never seen a Treasurer's Report. This should be at every meeting for every program. Chuck Munzert stated that some recreation councils don't have anything in their by-laws stating that they need a Treasurer's Report. Mr. Weir is planning to attend a council meeting tomorrow and intends to state that the councils have until the end of the month to comply with a financial review or they could possibly lose certification. In addition, Mr. Weir will also state that a Treasurer's Report is needed at every meeting. Mr. Weber responded stating that we need to know that the recreation councils are working towards this.

Mike Schneider conducted research for PNN and what they needed to do regarding the merger and board members want to thank him for this.

Mr. Weber stated that the Q & A's from the Office of Law were sent to all council presidents and to date, we have not heard back from any of them. Mr. Gilman and Mr. Milani worked on the questions from the Perry Hall Recreation Council, and Mr. Williams forwarded them to Mike Field. Mr. Williams stated that he spoke to Mr. Field who stated that he would review the information in time for the next board meeting.

Mr. Weber stated that Ed Pinder sent him an opinion on libel and slander. Mr. Gilman was asked to review this and provide summary language that the board could distribute.

Regarding Gray Charles and West Inverness Recreation Councils, Mr. Weber stated that any discussion would be tabled for the time being.

Ms. Davis handed out a document regarding Coaches Code of Conduct. Leslie Monfred stated that the document looked very comprehensive. Mr. Williams stated that we could advocate for this. The document provides the recreation councils strength to act against non-compliance. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding suspension/banning of coaches and volunteers.

Board members discussed, in length, background checks and whether or not they should be conducted. Mr. Schneider conducted research regarding this subject; Mr. Weber will forward this information to the board. Mr. Williams stated that the board should provide best practices and recommendations. Mr. Weber suggested forming a sub-committee to look into what the best practices are, what is available, and recommendations of alternatives. Mr. Williams suggested that Mr. Weber contact Mr. Definbaugh and ask him to forward the information he has on this subject in the event he is unable to attend another meeting. Mr. Weir suggested taking a poll at the next Southeast Area President's Meeting to see how many recreation councils are interested in conducting background checks.

New Business:

Mr. Weber distributed information regarding the changes to Local Open Space Waiver Fees, amending the allocation to NeighborSpace of Baltimore County, Inc., of such fees collected. Mr. Weber informed board members that he met with Barbara Hopkins, executive director of NeighborSpace. He believes that the board should develop a relationship with this group. They will

have funding for the acquisition of small plots of land. He would like Ms Hopkins to attend one of the Board of Recreation and Parks meetings to discuss what their organization does. In addition, NeighborSpace may want a member from the Board of Recreation and Parks to attend one of their meetings. This directly affects the amount of money going to Recreation and Parks. The Baltimore County Council adopted a resolution requesting the Planning Board to develop a comprehensive formula for the manner of establishing Local Open Space waiver fees. Ms. Monfred and Mr. Munzert conducted research on this matter. Mr. Munzert stated that NeighborSpace decides what to do with the money they receive and that it may not go to open space. Mr. Weber stated that board members need to go before the Planning Board to make sure they know how this will affect Recreation and Parks. He stated that someone from the board should get in touch with a member of the Planning Board to see what they are doing. He believes the board should take a stand.

In regards to the proposed revisions to the Parkville Recreation Council Constitution and By-Laws, Mr. Weber asked board members to review this over the next month and come to the October meeting ready to make a decision. Mr. Weber will get in touch with Mr. Definbaugh. Ms. Davis voiced her concern with a sentence in Article II, Section 1, which references the Board of Education. Ms. Davis stated that this should state Department of Recreation and Parks and not Board of Education.

Mr. Weber reported that he and Mr. Williams attended the Board of Education meeting last night to discuss the Joint Use Agreement. The Board of Education decided to approve this agreement. A copy of the agreement will be distributed to board members, and Mr. Williams will share this once he receives an official copy. Ms. Davis stated that when meeting with the principals, discussion should include the artificial turf field agreement and the Joint Use Agreement. Mr. Williams would like to look at the priority use of fields. No date has been selected for the meeting with principals, possibly some time in October or November.

Ms. Monfred met with Councilwoman Vicki Almond to inquire about her stance on smoking at Recreation and Parks sites and facilities. She was told that there was some interest for a bill banning smoking at parks, but there was no way to enforce this. Mr. Weber stated that the board can make a recommendation but does not have the authority to enforce this. Mr. Weber had given thought to Mike Pierce's last stance before the board. He stated that Mr. Pierce attended an earlier meeting in which Lisa Liupaeter was not in attendance, and a recorder was used. There was an issue with the recorder and the board's discussion with Mr. Pierce was not reflected in the minutes. Mr. Williams announced that the butt station at Victory Villa Community Center was moved. Mr. Pierce responded stating that this is not acceptable; this does not address the problem he raised three years ago. Ms. Monfred inquired about how a smoking ban would be enforced. Mr. Pierce responded stating that a law should be passed just like Howard County has done. Mr. Pierce stated that most people will comply. Mr. Milani stated that Howard County has 25 rangers to enforce this law. Mr. Williams stated that Councilman Marks came before him to discuss this issue, and Mr. Williams suggested that he talk to the other County Council members; Councilman Marks was not able to get the support he needed for this. Further discussion ensued. Mr. Weber inquired about whether Mr. Pierce had any other people that would support this, and Mr. Pierce responded stating that there are a lot of people who support this. Mr. Weber stated that by having others join Mr. Pierce in this issue, it would bring more weight to the issue and, therefore, provides more ammunition to the table.

Mr. Weir discussed the sale of the North Point Government Center and stated that the board should take a stance on this matter and make a statement. Mr. Weber responded that he would draft a letter stating the board's concern regarding the loss of parkland.

Action:

Mr. Weber and Mr. van den Beemt will meet to set subcommittees.

Mr. Milani and Mr. van den Beemt will meet to review 1099 recommendations.

Mr. Gilman to review Mr. Pinder's opinion on libel and slander and make a recommendation as to the letter to the recreation councils.

Mr. Milani motioned that the board issue the Coaches Code of Conduct to recommend to recreation councils for best practice for Baltimore County Recreation and Parks for signature by coaches, Ms. Monfred seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Mr. Milani motioned to inform the members of the Baltimore County Council that background checks is an issue the board is discussing, Chuck Munzert seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Mr. Definbaugh to review Parkville Recreation Council's Constitution and By-Laws in time for vote by the next meeting.

Mr. Williams to distribute the final approved Board of Education version of the Joint Use Agreement for a vote by the board.

Mr. Milani motioned to recommend a ban on smoking on all Recreation and Parks property and facilities in Baltimore County, Ms. Monfred seconded the motion and all were in favor.*

Ms. Monfred motioned to have Berkshire-Eastwood assume jurisdiction that previously belonged to Patapsco Neck-Norwood, Mr. Milani seconded and all were in favor.*


Mr. Weir motioned to state that the board is very concerned about the potential loss of parkland and how it will be replaced and maintaining of parkland in community also believe we should be consulted on this decision so we can provide input from our constituents. Mr. Gilman seconded the motion and all were in favor.*

* Mr. van den Beemt was not present at the time of the vote.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Weir moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Gilman seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lisa Liupaeter