



BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kelly Madigan, Executive Director, Office of Ethics and Accountability

FROM: Board of Recreation and Parks of Baltimore County

DATE: August 13, 2020

SUBJECT: Response to Investigative Summary RE Denial of Recertification of Friends of Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum

In response to the following statement included in the Investigative Summary, “The Office's investigation revealed that the existing Statement of Policies, Bylaws and Rules of Procedure that govern the Board do not address procedures for the recertification or decertification of nature and recreation councils, nor do they set forth an appeals process should nature or recreation councils be denied recertification or be decertified.”, this is a proposal to revise our current bylaws to include this Grievance Procedure. In addition, an amendment to the bylaws will establish a Grievance Committee consisting of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, and the representative of the Councilmanic District from which the grievance originated.

Grievance Procedure

A grievance may be brought by a council, a council member, an unidentified individual, or by a member of the Board of Recreation and Parks of Baltimore County (henceforth known as the Board).

Furthermore, a grievance can be initiated by the Board as a result of failure of the Council to follow the requirements stipulated in the Recertification Review document that each Council is required to submit bi-annually.

Dealing with a grievance promptly and fairly is vital for the council and the members it serves and is aimed at reducing the risk of future claims of unfair or illegal actions as well as violations of Board requirements for certification.

1. Informal Action

If the grievance is relatively minor, a member of the Board should have a discussion with the council to see if it can be resolved informally.

In most cases, a quiet word is all that is needed to prevent an issue from escalating.

The Board should keep a paper trail of all stages of the grievance procedure, including any informal resolution that has been agreed.

If the grievance is serious, or the person initiating it feels that it has not been satisfactorily resolved, the Board should deal with the complaint under its formal grievance procedure, and ask the person making the complaint to put his or her grievance in writing.

The Board should immediately respond to the complainant **in writing** that a review has been initiated.

2. Investigation

As soon as possible after receiving a grievance, the Board should carry out an investigation. This investigation will be carried out by the Grievance Committee. In many cases, this will be a relatively straightforward fact-finding exercise.

If the grievance involves other individuals or councils, they should be informed and given an opportunity to provide their own evidence.

The investigation process will depend on the specific circumstances of the case. Ultimately, the aim of the investigation is to establish the full facts of the grievance before any decision is taken.

3. Grievance Meeting

After the investigation, the Grievance Committee should hold a meeting with the Council representative(s) so that he or she has an opportunity to explain the complaint.

The complainant should be asked how he or she thinks the grievance should be resolved and what outcome he or she is seeking.

4. Decision

Having considered the evidence, the Grievance Committee will decide whether to uphold or reject the grievance.

The decision should be communicated to the Council or individual, in writing, as soon as possible.

If the grievance is upheld or partially upheld, the Board should tell the Council or individual what action it proposes to take and how this will be implemented.

5. Appeal

If the party making the complaint is dissatisfied with the decision, an appeal can be made to the full Board for their review. Following this review, a final decision on the matter will be communicated to all parties.