

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

GREG HEITNER, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., at Oregon Ridge Park and Lodge. In attendance were Greg Heitner, Chairman; Corey Johns, Vice Chairman; and board members Eric van den Beemt, Isaac Manjoe, Chuck Munzert, Dana Jackson, Phil Davis and Desiree Mundell-Collins. Recreation and Parks Department staff included Director Roslyn Johnson; Bob Smith, Deputy Director of Recreation and Facility Operations; Cortney Weinstock, Deputy Director of Administration; Ben Porter, Chief of Nature, Agricultural, Environmental and Programming Centers; and Annie Sanchez, Park Manager.

Also in attendance: Ralph Brown, President, Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council; Jeffrey Budnitz, Lake Roland Nature Council; Scott Nichols; and Michael Ruby, Country Chronicle.

Call to Order:

Chairman Greg Heitner called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Board Member Activities:

Desiree Mundell-Collins attended the Arbutus Recreation and Parks Council meeting and reported that things are going well. She talked to them about the recertification process and reported that they have not gotten tax returns in; their accountant passed away. Ms. Mundell-Collins relayed that the president requested an update regarding the Joint Use Agreement (JUA). This will be discussed under “New Business”.

Isaac Manjoe referenced the matter with the Liberty Road Recreation Council day care issue. However, he does not have full information and stated that he would get back to the Board. The County was made aware of this situation via the parents of the program participants.

Vice Chairman Corey Johns attended the virtual Oregon Ridge Regional Park Master Plan (ORRPMP) meeting. Mr. Johns reported that this was a good meeting, further stating that the firm is really impressive. He also reported that he worked with the Baltimore County Sailing Center (BCSC) on revisions to their bylaws and stated that this will be discussed under “New Business”. Mr. Johns spoke with Jaron Shaul who is advocating for mountain biking at Oregon Ridge. He suggested other opportunities regarding advocating for bikes in Baltimore County, and also referenced Batavia Park. Bob Smith was not opposed to the idea. Mr. Johns suggested the group attend the County Executive’s Budget Town Halls to advocate for this. Brief discussion ensued regarding other options aside from Baltimore County Recreation and Parks. Lastly, Mr. Johns reported that he had a conversation with Mr. Smith and Jerry Clark regarding Rosedale Park, which comes down to advocating at the Budget Town Halls. The more people that advocate, the more likely it is to get funding.

Eric van den Beemt informed board members that he has been working with councils in his area regarding recertification.

Dana Jackson reported that all seems to be going well in her area. She attended the Gray Charles Recreation Council meeting and stated that she thought it was successful. Chuck Munzert was also in attendance. The Council had questions regarding recertification, which she was able to answer.

Mr. Heitner stated that he has been in contact with Patti Schindler, with the Baltimore County Horse Council (BCHC). They had their first open meeting this week and they are moving right along. Mr. Heitner announced that he has received two questions in the last month regarding the JUA. In addition, he had two community groups come to him regarding the Gerst Road property. Mr. Heitner spoke with Mr. Smith and will pass this information along. Mr. Heitner also informed board members of a group comprised of Perry Hall HS band alumni looking to become part of a recreation council. Mr. Heitner commented that he thought this was pretty cool.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Johns moved to approve the November board meeting minutes; Mr. Munzert seconded; and all were in favor.

Chairman's Report:

Mr. Heitner reported that he knows everyone is working hard regarding recertification and thanked them for their efforts, and for getting things moving in the right direction.

Director's Comments:

Director Roslyn Johnson reported that the Department is publishing its first Winter Program Guide for all department directed events, programs and services. The guide will feature activities at nature centers and RACs, with general information for community centers, during December through March. In addition, the Recreation Services division has begun offering a series of drop-in style programs for residents. These programs are free to the public and offer a way for residents to access recreation more directly.

Ms. Johnson mentioned the registration system application and scope of work and reported that the Department is moving forward on this. In addition, Ms. Johnson reported on Angel Park, stating that once the contract is concluded in three years, the park will be turned over to Recreation and Parks.

Mr. Johnson announced that Samantha Walters has transferred to another position and is no longer with the Department.

The Department hosted a public input meeting for the ORRPMP to share concepts and gather input, with a short presentation by the Department and the consultant. It was relayed that this site is probably not the best for mountain biking. The Department held a groundbreaking for the new RAC in the Middle River community, and a groundbreaking for the new Cal Ripken, Sr. Youth Development Park at Fields at Renaissance Park, which will be the first in Baltimore County.

The Department acquired the Leadership Through Athletics property, which will be staffed by the Department and will open shortly. In addition, Ms. Johnson reported on a 109-acre property that the County is looking into and stated that this would be perfect for mountain biking.

The Department is getting ready to go live with the site inspection forms, and moving forward on the GIS mapping application. Ms. Johnson also reported that the Department will host a Skate with Santa event, on December 9 and 16, at the Reisterstown Sportsplex.

Ms. Johnson attended the BCPS principals meeting last week and reported that they were very open and receptive. She discussed the JUA with them, in addition to answering questions about the RACs, which they were happy about.

Lastly, Ms. Johnson announced that the Department has grown 500 poinsettias at the Ag Center greenhouse, and there is one for each board member to take with them this evening. She stated that the team did a great job, further remarking that they turned out beautiful. Ms. Johnson wished all Happy Holidays!

Old Business:

Regarding recertification, board members reviewed and discussed the status of outstanding councils. Ms. Mundell-Collins stated that the Arbutus Recreation and Parks Council emailed, stating they would send taxes when possible, and she stated that she believes they are working in good faith. Regarding the Baltimore Highlands Recreation Council, Phil Davis reported that he spoke with the council president and they are working to submit this over the next week. Brooks Paternotte emailed Lisa Winters and stated that Greater Pikesville Recreation Council could be recertified, and that he heard from the president of the Owings Mills Recreation and Parks Council who reported that they are working on this. As for Towson Recreation Council, Ms. Winters stated that the last Mr. Paternotte reported was that the Council was working on this. Mr. Paternotte was not in attendance to provide an update on this, nor an update on Towsontowne Recreation Council. Mr. van den Beemt received recertification paperwork for Carroll Manor and Hereford Zone Recreation Councils. In addition, he reported that Prettyboy Recreation Council still has some issues; however, they are working to resolve them. He referenced the day care program, which has a lot of expenses, further stating that all of this is now documented. They have a draft of the 990, but they have not yet submitted this. Mr. van den Beemt said he would vote to approve the recertification once he received word that the 990 was submitted. Regarding Bear Creek Recreation Council, Ms. Jackson stated that they said they filed taxes, but did not send them to her. She stated that she would follow up with them. Ms. Jackson reported that she received and reviewed recertification paperwork from Colgate, Edgemere-Sparrows Point, Gray Charles and North Point Village Recreation Councils.

Board members identified those councils that are not in compliance nor working towards compliance, and discussed the letter to be sent to these councils. These councils are as follows: Towsontowne, Dundalk-Eastfield and Watersedge Recreation Councils. Mr. Smith stated that a letter has been drafted, and asked what dates should be inserted, referencing January 1 and February 1. Mr. Munzert replied, stating that the original plan was that no additional permits be issued to delinquent councils, after November 1, and any council that is delinquent after December 1, the Board is asking the County to pull their permits. He stated that they are not doing what they should be doing. Mr. van den Beemt seconded Mr. Munzert's statement. Ms. Mundell-Collins replied, stating that the Board needs to act on what they say they are going to do, and move forward with this. Mr. Heitner stated that the councils would have to be working with us – either submitting required information, or working towards submitting the required information. The councils need to be working with board members, and the Board would relay this to the Department. Mr. Smith asked the Board if they would then decertify the non-compliant councils, questioning this as it relates to pavilion and facility rentals. Mr. Heitner replied, stating that the councils would not be decertified; they would not be recertified for not meeting the requirements of the Board. Therefore, they would not be recognized as certified by the Board and would lose insurance through the County, and as of January 1, these councils will have existing permits revoked.

New Business:

Mr. Heitner reported that there are several board member terms that end December 31, 2022, to include Ms. Mundell-Collins, Mr. Johns, Mr. Manjoe and Mr. van den Beemt. Mr. van den Beemt reported that he has spoken with Councilman Kach and stated that he is not reapplying to serve on the Board. Councilman Kach is actively looking for a replacement. Mr. Johns stated that he had a conversation with the County Executive's office. He stated that they informed him that they are working on board and commission reappointments and

will notify members. Mr. Manjoe stated that he has been reappointed and said he would share this letter with Ms. Winters. Mr. Heitner announced that he will be leaving the Board after the meeting in February and has already notified Councilman Marks.

Mr. Davis sent out an email to board members requesting nominations for Chairman and Vice Chairman. Mr. Heitner reported that the slate provided to him by Mr. Paternotte is as follows: Mr. Johns for Chairman, and Mr. Paternotte, Ms. Mundell-Collins, Mr. Davis and Mr. Munzert for Vice Chairman. This item will be on next month's agenda under "Old Business" and the election will take place in January. Mr. Heitner thanked the Nominating Committee.

Mr. Johns reported that the BCSC bylaw revisions were sent out to all board members before the meeting. He stated that he was working with them pretty extensively as they were going through the process. The revisions were approved by the Council. See item under "Action".

Mr. Johns addressed the Board regarding communication with the States Attorney. He reported that he had a conversation about a council with a financial issue. It was then stated that there are other councils with issues. Mr. Johns contacted the State's Attorney asking about this, and asked why the Board was unaware as this would be helpful to be made aware of this when it gets to a public state. He was told that they are happy to connect with a group from the Board, to meet with Adam Lippe to discuss how to stay in the loop more. Mr. Johns agreed to head this meeting. Mr. Heitner asked those interested to reach out to Mr. Johns.

Mr. Heitner thanked Mr. van den Beemt for all of his time and all he has done for the Board. Mr. van den Beemt thanked the Board and the County. Mr. Heitner thanked Ms. Johnson for guidance and friendship as well.

Action:

Mr. van den Beemt motioned to recertify Greater Pikesville, Carroll Manor, Hereford Zone, Colgate, Edgemere-Sparrows Point, Gray Charles and North Point Village Recreation Councils; Mr. Manjoe seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Mr. Johns motioned to approve the proposed revisions to the BCSC bylaws; Mr. van den Beemt seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Comments By Individual Citizens:

Scott Nichols reported that he is here to listen, and stated that he is interested to serve at some point.

Jeffrey Budnitz thanked all board members that are heading out, recognizing all of their efforts. He spoke of the BCHC and the positive impact they are having. He then directed his communication to Ms. Johnson, stating that he had a meeting way back with her. He referenced her role in MRPA, and thanked her for everything she has done.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. van den Beemt moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Manjoe seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Winters