

# BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

COREY JOHNS, CHAIR

## Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, July 10, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at the Back River Community Center. In attendance were Corey Johns, Chair; Phil Davis, Vice Chair; and board members Danielle Bassett, Brooks Paternotte, Jon Marsalek, Isaac Manjoe, Pat Roddy, Chuck Munzert, Dana Jackson, and Desiree Mundell-Collins.

Also in attendance: Jeffrey Budnitz, Lake Roland Nature Council (LRNC); and Kim Harrison, Overlea-Fullerton Recreation Council (OFRC).

### **Call to Order:**

Chair Corey Johns called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Director Bob Smith shared background information regarding the Back River Community Center and welcomed all to the facility.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Prior to the approval of minutes, Mr. Johns requested to correct the spelling from Debra Green to Deborah Green. Chuck Munzert motioned to approve the June meeting minutes; Danielle Bassett seconded the motion, Jon Marsalek abstained because he did not have a chance to review the minutes in full, and all other members in attendance were in favor.

### **CivicRec Demonstration:**

Mr. Smith introduced Baltimore County Recreation and Parks (BCRP) staff member Scott Stanfill. Mr. Stanfill provided an overview of CivicRec, a web-based recreation management platform for all things related to Baltimore County recreation facilities, facility and permit reservations, programs registrations, and revenue collection. Mr. Stanfill reported that there are currently ~12,600 user accounts, 1,283 pavilion reservations online for \$280,677, 148 sports fields reservations online for \$39,677 including 15 turf field reservations for \$7,363, and 1,697 program reservations for \$200,556 including 565 summer camp registrations for \$104,779, and answered questions from those in attendance.

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

Regarding staff movement, new hires and retirements, Mr. Smith announced that there is nothing to report regarding staff movement or retirements at this time. However, the Department has made offers, or is in the onboarding process for the Human Resources Analyst, Office Administrator for the Deputy Director, RAC Leaders, Naturalist I at Oregon Ridge, Farm Park Manager, Public Information Officer, and Community Supervisors. Further, Mr. Smith reported that the vacancy rate is now down to 6.9%. Mr. Johns shared a text he received regarding staff member Bobby Gay and the great job he does. In addition, Mr. Johns questioned the change to Therapeutic Recreation. Deputy Director Cortney Weinstock replied, stating that the former Therapeutic Recreation Human Services Program Supervisor left employment. This position will be posted to fill the vacancy.

As it relates to public policy, Mr. Smith stated that we will continue to add policies onto the website. In addition, the Department recently launched the capital projects webpage, with ten projects currently listed on this site. The goal is to add five more each week until we get them all on this list, in an effort to provide more information to the public. Further, Mr. Smith reported that we are currently scrubbing all webpages. The County implemented a change to the content management system and various links were interrupted as a result.

Regarding use of school facilities, BCRP met with BCPS to work on moving us from “the line with everyone else” submitting requests for use of facilities, to eliminate some of the steps, resulting in a under 30-day permit approval turnaround, versus 45 days. Mr. Smith stated that this is a move in the right direction. Further, we have established regular meetings between BCRP and BCPS staff.

The MOU with Mount Carmel was mentioned last month. Mr. Smith reported that they are currently reviewing some of the pieces in the MOU. Mount Carmel will have after school until 6 p.m., and all other times planned with the local community office. Discussion ensued regarding their involvement with securing funding for the Essex Field at The Fields at Renaissance Park.

The PAL Board Donation Acceptance is scheduled to go before County Council on September 16. A supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$18,840.06 is needed to enable Baltimore County Recreation and Parks to utilize a donation from the now defunct Police Athletic League (PAL) Board of Directors. In the past, under PAL, the Board of Directors raised funds to enhance the experiences of the children, by attending educational, cultural and athletic events that would otherwise not be possible. This included cost of tickets, transportation to and from these events, and other program supplies. Now that the PAL Board of Directors has been dissolved, this donation is to continue to use these remaining funds for these purposes.

Upcoming events include the Middle River Recreation Activity Center (RAC) Ribbon Cutting on August 7, Rosedale RAC Ribbon Cutting on September 27, and ribbon cuttings for Meadow Creek Park and Hazelwood Skate Park, which will be scheduled in the fall. In addition, the Department’s 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration is scheduled for July 20. Under design are the following projects: cricket pitch, Belfast Road Park Site, Days Cove Park, and Sparrows Point Park.

If board members have any input on issues related to joint use, Mr. Smith suggested consolidating these in advance of the meeting with Board of Education, scheduled in September, to share with them prior to this meeting. Mr. Johns stated that he would like to discuss the future of Golden Ring Middle School. BCRP has a verbal communication with BCPS that indoors will remain for use for BCRP. Mr. Johns also mentioned the PTA in schools, stating that there is no clear process on who can promote what in the schools. Mr. Johns asked all members to send topics for discussion to him, to share with Mr. Smith.

### **Board Member Activities:**

Isaac Manjoe received an email from Kara Burman regarding an individual who signed up for a program, but never participated and is seeking a refund. Mr. Manjoe reported that he discussed this with Eric Carson and he settled this with the participant. He asked Mr. Carson to send him the information; he is still waiting for this. Additionally, Mr. Manjoe stated that BCRP has been promising for almost six months, the resurfacing of the garden at Rockdale Park, due to a drainage issue. Mr. Smith replied, stating that he will look into this, and asked if anyone has reached out to staff at the local recreation office for an update. Mr. Manjoe stated that he was not sure if anyone has reached out to the Community Supervisor.

Brooks Paternotte reported that he has been working with the nature councils on the MOU draft.

Ms. Bassett announced that the former Halethorpe Colored School will be celebrating its 100-year anniversary. Ms. Bassett spoke with Otis Collins and was informed that the school was nominated for the National Register of Historic Places. Desiree Mundell-Collins referenced the sign on the building that designates it as a historic site, indicating that there is a spelling error. Mr. Smith stated that he would look into this. Ms. Bassett stated that she is planning to reach out to BCRP and Councilman Pat Young for any type of proclamation to celebrate the 100 years.

Mr. Marsalek shared that Cromwell Valley Park is hosting the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company for an outdoor performance on July 20. He thought that BCRP could share this on social media.

### **Chair's Report:**

Mr. Johns and Mr. Marsalek participated in a meeting with the Commission on Aging, recommending to set up cross promotion to find programs for young and older participants. In addition, Mr. Johns attended the ribbon cutting for Essex Field at The Fields at Renaissance Park, and just yesterday, toured Lake Roland, along with County staff, and saw what the LRNC does. He stated that this included good conversation. Further, Mr. Johns reported that he has been connecting with different councils and answering questions about various topics. Mr. Johns referenced the MOU with nature councils, stating that the councils submitted revisions back to the County.

### **Committee Reports:**

Financial Review Committee: Mr. Munzert reported that he and Dana Jackson attended a meeting with OFRC, concerning money missing. They were informed that OFRC hired an accountant who went back three years and found that the money was transferred out of the account to an LLC in Florida. They are unable to get any information from the bank, because it has been six months. Mr. Munzert stated that they are hoping to get help from the State's Attorney's Office. Jeffrey Budnitz suggested contacting the FBI, Baltimore Office, because of wire fraud across state lines. In addition, Mr. Munzert reported on a situation regarding Hereford Recreation Council, stating that they have requested six months of treasurer reports and meeting minutes, to determine how money was transferred.

Governance Committee: Vice Chair Phil Davis reported that he will get a meeting scheduled soon.

Legislative Committee: Nothing to report. Pat Roddy referenced possible expansion of the Board by two members.

Bylaws Committee: Mr. Manjoe reported that he is working on drafting bylaws to share next month, stating that Turner Station Recreation Council is part of this process. Kim Harrison said that OFRC sent their bylaws back in about three weeks ago; Mr. Johns has not received this.

### **Old Business:**

Mr. Johns stated that the Board is ready to move forward on the MOU Committee. He heard from Mr. Marsalek and Ms. Jackson regarding their participation, and stated that he will also participate. Mr. Johns and Mr. Paternotte set up MOU meetings with stakeholders of nature councils, and said he felt this was a good model to go over the recreation council MOU. He will send out invites to the selected members of the committee to convene a meeting to go over thoughts of what the County provides in their version of the MOU. The initial MOU committee will likely only have seven recreation council representatives participating as part of this first stage, as a starting point, and will then expand to include more recreation council representatives. Mr. Johns asked Mr. Smith when the ideal deadline to get all of the recreation council's thoughts back on the MOU and he

said December 1. Mr. Johns asked Mr. Smith to send him the County's draft copy so they can get started. Additionally, he referenced recertification and Mr. Smith stated that the MOU will state that the Board will have authority to certify councils. He stated that the MOU is between the agency and the council, and we are stating that they have to be a certified council to obtain an MOU with the County. Mr. Smith stated that they recognize the value of certification and the Board's role. Discussion ensued regarding certification and the MOU.

Regarding board member document requests, Mr. Johns stated that the best process, if you have a request for a document, is to send this request to the Chair. The Chair will review requests and send to the Director. See item under "Action."

Ms. Jackson asked for an update regarding the Board's request to obtain County email addresses. Mr. Smith replied, stating that he met with the Office of Information Technology and the Office of Law regarding email accounts. Mr. Smith shared that they are looking at all other boards, and they are looking to create a domain for the boards to differentiate between County employee and board member. Mr. Smith will follow up to find out the timeline on this. In addition, Mr. Smith reported that the Board will not have an Assistant County Attorney assigned to them; they should contact James Benjamin. Mr. Smith stated the he will follow up on this; Mr. Roddy stated that other boards do have an Assistant County Attorney assigned to them. Mr. Johns to follow up with the State's Attorney's Office.

### **New Business:**

Policy Section D – Appealing Decisions Made by the Board was brought to board members a few years ago as a follow up to Banneker. Mr. Johns stated that this will be cleared up when the Board revises the certification process. Mr. Roddy questioned whether Section D and language proposed by the Chair would satisfy Item 1 from the Inspector General; Mr. Johns said that it would. Board members reviewed the draft and discussion ensued. Mr. Davis asked if the Board's decision would need to be made in writing; Mr. Johns replied, stating that they could add something along those lines to the draft. Mr. Marsalek asked if there should be an appeal form to be filled out; Mr. Johns stated that this draft does state what is needed. See item under "Action." Mr. Johns will send updated language to Lisa Winters.

Mr. Johns has been receiving a lot of questions from recreation and nature councils regarding insurance. They have relayed that they are having a hard time finding an affordable, helpful company. Mr. Johns asked board members if they would want to send out resources to the councils with a note that the Board is not endorsing the companies listed. Mr. Manjoe replied, stating that the councils are all non-profits and know how to go about getting the information they need; the Board should not recommend insurance to any council. Other members of the Board agreed with Mr. Manjoe and further discussion ensued. Mr. Marsalek suggested the Board send a message to all councils about the subject of insurance, asking if there are any councils that would like to field questions related to this topic, in an effort to assist other councils. Mr. Johns stated that he would reach out to the council that provided him with the recommendations, to see if they would be interested in serving as the point of contact for these inquiries from other councils. Mr. Smith stated that BCRP cannot supply recommendations.

Mr. Johns reported that a note did go out to all councils regarding the Student Representative position on the Board. Ms. Jackson stated that she was contacted by Councilman Todd Crandell's Legislative Aide about a student who had an idea about giving service hours for students who volunteer. Ms. Jackson said the Board could not get involved, but councils could be contacted directly. In addition, Ms. Jackson reported that she told them that the Board is looking for a Student Representative and to share this with the student that contacted their office. She referenced the student's idea and thinks it could take off. She also said the idea was being

shared with some recreation councils in her area for them to decide if they would want to implement it directly.

**Comments By Individual Citizens:**

Ms. Harrison shared that she was in Golden Ring yesterday and blueprints were laying on the floor. She stated that it looks like part of the space will be a warehouse on the parking lot. In addition, Ms. Harrison thanked the Department for organizing and running the Summer Basketball League. The league started yesterday at Liberty Road, with the girls. Mr. Smith replied, stating that the Department was happy to get this up and running, with 16 teams participating. Further, Mr. Smith stated that he will find out about the maintenance of the diamond; he is concerned.

**Action:**

Board member document requests are to be sent to the Chair for review, prior to the Chair sending to the Director. Mr. Munzert motioned to approve this process; Mr. Paternotte seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Mr. Munzert motioned to approve Policy Section D – Appealing Decisions Made by the Board; Ms. Jackson seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Mr. Roddy moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Munzert seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Winters