

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

GREG HEITNER, CHAIRMAN

Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., at the Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture and Farm Park (Ag Center). In attendance were Greg Heitner, Chairman; Corey Johns, Vice Chairman; and board members Eric van den Beemt, Chuck Munzert, Isaac Manjoe, Brooks Paternotte, Phil Davis and Dana Jackson. Recreation and Parks Department staff included Director Roslyn Johnson; and Bob Smith, Deputy Director of Recreation and Facility Operations.

Also in attendance: Ralph Brown, President, Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council; Jarod Picone, Carroll Manor Recreation Council.

Call to Order:

Chairman Greg Heitner called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Board Member Activities:

Dana Jackson reported that everyone seems to be doing well. Bob Smith announced that he attended the Region 4 President's Meeting last week and relayed that there is an issue with Gray Charles Recreation Council – money missing. Ms. Jackson replied, stating that she would follow up.

Brooks Paternotte stated that he wanted to recognize Ben Porter for his work regarding The Association of Nature Center Administrators coming together for the annual summit. They rotate around the country, and were at Irvine Nature Center this year. They arranged a field trip to Marshy Point Nature Center to learn about all the nature centers in Baltimore County, which Mr. Porter led. Mr. Paternotte stated that Mr. Porter did an incredible job hosting the group with his presentation and planned activities on site. In addition, Mr. Paternotte wanted to recognize Vice Chairman Corey Johns who was in receipt of the Gunpowder Valley Conservancy Hero of the Green recognition award!

Mr. Johns was at Golden Ring Park and reported that there was 300 people on site one recent Saturday. He would like to propose the idea of a meeting with Rosedale Recreation Council/Jerry Clark regarding other uses for this space. Mr. Johns stated that there is lots of space that could be utilized at this site and he would like to add this to the agenda to be discussed at next month's meeting.

Mr. Heitner mentioned the inquiries he has received regarding the Owings Mills Recreation Council cheer program. In addition, he reported that Angel Park is going through some site improvements. He stated that this park, and others in the area, are experiencing vandalism and questioned if this was occurring around the County. Director Roslyn Johnson replied, stating that it is intermittent/spotty, but it does occur. Mr. Heitner reported that the Baltimore County Horse Council is incredibly active. They have asked him to extend an invite to all board members to attend their next Friday Night Lights on September 16. This event will take place at the Ag Center from 7 – 9 p.m. The event is an autism friendly event with free admission.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Johns moved to approve the July board meeting minutes; Isaac Manjoe seconded; and all were in favor.

Director's Comments:

Ms. Johnson reported that we are moving forward with CivicRec program registration and anticipate a January-April roll out for people who want to voluntarily participate in the program. We will be phasing this in rather slowly with early adopters, then a second wave consisting of others ready to come on board, and the third wave will be the remaining folks. All will have to go through the registration program; we don't anticipate charging councils any fees for this. Payment will be submitted through this program, which will be the challenge for us to figure out. However, all monies should come through this portal. Ms. Johnson mentioned wanting to have a scholarship pot and briefly discussed. This is also a permitting system. In an effort to provide equity to those without various resources, we will have hubs set up around the County allowing people to come in and register. We will need to obtain data from the various councils.

We recently met with BCPS and had a very good meeting; Ms. Johnson reported on topics of discussion. This past week we marked our POS acquisition acreage with our 200th acre acquisition that went to closure. Ms. Johnson announced that we are looking at another property that is 109 acres. Ms. Johnson stated that she is hopeful we can get this in our inventory. Members of the Department will be attending the NRPA Conference next week in Phoenix, AZ. We have four staff presenting five sessions, with two additional staff members attending in the Exhibit Hall (a total of six attendees).

We have several upcoming groundbreaking/ribbon cuttings. The Ravens Destination Playground at Northwest Regional Park is scheduled for October 17. We helped to write a book about Women in Football, which will be part of the story book trail on site. We are looking to print these books and looking for a sponsor. A groundbreaking for McCormick RAC is scheduled for October 21. The groundbreaking for Renaissance Park is scheduled for November 7. The field is going to cost a little under \$2 million. We were able to put Phase I and II together. Mount Carmel will have limited use. Glen Mar RAC groundbreaking is scheduled on November 17.

There are also several upcoming community meetings scheduled. The Mount Vista Park Program Open Space Public Information Meeting is scheduled for September 29 via WebEx. There are two public input meetings scheduled for the Oregon Ridge Regional Park Master Plan, October 1 in person and October 6 via WebEx. Children will also be able to participate at the in person meeting on October 1. In addition, there will be two meetings scheduled in November regarding the findings. Gwynn Oak Park Enhancements Public Input Meeting is scheduled for October 18 via WebEx. The Belfast Road Property Public Input Meeting is scheduled for October 27 at Hereford HSRC. Mr. Smith is planning to meet with three council presidents to make sure all understand the history of the project.

CAPRA is at 76% complete. We are on track and excited about this. In addition, MOU's is back on track. We met with the Office of Law and will be moving forward on this. The Office of Law started back up, a week and a half ago, reviewing this. Ms. Johnson stated that this will really help with equity, and we as a Department will fill in the gaps.

Ms. Johnson announced that we will soon have a new logo! Two Graphic Design classes at Stevenson University worked on this. Submissions have been narrowed down to two and staff are currently voting on this. We will send this to board members to vote on as well (voting closes tonight). The winning logo will be unveiled at our All Staff on September 28. This will be an all-day training to include the state of the Department and the direction of where we are going, work life balance, and a keynote speaker. The afternoon will consist of programming activities. We will send board members an invite to attend any part of the day. In addition, we are

working on a recruitment video, which has been very exciting. We are also hiring a Public Information Specialist.

Ms. Johnson reported that we have an issue with background checks, in that the federal government determined that the State distributed federal criminal histories illegally to child care providers. The State considers all recreation and parks agencies to be child care providers. As “child care providers,” we are entitled to receive state criminal histories only. Federal criminal histories will be sent to the State Office of Child Care for review. Without federal criminal histories, we will not be able to determine eligibility for employment and volunteering. We raised the concern with the County Administrative Officer and MACo. We spoke with Carroll, Harford, Howard and Montgomery Counties, which are equally concerned. While we resolve the issue, we expect all volunteers to apply through NCSI. We are reviewing applications for the Background Check Specialist position, as well as fingerprinting BCPS on behalf of the CE’s initiative to help with bus attendant and bus driver recruitment and retention.

Old Business:

Board members reviewed the status of recertification for councils and stated that they have reached out to councils in their area they were still waiting on. Councils that have not made contact with board members to date [Arbutus, Baltimore Highlands, Greater Pikesville, Towsontowne, Carroll Manor, Prettyboy and Dundalk Eastfield] will receive a letter from the Chairman indicating they are past the due date and non-compliance could result in the loss of field/facility permits. Board members will continue to follow up with councils they are in communication with, to obtain recertification information. See item under “Action” regarding recertification.

Mr. Manjoe stated that he has nothing to report at this time regarding Liberty Road Recreation and Parks Council. Mr. Smith responded, stating that he has checked with staff and all seems okay.

Mr. Munzert reported that the Chris Martin Field Dedication plaque is up and someone from the County will inspect.

Regarding the Edmondson-Westview Recreation and Parks Council, Mr. Munzert reported on the meeting with the Executive Board and basketball program and stated that they reported this issue to Adam Lippe. Mr. Munzert stated that a detective has been assigned to this case and charges will be filed. Mr. Heitner thanked Mr. Munzert for taking the lead on this.

New Business:

Procedure Protocol for Board Situations will be carried over to next month due to Desiree Mundell-Collins’ absence.

Mr. Heitner has tabled Advisory Note to Councils as this is more of best practices.

Lisa Winters stated that all board members should have received an email regarding Ethics Training. She will request this information be resent to all board members as a reminder to complete if they have not already done so.

Action:

Mr. Johns motioned to recertify Edmondson-Westview, Reisterstown, Cockeysville, Lutherville-Timonium, Seventh District, Greater Loch Raven, Kingsville and Parkville Recreation Councils; Mr. Munzert seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Comments by Individual Citizens:

Jarod Picone, volunteer with the Carroll Manor Recreation Council, addressed the Board by first stating that he would address recertification with the Council at the monthly meeting tomorrow night, and stated that he is here to advocate for additional field space. Mr. Picone runs the soccer board/program. He stated that the Council is sandwiched between several other councils that have access to: an unlit field at Carroll Manor ESRC; two at Jacksonville ESRC, one of which has lights; and Hydes Road Park with five fields and the sixth field which is allocated to U8. Mr. Picone is asking how Belfast Road Property is being done when Hereford has access to lit fields. Mr. Picone reiterated that he is here to advocate for his very large program, and asked if a sample analysis could be conducted regarding program/registration/field/light access. Ms. Johnson replied, stating we are working on trying to get more fields/land. Ms. Johnson stated that the main challenge is land; if you see any large parcels for sale, please let us know. Once we purchase property then the challenge is funding. Mr. Picone stated that he believes the council could support the County with this. Mr. Smith stated that he has been with the County for many years and he recalled 20 years ago in his position as a Community Supervisor in Hereford, trying to find fields for North County. Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Picone to advocate at the Budget Meetings, as we have seen a tremendous response to this. Ms. Johnson stated that we would not conduct an analysis; we have a master plan coming up, which is 6-8 months away. Further discussion ensued regarding resources and program registration comparison. Mr. Heitner thanked Mr. Picone for sharing with the Board, and for his support of the programs. Mr. Picone mentioned Cloverland Park and enhancements/upgrades. Ms. Johnson replied, stating that there is funding budgeted for the design of site improvements/enhancements including the existing cricket field.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. van den Beemt moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Paternotte seconded the motion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Winters