The regular monthly meeting of the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Board was held on Wednesday, November 13, 2019, at 6 p.m., at Department Headquarters, Cockeysville, Maryland. In attendance were Chuck Munzert, chairman, board members Leslie Monfred, Eric van den Beemt, Isaac Manjoe, Chip Hiebler, Corey Johns and Ryleigh Casserly. Recreation and Parks department staff included Keith Williams, acting director, and Bob Smith, chief, Recreation Services.

Call to Order:

Chairman Chuck Munzert called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Board Member Activities:

Eric van den Beemt inquired about the letter that is to be sent to MARC regarding MARC being consulted when there are major projects or changes with the Ag Center. Keith Williams stated that the letter has not been sent yet, and we are already doing this MARC. Mr. Williams also mentioned that Keith, Pat McDougall, and Susan Cormack, will be meeting with Tom Whedbee and Dan Calhoun tomorrow at 10 a.m. at the Ag Center to go over space issues in regards to what space they are using as opposed to what the County is using. Mr. Williams also mentioned that he will scheduling some time with Sam O’Neill, from the Executive Office, to tour the facility. Additional meetings will be scheduled to discuss the removal of dead trees and their replacement along the entrance way of the property. Removal of the dead trees will be completed by a private contractor.

Corey Johns attended White Marsh Recreation Council. The meeting was standard and completed quickly. Hereford Recreation Council’s citizen generated project is very much in its infancy. Mr. Johns had conversations with some of the nature councils. They are very appreciative of the efforts made by Kris Mervine for the Nature Council Presidents Meeting next year, and they also appreciate the Department’s commitment as well.

Chip Hiebler reported Lansdowne PAL Center had their TV’s installed. There are four TV’s mounted along with X-boxes and the children are excited. Baltimore Highlands completed their fundraiser Haunted Hallows. They did not make as much money as they expected. They made almost $3,000 which will allow them to fund other programs throughout the year.

Leslie Monfred reported that she attended the student support network. Mike Weber is the treasurer, and he also MC’d the event. County Executive Johnny Olszewski attended the event. It was a great event.

Chuck Munzert reported that the County Council did vote to change the zoning for a new recreational facility at White Marsh and 43. The paperwork has been submitted for the building to be built. Plans have been released on the repurposing of the GSA building on Eastern Avenue. Almost 40% of the building will be
used for indoor recreation. Indications are that Blue Ocean has hired Coopermine to run the indoor athletic fields. The project is expected to take four to five years to complete.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from the meeting held on October 16, 2019 were not approved due to being incomplete.

Chairman’s Report:

Chuck Munzert had nothing to report.

Director’s Comments:

Acting Director, Keith Williams reported there were a number of qualified applicants who have applied for the Director of Recreation and Parks. Some of the applicants are from outside the State of Maryland. Interviews were held this week. The second round of interviews will most likely be held next week or the week after. The hope is that the new director will start sometime in January.

The Supervisor at Cromwell Valley Park is currently conducting interviews to fill the new Recreation Community Supervisor I position that was approved in this fiscal year’s budget.

We are currently advertising to fill two new PAL Recreation Center Coordinators. These positions are earmarked for the two new PAL centers that will open on the east side of Baltimore County. The new PAL centers will be temporarily located in the rec rooms at local schools, with the hope of being able to identify capital funding in next year’s budget to begin construction of two free standing centers.

We have received approval from the administration to hire a temporary Recreation Community Supervisor I to work directly with programming in Liberty Road. We have selected someone to fill this position. This person is good to work with, and has worked for Recreation and Parks in the past in the PAL program. He is currently in the hiring process.

Lisa Scott and Keith Williams will meeting with Stacy Rodgers, County Administrative Officer; Ed Blades, Director of Budget and Finance; and John O’Neill, Budget Analyst for Recreation and Parks; on Monday to review first quarter expenditures and expenses for the rest of the fiscal year. If time allows, we may have a brief discussion on the general parameters of the FY21 budget that we are currently working on. This is something new the administration has started with all the agencies.

Chuck Munzert asked if Recreation and Parks is still involved in discussions on the purchasing of local open space. Keith Williams responded that he and Pat McDougall work with the staff in real estate on local open space. Mr. Williams also mentioned that the department is currently working with the administration to create a SOP on how that process works.

Corey Johns stated that Marshy Point had mentioned there are two private parcels within Marshy Point that they would like to see be purchased by the County instead of being sold to private owners. They have recently been placed on the market. Keith Williams recommended that Corey Johns contact Pat McDougall with the information on the properties. It was also mentioned that these properties would complete the connection between Eastern Regional and Marshy Point Trail.
Old Business:

Recertification – Postponed until the next meeting.

Background Checks – Bob Smith reported that we are currently interviewing staff members who have expressed interest in overseeing the implementation and supervision of the background check process. Once we have approval from the Administrative Officer, this person should be able to start right away. They will be located at the Recreation and Parks Headquarters. Their responsibilities will be fingerprinting the volunteers, compiling data on the volunteers, and reviewing the CJIS background check reports. They will also compile a list of volunteers who have passed the background check and issue ID’s. We are working with OIT to create an online portal for volunteers to be able to go online and register. We are also developing a form for the Recreation Councils to list the names of their volunteers.

At the last meeting, Keith Williams asked if anyone had any recommendations of sites for fingerprinting process. He only received one recommendation. Our site list was basically copied from the list that was created by Health and Human Services for flu clinics. Stacy Rodgers has asked that the Board look at the list, and if you are in agreement with the list, Keith Williams will report back to Ms. Rodgers. Ms. Rodgers will then contact someone in Education to coordinate the scheduling. The Board is recommending additional sites at Franklin Middle, Perry Hall Middle, and Catonsville Middle.

The County has purchased three fingerprint machines. They will be located in Recreation and Parks, Office of Human Resources and Health and Human Services. The plan is that Recreation and Parks will be able to use all three machines for the first wave of fingerprinting. Volunteers who cannot make it to one of the selected sites, can schedule an appointment to be fingerprinted at Recreation and Parks Headquarters. The hope is to have the fingerprint machines up and running the early part of the New Year. Ultimately, it will be the responsibility of the Recreation Councils to notify their volunteers of the new fingerprint process. Recreation and Parks will do everything we can to get the word out, such as, posting an announcement on our website, and working with the Office of Communications to do a social media blast and those types of things. Once we have more information, we will update the recreation councils.

The question was asked, what happens to volunteers who are supposed to coach but haven’t gotten the new background check? Bob Smith stated that management has not had that discussion yet, however, as long as that volunteer is on the SSCI list, we will honor that background check until it expires.

Liberty Road Travel Basketball - Isaac Manjoe reported he received an email from the new recreation council requesting Rhonda Fox-Jones not be suspended permanently, but for possibly six months to a year. The recreation council feels she is an asset to the council, and they would like to keep her. Mr. Manjoe stated that Mrs. Fox-Jones would not be running any recreation programs. Her position would be an officer on the Board. The recreation council is also asking for a written letter from the Board on their decision on Ms. Fox-Jones. Mr. Manjoe asked if any of the at-large board members will attend the Liberty Road Recreation Council meeting with him on November 20, 2019. Leslie Monfred, and Chip Hiebler said they would attend the meeting with him. Chuck Munzert said he will try to attend the meeting. It was decided to postpone the letter to Liberty Road Recreation Council again.
New Business:

Chuck Munzert, Keith Williams, Bob Smith, and Kris Mervine were invited to attend a meeting with Stacy Rodgers on November 7, 2019.

Chuck Munzert reported that a letter has been drafted to the Friends of Benjamin Banneker stating the Board has denied their appeal. The letter also states that we would like for the programs to stay active at the facility; however they no longer have the priority of a recreation council. They would now have to apply for a permit with Baltimore County.

Chip Hiebler reported that it has been brought to his attention that items that were purchased with council money have been removed from the facility. The question is now, who owns these items? Do they still belong to the Friends of Benjamin Banneker (the Friends), or should they go to another 501 C3 organization?

Comments by Individual Citizens:

Julie - Representative from the Foundation reported that they use the tents stored at the Museum for the Colonial Market Fair. She believes Steven Lee bought one tent and the Friends of Benjamin Banneker bought the other ones. She would like to know who owns the tents. Were the tents donated to the Museum?

Keith Williams responded that unless it was donated to Baltimore County by the purchaser, which he believes they were not, the items belong to whoever purchased them.

Another question asked, once someone has reported that a recreation council has a substantial amount of money missing or they have seriously mismanaged money, who reports these organizations to the IRS? Chip Heiber answered that since the Friends are a 501 C3 stand-alone corporation, and are no longer a council of record, it is not our responsibility to report them to the IRS.

The Foundation has been raising money for the 2020 Colonial Market Fair. They have approximately $9,000 with a budget of $13,000. Their concern is that they need tents for this event, and the cost of tents was not included in there budget. They need to raise at least $6,000 to purchase new tents. If they do not have tents, they may have to cancel this event. Keith Williams responded that they should work with Melanie Dance and Kris Mervine to see what is needed for this event to continue.

Adjournment:

Mr. Munzert moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Samantha Walters