



HEARING NOTES

Legislative Oversight 24-0057

Agency Briefing – Department of Recreation and Parks

Committee: Finance and Performance

Chaired by: John Bullock

Hearing Date: Thursday, April 11, 2024

Time (Beginning): 3:10 PM

Time (Ending): 4:40 PM

Location: Council Chambers

Total Attendance: Approximately 20 in-person
Approximately 10 virtually

Committee Members in Attendance:

John Bullock Isaac “Yitzy” Schleifer

Phylicia Porter

- Bill Synopsis in the file? YES NO N/A
- Attendance sheet in the file? YES NO N/A
- Agency reports read? YES NO N/A
- Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded?..... YES NO N/A
- Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?..... YES NO N/A
- Evidence of notification to property owners? YES NO N/A
- Final vote taken at this hearing? YES NO N/A

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

Reginald Moore, Agency Director, Baltimore City Recreation & Parks (BCRP)

Adam Boarman, Chief of Capital Development, BCRP

Edward Wheeling, Deputy Director of Parks & Facility Maintenance

Marvin “Doc” Cheatham

James Holzmeister, Skate Park of Baltimore

Chrissy Brown, Skate Park of Baltimore

Major Issues Discussed

1. The Agency Director gave a presentation discussing the agency's fiscal updates, comprehensive plan, ongoing and upcoming capital projects, and agency highlights.
2. Councilmember Porter asked BCRP what constitutes a capital project and how BCRP assesses capital projects. BCRP noted that capital projects are determined by a dollar amount of at least \$50k and they do assessments of all facilities to determine what needs to be renovated or demolished.
3. Councilmember Porter asked BCRP to discuss the environmental component of the capital projects. BCRP that they do an environmental assessment and then contractors develop a plan to mitigate any issues. It is a legal requirement.
4. Chairman Bullock asked who is performing the assessments, and BCRP confirmed that all are done by third parties.
5. Chairman Bullock asked how the agency determines which contractors or consultants are doing which assessments. BCRP noted it depends on their workload.
6. Councilmember Porter asked about the rotation of the Rangers in the Ranger Program. **BCRP noted they are assigned areas and rotate, but will follow up on specifics.**
7. Councilmember Porter and Chairman Bullock asked about BCRP's and the Ranger Program's relationship and collaboration with Friends groups for the parks.
8. **Chairman Bullock asked BCRP to discuss the costs of Charm City Lights this year and what they anticipate moving forward. BCRP noted that the total installation costs and the purchase of the lights was \$700k in 2023, but will follow up on the total operation costs.** BCRP plans to bring in sponsors to help cover costs, and plan to have conversations.
9. Chairman Bullock asked about overtime costs and if it is associated with event times or manpower for events. BCRP noted it is associated with manpower due to the size of events.
10. Council member Schleifer asked if all rec centers get a feasibility study before moving forward. BCRP noted that the 5th District is getting a feasibility study as there has not been a rec center in that district, and they need to do assessments.
11. Councilman Schleifer asked how many rec centers are being built. BCRP noted that Gardenville and Curtis Bay are being built.
12. Councilman Schleifer noted that he requested a rec center for the 5th District, which is the only district without one, and noted that multiple rec centers have been planned, but none for his district. He asked BCRP how they determine where they build rec centers and who decides. The BCRP representative noted that he is unsure why a rec was not built into the 5th District.
13. **Chairman Bullock asked what the timeframe of the 5th District feasibility study, and what are the expected outcomes. BCRP noted that most feasibility studies take 12 months to be complete, and can follow up with a more detailed timeline.**
14. Council Schleifer asked who makes the decisions as to where to put rec centers since the current director. BCRP noted that it's an agency-wide decision, and the Agency Director is creating a comprehensive plan for the agency for guidance.
15. Chairman Bullock asked BCRP to discuss more about the mobile recreation equipment and the process of getting it into communities. He also asked the agency to discuss how the agency envisions the rollout of the mobile equipment, and how communities can get those activities. **BCRP will follow up on more specifics as to how communities can get mobile units for their neighborhoods.**

16. Councilmember Porter and BCRP discussed multi-modal spaces that include rec centers in South Baltimore and where they are in the conversations with Enoch Pratt to partner. BCRP noted they are still in conversations but working to engage other partners.
17. Councilmember Porter noted that she would like the Mayor’s Office to use their influence to bring in partners and resources for these spaces.
18. Councilmember Schleifer asked BCRP how many stumps the in-house BCRP crews have ground in the last 3 years. BCRP will follow up with the committee, and note how many stumps were ground by external parties for the last 3 years.
19. Chairman Bullock asked BCRP to discuss partnerships for the rec centers, particularly around funding.
20. Councilman Schleifer asked if they have done a review of the 5-year strategic plan, which BCRP is currently in the process of. Councilman Schleifer requested BCRP to share that performance review with the committee. Also, BCRP will follow up on the timeframe of the performance review and will send the 5-year strategic plan to the committee.
21. Chairman Bullock asked BCRP to discuss dumping equipment and staff utilization for this issue.
22. Councilmember Porter asked BCRP to discuss the public safety measures for play spaces, particularly around arson, and drug and syringe usage. BCRP noted they are continuing to work with the Baltimore Police Department, and started having conversations about cameras, lighting, and engaging the community. They are also working with the health department on staff safety and training, and the disposal of hazardous items.
23. James Holzmeister and Chrissy Brown testified, on behalf of Skatepark Baltimore, and their efforts to build a skateboard park in the Easterwood/Matthew Henson neighborhood. Also, Marvin “Doc” Cheatham testified on the advocacy efforts to bring the skateboard park to the neighborhood.
24. Chairman Bullock thanked the public for testifying and for their passion for the neighborhood.
25. BCRP noted that any funds for the Easterwood/Matthew Henson skatepark are still in the budget, and they are working on initial items that are needed first for this skatepark, such as a playground and the walk paths. BCRP noted they are committed to Easterwood, and they are not opposed to the skatepark.
26. Chairman Bullock asked about the timings of the improvements. BCRP noted that are anticipating starting construction late this fall, and estimated the playground improvements could occur this summer.
27. Chairman Bullock thanked BCRP for coming before the committee, and they appreciate their work.
28. Hearing is adjourned.

Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes **No**

Please see the highlights above

Niya N. Garrett

Niya N. Garrett, Committee Staff

Cc: Bill File

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Date: April 12, 2024

OCS Chrono File



Baltimore City Council Committee Hearing Attendance Record

Subject: Legislative Oversight – Agency Briefing – Department of Recreation & Parks	LO#24-0057
Committee: Finance and Performance	Chair: John T. Bullock
Date: Thursday, April 11, 2024	Time: 3:00 PM
Location: Council Chambers	

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

What is your position on this bill?

Lobbyist: Are you registered in the City?*

CHECK HERE TO TESTIFY



First Name	Last Name	Address / Organization / Email	<u>Testify</u>	For	Against	Yes	No
John	Doe	400 N. Holliday St. Johndoenbmore@yahoo.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
James	Holzmanister	905 E 37th Street / Skatepark of Baltimore holz1066@gmail.com	✓		✓		#
Eosi <i>(Signature)</i>	Brown <i>(Signature)</i>	SoB CMBrown247@gmail.com	✓				

*NOTE: IF YOU ARE COMPENSATED OR INCUR EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THIS BILL, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW TO REGISTER WITH THE CITY ETHICS BOARD AS A LOBBYIST. REGISTRATION CAN BE DONE ONLINE AND IS A SIMPLE PROCESS. FOR INFORMATION VISIT: [HTTPS://ETHICS.BALTIMORECITY.GOV/](https://ethics.baltimorecity.gov/) OR CALL: 410-396-4730

City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Meeting Minutes - Final

Finance and Performance Committee

Thursday, April 11, 2024

3:00 PM Du Burns Council Chamber, 4th floor, City Hall, Phone:
+1-408-418-9388, Access Code: 2349 899 2182, Password:
Public, Link: [https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/j.php?
MTID=m602a0fb1ca9b188af40010a0ebe1869f](https://bmore.webex.com/bmore/j.php?MTID=m602a0fb1ca9b188af40010a0ebe1869f)

Legislative Oversight: LO24-0057

CALL TO ORDER

INTRODUCTIONS

ATTENDANCE

Present 3 - John T. Bullock, Chair Phylcia Porter, and Chair Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer

Absent 2 - Chair Eric T. Costello, and Chair Danielle N. McCray

ITEM SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Agency Briefing - Department of Recreation and Parks
For the purpose of calling on pertinent agency representatives of the Department of Recreation and Parks to brief the City Council at minimum on a quarterly basis, on how the Department's FY 23 actual expenditures compared to prior years and to provide a current update on FY 24 quarterly expenditures and budget projections. The presentation is to include a status report on: Overtime Expenses: current fiscal year compared to last fiscal year; Vacancies: current fiscal year compared to last fiscal year; Equipment/Departmental Needs: Such as equipment, training, etc., that is needed to improve recreation centers, parks, special facilities and pools; and to provide an update/status report on BCRP'S Playbook efforts and planning process; specifically, the City Council is interested in the Department's Capital Investment Strategy, Operations Plan and Funding Strategy; status of major Capital Projects currently underway and updates on any other projected challenges of the Department.

Hearing adjourned

ADJOURNMENT