

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0238R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: President Young, Councilmembers Costello, Scott, Holton, Branch, Middleton,
Henry, Stokes, Kraft, Welch, Clarke, Reisinger, Spector, Curran

Introduced and read first time: June 22, 2015

Assigned to: Recreation and Parks Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Department of Recreation and Parks, Department of
Finance

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Building on the Success of the Rec and Tech Center Model**

3 FOR the purpose of commending the Digital Harbor Foundation and the Liberty Rec and Tech
4 Center for their groundbreaking work that is bringing so many benefits to our community,
5 and calling on representatives from the Departments of Recreation & Parks and Finance to
6 appear before the Council to discuss how the City can allocate the necessary funding and
7 other resources to enable other recreation centers to follow this model.

8 **Recitals**

9 U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan’s recent visit to the Liberty Rec and Tech Center
10 underscored how it and the Digital Harbor Foundation’s Rec and Tech program have rapidly
11 risen to prominence as national models for community and youth engagement. This center,
12 slated for closing 3 years ago, was saved by the surrounding community and has now become a
13 community pillar with courses on everything from coding to sewing, GED classes, exercise
14 programs, and an active food kitchen.

15 The involvement of community and non-profit partners, including the Digital Harbor
16 Foundation, has been critical to this transformation. Volunteer help from Baltimore’s tech
17 community and generous financial support from both non-profits and corporations have enabled
18 these technology centered programs to take off and thrive.

19 Digital Harbor and Liberty’s model of partnership between the City and the community, with
20 private, non-profit, and public stakeholders all contributing resources, is one that should be
21 studied and emulated. There’s no reason why other neighborhoods couldn’t organize around
22 similar “Rec and Tech” centers. Or why other recreation centers couldn’t take advantage of
23 enthusiasm from different sectors of Baltimore’s diverse community to carve out their own
24 niches through partnerships with non-profits and businesses that focus on biotechnology,
25 agriculture and food, our maritime heritage, or any number of other areas.

26 The Department of Recreation and Parks, and the City as a whole, should be actively seeking
27 out opportunities to facilitate the kind of broad partnerships that have made Liberty so successful,
28 and finding ways to step up with additional funding and resources to get programs based on this
29 model up and running.

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
2 Council commends the Digital Harbor Foundation and the Liberty Rec and Tech Center for their
3 groundbreaking work that is bringing so many benefits to our community, and calls on
4 representatives from the Departments of Recreation & Parks and Finance to appear before the
5 Council to discuss how the City can allocate the necessary funding and other resources to enable
6 other recreation centers to follow this model.

7 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
8 Director of Recreation and Parks, the Director of Finance, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to
9 the City Council.