

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE EMERSON RECREATION COMMISSION WAS HELD ON JANUARY 3, 2019, AT 8:00 P.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE RECREATION CENTER.

Presiding Officer Afrim Hoxha welcomed everyone and called the Regular Meeting of the Recreation Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday January 3, 2019.

Roll Call: Presiding Officer Afrim Hoxha, David Cannici, Anthony Gismondi, Bob Quinones Mike Graham, Paul Coombes, Rich Solimando, Eilish Viggiani. Willie Ortiz late

I Reorganization

Afrim asked the current board members if any of them were leaving the board. All agreed they were staying.

Afrim requested nominations for Presiding Office. Mike Graham nominated Afrim Hoxha to the position of Presiding Officer, Paul Coombes seconded. Passed unanimously. Willie Ortiz wanted it on record that Afrim should have a very positive endorsement this appointment.

Afrim requested nominations for executive vice president. Paul Coombes nominated Dave Cannici as alternate Presiding Officer. Anthony Gismondi seconded. Motion passed unanimously

Sport Liaison positions were agreed as follows

Paul Coombes - Wrestling
Eilish Viggiani - Football and Cheer
Mike Graham - Softball
Anthony Gismondi - Baseball
Bob Quinones - Soccer
Rich Solimando - Fields (also Bob Quinones and Eilish Viggiani)
David Cannici - Summer Rec

II Open Public Comments

This item was moved forward in the agenda by Afrim

New Track Program

Following up on the discussions at the December 6 meeting where Jon Grey expressed an interest in starting a track program, 5 parents attended the meeting to discuss the proposal further. There are at least another 5 parents who would be interested who have kids running already. The group who attended (listed below) wanted to know how they would go about starting a track program.

Chris Pesce 24 Linwood Ave
Maureen Dillon 64 Revere
Rommel DelaRosa 18 Wortendyke
Arthur Lu 58 Orchard
Christina Berens 2 Hartland

Afrim noted there were 5 present plus Jon Grey and asked if there were more parents who were interested in being involved. The answer was yes. In answer to a question about how track programs are structured, Chris Pesce shared that he had a contact in Westwood who they would rely on for this type of information. Basically, a team would sign up for a meet that town rec teams are eligible to run in, usually New Jersey Striders. There are anything between 5 and 50 runners per school. There is no requirement for towns to hold a meet unless they choose to.

The current Emerson track program is run by the Church of Assumption and its team competes in a league for Catholic schools for which town teams are not eligible. Residents have assumed that the Assumption program is for families who are associated with the church. This is not actually true, but the feeling was that it has put people off joining. For the last couple of years the program has been losing members and currently there are only 6-8 kids remaining.

If there are enough volunteers to make up a board, and enough volunteers to coach then this could become a year-round sport, but initially once the group is organized they would start off just competing in spring meets. The Recreation Commission would be supportive if there are a good number of kids who are interested, enough volunteers available to support the teams and there is a commitment to keep the program going over a long period of time and not just while they have children who are interested in the sport. The Recreation Commission does not want to support a program that only lasts a year. The group needs to show that they have the resource to set up a board, organize the program, get registration done order uniforms etc.

A question was asked about where the existing track teams practice as there may be a conflict in the fall when soccer and football would be using the fields. In the spring Assumption use the high school in the fall they use the middle school. Ensuring that there is track space available should be one of the first priorities for the group. Rich and Dave would coordinate with the Board of Ed to support this.

In the Assumption program a fee of between \$10 and \$15 is charged at the beginning of to cover the entrance fees to meets. If the program is started it is envisaged that one fee will cover most of the meet expense. The Recreation Commission could provide some startup funding to the Track Board so they can buy uniforms. There is no requirement to put up a bond to participate in the meets. The Track program will be covered for insurance by the Recreation Commission.

Ask Bob what is the minimum that is needed to form a sports board. *Action Liz Morris*

There seems to be good support and the Recreation Commission is in broad agreement that there is a place for a town Track team. They requested that the group of parents at the meeting should form a task force to lay out how this would work and then present back to the Recreation Commission the January 17 meeting. *Action Track task force*

Mike Graham made a motion to form a board for a Track program. Eilish Viggiani seconded. Approved unanimously.

There was a question as to what age the program would stop; eighth grade but the program may lose kids at middle school.

III Christmas Tree Lighting Event wrap up

Event went well. Nicole took 75 pictures. She was paid \$350 but can submit for more. Everyone had a good time despite the fact that it was very cold. FD very happy and liked the concept. Fire truck was a little late.

IV Sport-by-Sport Review

Wrestling

Nothing new to report. 39 kids signed up which is less than last year.

Baseball

Nothing new, except April 6 is opening day

Soccer

Soccer social went well in October. One small complaint for the season was that, the teams felt they needed more turf time. New goals worked well. Spring registration for club soccer is underway and the soccer board is working with the county. The soccer board is looking for a treasurer to replace Bob.

Ginette Rausch who was a member of the soccer board for a long time is seriously ill in hospital and is not doing well. Willie Ortiz requested a moment of silence for her. The soccer board will be making a donation to her family.

Football-

Nothing new

Softball-

Registration still ongoing. Another session on Saturday 5. Clinics signed up for several months ago but yesterday were bumped by a high school program. Will change the date. The high school softball coach runs the clinics for free so it is a small fundraiser for softball.

V Sport Board Review Process

The boards are mandated to send one member to attend one Recreation meeting per month starting in February. The first meeting this will apply to is February 7. Every sport will be expected to send a representative to that meeting where they will receive a copy of the calendar. After that they can choose but they must come to one a month. They are welcome to come to all of them if they wish.

If a Sports board consistently doesn't show up then a communication will be sent reminding them that they have an obligation to attend the meetings. If they miss a second meeting there will be another follow up letter. A third time will result in some action as yet to be determined.

In addition to receiving information from the Recreation Commission, the sports boards will be able to share ideas and take them back to their own board.

There may be recreation business that needs to be discussed, so the agenda will be structured so that there is a sports round table at the start of the meeting which will be open to the members of sports boards. The meeting will then go into in closed session.

Fields

Rich is looking at a new system called Civic Permits which will make the process for booking fields more straightforward and transparent. It is the same system that the high school uses. A license is \$800 per year for the complete system but the recreation may not need the full spec which would reduce the cost somewhat. The first year will be \$1,000 because of startup costs. It was suggested that the vendor come and discuss the system and what incremental value there is at each cost point and ensure that the Recreation Commission has written confirmation that the system purchased by the Rec will be able to interface with the one used by the high school. It would be helpful if the Rec was able to see the Board of Ed schedule through this system.

The system will allow sports to look at the fields and see what availability there is. They will then request a time and date which will be approved first by Giovanna for Board of Ed, then by the HS Athletic coach and his assistant and then by Rich who will balance the needs of all Rec sports. The schools have priority over rec. Once all parties have approved the request, the field will be booked and the person requesting the field will receive an email confirming the booking. If the Board of Ed or the high school makes changes the Rec (Rich) will be able to see it immediately.

Once the system has been installed all the Recreation Commission and sports board members should be trained by the company that sells Civic Permits. The training should be live and not via email or phone.

The system is also capable of holding insurance information for non-rec teams that want to book a field.

Rich should have full information on how the system works for the meeting on January 17. Rich needs the approval of the Recreation.

Afrim requested that a copy of the Recreation budget be provided to the board.

VI Approval of the 11-1-18 and 12-6-18 Minutes

After some discussion it was agreed that these minutes would not be approved at the next meeting as the commissioners had not had sufficient time to review them. They will be considered at the next meeting.

Motion not to approve made by Willie Ortiz, seconded by Rich Solimando and approved unanimously.

A question was asked as to whether the sports boards were required to publish their minutes. The consensus was that a view should be sought from the Borough Attorney via the Borough Administrator.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Willie Ortiz, seconded by Rich Solimando, approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Morris
Acting Recreation Secretary