

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE EMERSON RECREATION COMMISSION WAS HELD ON THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 5, 2019, AT 8:00 P.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE RECREATION CENTER.

Roll Call: David Cannici, Councilwoman McGuire, Anthony Gismondi, Paul Coombes, Willie Ortiz, Eilish Viggiani, Bob Quinones, Mike Graham

I Call to Order

Alternate Presiding Officer David Cannici thanked everyone for attending and called the Regular Meeting of the Recreation Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday September 5, 2019.

II. Roll Call

David Cannici, Anthony Gismondi, Paul Coombes, Willie Ortiz, Eilish Viggiani, Bob Quinones, Mike Graham

Mayor DiPaola and Councilwoman McGuire were also in attendance

III Reading and Approval of the Minutes of the June 20 and August 15 meetings

June 20, 2019

Motion to approve the minutes from June 20, 2019 meeting was made by Paul Coombes, seconded by Mike Graham and approved by a majority. Bob Quinones abstained as he was not at the meeting.

August 15, 2019

Motion to approve the minutes from August 15, 2019 meeting was made by Bob Quinones, seconded by Anthony Gismondi and approved by a majority. Mike Graham abstained as he was not at the meeting.

IV Reports of Officers

Presiding Officer

Dave Cannici has drafted an email outlining when Sport's Boards are required to attend and what they are expected to discuss. He requested that the Commission members who are liaison to the Sport's Board forward the communication to the relevant president on his behalf. They should be given the dates of the meetings that they will be attending and directed to come to the meeting prepared to give an update on registration, upcoming events, staffing, program challenges and any open items.

The budget was discussed briefly but it was agreed that it should be tabled for the next meeting.

Motion to table the discussion of the budget till the next meeting was made by Willie Ortiz and seconded by Bob Quinones, and approved unanimously.

Alternate Presiding Officer

Nothing to report

Secretary

Football and soccer coaches who did not coach in the spring are going through the background check process. A list of soccer coaches will be provided.

There was a discussion about producing the cards which are plastic and made using a thermal printer. They have an expiration date and are only good for one year. The meeting agreed that Council President Falotico would be contacted to confirm whether or not the cards had to be plastic and produced in this manner or is laminated paper acceptable and if they have to be replaced annually. Whilst this process is being put in place the recreation secretary will email coaches who have passed all the background checks and provided a picture to let them know that they have cleared the checks. It was pointed out that this may lead to issue if coaches are challenged on the field.

This will be added to the Unfinished Business of the agenda for the September 19th meeting.

Councilwoman McGuire

Councilwoman McGuire requested clarification on a matter that was raised by the developers in a closed meeting concerning a donation made by their company to the Summer Kick-off. They stated it was solicited. There was some discussion about sharing of information on individual donors and the method by which donations are received. The question was asked as to whether the Recreation Commission should avoid asking for donations from entities doing business with the town to avoid any conflicts. Councilwoman McGuire agreed to clarify this at a future meeting.

The mayor told the meeting that any communication with the developers must go through; the office of the Borough Administrator, the Borough Clerk, Borough Attorney, the Mayor or the Redevelopment committee.

The mayor reiterated that she and the council want to work with the Recreation Commission. They don't want to interfere and do want to provide support. There will be occasions that they need to get involved and ensure that there is no comeback on the Borough or the Recreation Commission. Dave responded that he appreciated all the support from Councilwoman McGuire and the Mayor and Council.

VII Open Session (Public)

Brian Schumeyer, 114 Highland Ave

Brian asked if it was known why the number of Emerson children attending the Emerson summer camp was declining, what may be causing this and what could be done to

encourage them to come back to the Emerson Summer camp. Dave Cannici, the Recreation Commission coordinator for the summer camp said that much of the reason for this was the facilities. Some towns have swimming pools, recreation centers etc. which Emerson does not. Additionally, because the facilities are not large enough to accommodate all the campers, the camp has to be canceled in the event of inclement weather. This is an ongoing issue. The activities are reviewed and changed each year to provide a varied and interesting program for the kids attending.

A suggestion was made that the Summer Recreation Camp could be held at one of the schools on rainy days. This will be suggested to the Board of Ed. Also look to shorter days for specific events. At a future date the Summer Recreation Camp Coordinator will be invited to a Recreation Commission meeting to brainstorm what improvements could be made.

Brian also requested clarification on the differences between club, travel and recreation sports. He was told that this can vary depending on the sport. In baseball there is recreation and travel baseball for Emerson children. Club baseball draws players from multiple towns and is private. In soccer travel is actually played through US Club soccer and is called club even though the vast majority of the players on these teams are from Emerson. There should be no conflict between recreation and travel soccer games and the games are scheduled to avoid this. However if players choose to play on for profit club teams this may mean a recreation team is short of players.

Brian was interested in joining the Recreation Commission but when he asked he was told the seats had already been filled. He was told that these are always mayoral appointments and not made by the Recreation commission. The Mayor confirmed this was the case.

Chris Butler, Soccer Board President, 105 Ross Ave

Chris was asked to attend because of a scheduling issue concerning recreation soccer and fall baseball. Bob told the meeting that he and Eilish had taken over scheduling for the Borough. Giovanna, assistant at the Board of Education is also involved in managing the fields as is Jill Dunican, Athletics assistant for the high schools. Fall baseball and recreation soccer are using the same fields and the three entities have worked closely to make sure both sports and the high school have what they need in terms of fields. This seems to be working. The only issue that may arise is game cancellations due to inclement weather which would require rescheduling. This will be dealt with as it arises.

Dave reminded the meeting that priority for fields was given is the following order school, sport and season and then everyone else. The point was made that if baseball wants to practice on infield while soccer practices are going on they can do that as long as there are no balls being hit into the outfield and all the drills are confined to the infield area.

V. Unfinished Business

The Recreation Secretary will send a reminder about the Recreation Commission meetings to the Sports Boards presidents the Monday before each of these meeting.

VI New Business

Discussion on appointment of individuals to replace Afrim Hoxha and Rich Solimando

The Mayor clarified the process for appointment of new members to the Recreation Commission. By statute, the appointment of regular members of the Recreation Commission is a mayoral appointment. Alternates are mayoral appointments with the approval of the council. The Mayor will be appointing Steve Paino as the regular member and Phil Gianatasio as the alternate member subject to approval by the council. There was a discussion about Sport's Board presidents holding a position on the Recreation Commission. This will be discussed in more detail at a future meeting.

At the August 15 meeting the Commission had assumed that the process was for the existing alternate to become a regular member. The Mayor reiterated that this was not the case and the current Borough Ordinance relating to these appointments does not follow the State statute. The existing ordinance will be voided at a future meeting of the Mayor and Council.

Special Events Committee

The Mayor informed the Recreation Commission that a Special Events committee is being formed. It will focus on different events to the Recreation Commission and so the two entities will be synergistic. The initial project that they are looking at is an 80th birthday celebration for Borough Hall which is in three weeks. That project will be led by the Mayor, Councilwoman McGuire, the Historic Preservation Committee and any other volunteers who are interested. She extended a welcome to any Recreation Commission members who may be interested in being involved. The Special Events Committee will organize other celebrations that are not sports focused and events for seniors. The two groups should work together at all events. One idea is to have more activities for seniors at the town picnic which. Historically it has been more focused on children. Ideas like a senior dance were suggested. The Special Events Committee will have a line item in the next budget.

There was some discussion about whether the Recreation Commission would be involved in a holiday event this year. The Mayor reported that she had spoken with the Fire Chief and they would be organizing the annual Santa visit, with photographs and hot chocolate. The mayor has suggested they serve hot apple cider as well. She also mentioned that she is trying to organize a senior outreach group to make seniors feel more of a part of the community. Dave agreed that the Recreation Commission would be supportive of this.

Fundraising-nothing report

Events-To support the Holiday event the Recreation Commission will provide the contact details for the photographer Nicole del Grasso who took the pictures last year.

Field Scheduling-Nothing to report

Communications-Nothing to report other than in the Presidents report. The dates of the Recreation Committee meetings that the Sports Boards are required to attend will be circulated by the Recreation Secretary so they can be communicated to the Sports Boards.

When Phil Gianatasio joins he will be asked to be the Recreation Liaison for baseball Steve Paino will be asked to be the Recreation Liaison wrestling coordinator.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Willie Ortiz, seconded by Bob Quinones, and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Morris
Recreation Secretary