

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE EMERSON RECREATION COMMISSION WAS HELD ON THURSDAY OCTOBER 17, 2019, AT 8:00 P.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE RECREATION CENTER.

I Call to Order

Alternate Presiding Officer Paul Coombes thanked everyone for attending and called the Regular Meeting of the Recreation Commission to order at 8:02 p.m. on Thursday October 17, 2019.

II. Roll Call

Anthony Gismondi, Paul Coombes, Eilish Viggiani, Steve Paino, Phil Gianatasio, Bob Quinones, Mike Graham, Willie Ortiz

Councilwoman McGuire was also in attendance along with Paul Lauterbeck, Chris Sassi and Dave Zimmerman

IV Reports of Officers

Dave Cannici has tendered his resignation. On behalf of the Recreation Commission Paul Coombes thanked Dave for all his hard work over the years that he was involved with the Recreation Commission and Sports Boards and recognized the contribution that he made.

The meeting also appointed a new president.

Motion to appoint Bob Quinones as the Presiding Officer of the Recreation Commission was made by Paul Coombes, seconded by Mike Graham and approved unanimously.

Presiding Officer- Nothing to report

Alternate Presiding Officer- Nothing to report

Secretary-

The secretary reported that new background checks were being submitted and asked if a process had been agreed for printing the ID cards. The Ordinance requires that coaches must have ID cards but the method for producing them is not specified. A meeting with the Interim Borough Administrator was planned. This will now be followed up with the new Borough Administrator Robert Hermansen. The fact that the cards have to be renewed every year would make the process of producing the cards from laminated paper more attractive.

A list of coaches who received their cards earlier in the process will be requested. If this is not available then all the cards may be reproduced. Before this is done, confirmation of the need to include expiration dates is needed. The Borough Administrator will be asked

for a view on whether it is mandatory to have an expiration date on the card. The checks will still be run every year, but if there is no expiration date on the card it would make the process easier. Any change in status on the background checks will be dealt with by the police and the individual removed from the list of approved coaches.

On behalf of the Board of Health, the Secretary asked if any inspections were carried out at the Concession Stand when sports were using it to cook and sell food during games. The stand is open between April and November and is only used by baseball and football. The consensus was that only pre-packaged food was served, with the possible exception being opening day for baseball.

Councilwoman McGuire

Councilwoman McGuire informed the meeting of the appointment of Robert Hermansen to the position of full time Borough Administrator.

She reported that the Mayor and Council had a second reading of Ordinance 1601-19 to amend Chapter 61, 61-4 A, B, C and that it had passed.

She also informed the meeting that members of the Recreation Commission would be contacted by the independent investigator looking into the pool incident that took place at the Recreation Summer Camp and they should make themselves available. Members of the Recreation Commission requested the name of the individual and whether the Borough Administrator would be present when they meet with them. Councilwoman McGuire will try and obtain this information.

V. Program Updates and Reviews

Softball Chris Sassi

Registration for the spring will open November 1 and run until January 31 2020. There is a late fee of \$20 after that. The spring season will open in April 2020 but no date has been confirmed.

The Softball Sports Board has ten members

Softball had a good fall season with 40 girls playing on three teams. There are two weeks left in the season

Baseball Dave Zimmerman

Dates for registration will not be confirmed until a decision has been taken on whether or not Emerson Baseball will join the Little League

The Baseball Sports Board has ten members

Baseball had 4 fall teams 9U, 10U, 11U and 13U and there are three games left in the season which should be finished by early November.

A commissioner from the summer baseball league NEBAS will attend the next baseball board meeting on October 23rd as Emerson Baseball would like to be the host town for the 2021 season.

Baseball is considering introducing a deposit scheme. Currently some families do not help and there can be two games going on at once and the concession stand is not open because there is no one to work it. Parents would submit a check for \$50 before they are given a uniform which would be held against them fulfilling their volunteer requirements. If they do the check will be returned to them. If not it will be deposited. This would only apply to families with children of age to play in the minors and older. Tracking will be done through Sign up genius with one person given the responsibility to monitor it. If working the concession stand does not provide enough opportunities to volunteer, parents can help with field maintenance like raking or striping the field. Donating snacks would also be acceptable.

The question was asked whether field scheduling would still be done through Civic Permits. For football and baseball (Hillman and Benkovic) the requests will be processed by the Recreation department through Civic Permits. Requests for the Board of Ed fields should be sent to Giovanna by email.

A question was asked about blackout dates (Summer Kick Off, Stephanie Morgan Memorial Tournament etc.). These will be publicized when they have been agreed.

The field at the Emerson golf course has not yet been used. It may be used for the pre-K soccer program in the spring which will be run Friday afternoons.

Soccer Paul Lauterback

Recreation soccer had 241 players registered and another 52 from the club team giving a total of 293.

The World Cup event is being held October 19-20.

Soccer social is 7-11 pm November 1st at the Knights of Columbus in Washington Township. Last year there were 75 guests and soccer has already sold 85 tickets for this year and estimate there will probably be around 100 attendees this year.

Alex Matz was named Treasurer for soccer in August.

Football Eilish Viggiani

The Football Board member who had been scheduled to attend had a death in the family so they were not able to attend.

Emerson hosted their first game and it was really well attended. Emerson football and cheer donated all of the food for the Concession stand so that Park Ridge did not have to contribute. Season will end at the beginning of November with an end of season party and trophies.

They are planning a Casino Night fundraiser in November at the Knights of Columbus

The corn hole tournament that was originally planned for the fall will be held in the spring.

The Football Board has 8 members

Track Dave Zimmerman

Spring track will start in March and registration will probably open after the holidays. This year there were 107 kids in the program.

Cross country is going well with 23 kids participating, most of who came from the spring Track program. They have been using Villano to practice and have their last meet on Oct. 19 with a yearend party. The cross country participated in three meets this season. They are considering having cross country as a separate sport from track next year.

Wrestling Steve Paino

Registration opened October 15 and will end October 19. There will be a late fee until December 2nd.

There was an informal social gathering October 16 to encourage more involvement.

The last Board seat has been filled by Janine Giantasio.

The wrestling board is also looking at \$60 volunteer fee as a separate check. If families do not give 2 hours volunteer time at one of the tournaments check will be deposited. Teenagers looking for community service time have been a big help in the past and some of them have come back to help when they have satisfied their community service hours. The wrestling board is considering paying them a fee which would be taken from the checks from families who did not fulfil their volunteer requirements. This will be brought to a Recreation Commission to discuss.

Wrestling will have a competitive dual team

Wrestling expenses have not been reimbursed for the 2018/19 season. The Commission advised that they should contact the Borough's CFO for reimbursement. Once the receipts are submitted a PO will be generated, once that has been signed a check will be produced and sent.

The Wrestling Board made a generous donation to the high school so they could purchase new mats. Emerson wrestling will be able to use these.

III Reading and Approval of the Minutes of the October 3 meeting

Motion to approve the minutes from October 3, 2019 meeting was made by Steve Paino, seconded by Phil Gianatasio and approved.

Roll call: Anthony Gismondi Yes, Paul Coombes Yes, Eilish Viggiani Abstain, Steve Paino Yes Phil Gianatasio Yes, Bob Quinones Abstain, Mike Graham Abstain, Willie Ortiz Abstain

V. Unfinished Business

Little League Baseball will be discussed on November 7th when the Little League representative and Ken Benkovic will be present. Paul had requested clarification as to who could approve the move to the Little League, the Governing Body or the Recreation

Commission. Councilwoman McGuire will follow up with the new Borough Administrator before the next meeting.

There was a discussion about whether the Boys and Girls club had been invited to Recreation Commission meetings in the past.

Budget was reviewed by Willie Ortiz. He reported that the Recreation Commission raises more money than they spend. He further commented that this may not be appreciated by the Mayor and Council and he requested that the liaison Councilwoman McGuire report that back to them.

There was a discussion about whether the money left in the budget was carried over to the next financial year or used for non-recreation purposes. The consensus was that it was the latter.

A suggestion was made that the surplus be used to purchase nets, line painting machine; fireworks for the 2020 summer kick off before the end of the year. Suggestions should be requested from the Sports Board.

VI New Business

Fundraising-nothing report

Events-Anthony has looked into purchasing an ice rink. The difference in price between buying (\$5,600) and renting (\$5,500) a rink is small. However a rented rink comes with skates. If the Commission decides to purchase a rink they would also have to purchase skates. Anthony has found a vendor that sells skates for about \$15 per pair and he suggested purchasing about 40 pairs. It is hard to find vendors who will rent skates without renting a rink as well. Willie suggested that the county be contacted to see if they have a contact. From the discussion about budget there seems to be funds to do this.

Over the first two or three years the rink would pay for itself and then become a revenue generator. It could be used at other events, for example the summer kickoff meeting. The rink would be stored at the DPW. The DPW would also need to build the platform for the rink to be placed on. Specs, what maintenance and up keep may be needed and a price for all of this is required. Last year Kuiken donated the boards for the platform but they may not be able to do this again.

There was a discussion about what else should be done as part of the event. Suggestions included hot chocolate and brownies, inflatable carnival games and a face painter.

The meeting agreed that a full plan including timelines, costs, whether or not the DPW will be able to assemble, take down and store the platform and rink and what type of activities will be available was required by the next meeting on November 7th. The secretary will check whether to DPW will be able to help and store the rink.

December 13/14 was agreed as the date for the event.

Field Scheduling-is going well.

Communications-Nothing to report other than the request for copies of Recreation Commissioners Drivers Licenses for insurance purposes.

VII Open Session (Public)

Steve Paino asked what the procedure was for excused and unexcused absences, specifically was this voted on at the start of the meeting after which a Commissioner had been absent. There was no consensus on this and the by-laws will be checked to see what they say.

Councilwoman McGuire responded to the comment made earlier in the meeting that the Mayor does not appreciate the work done to fundraise for the events that are held during the year. She stated that she did not feel the Mayor is negative about the Recreation Commission and both the Mayor and Councilwoman McGuire have fully supported the Recreation Commission. She gave examples including: provision of extra budget to fund the track team, ensuring that Stop and Shop provided support for the summer kick off town picnic by providing all the food needed and facilitating the process of approving the county field for use by the sports programs.

Commissioner Ortiz disagreed, highlighting the loss of three commissioners in a short time. He further stated that the majority of the work on the summer kick off was done by the Recreation Commission.

Alternate Presiding Officer requested the discussion conclude and asked for other open items for discussion.

There was a request for further information about the pool incident that happened at the Summer Recreation camp which is being investigated. It was agreed that this was not a question for the Recreation Commission meeting.

There was a question about when dates for Sports Board meetings which would be held in the Council Chambers would be available. There was some discussion about whether Sports board meetings were required to be held in the council Chambers and Councilwoman McGuire report said she would check and get back to the Commission.

As there will be a new member appointed to replace Dave Cannici, Bob Quinones made a recommendation that Eilish Viggiani be given the remainder of that term so that she becomes a regular member rather than an alternate. There was some discussion about whether it was better to do this as the term would expire in December or for Eilish to retain her alternate status as that term runs until December 31, 2022.

Motion to close the open session made by Willie Ortiz seconded by Mike Graham.
Approved unanimously.

Motion to close the meeting made by Willie Ortiz, seconded by Anthony Gismondi.
Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Morris
Recreation Secretary