

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE EMERSON RECREATION COMMISSION WAS
HELD ON WEDNESD JUNE 17, 2019, AT 8:00 P.M.**

This meeting of the Recreation Commission of the Borough of Emerson was held via the teleconferencing app GoToMeeting on June 17, 2020 at 8:00 p.m. due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency.

ACCESS INFORMATION

Emerson Recreation Commission meeting, June 17, 2020 at 8pm

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I. Call to Order

Presiding Officer Bob Quinones welcomed everyone to the regular meeting of the recreation commission and called the meeting to order at 8:10 pm. Motion to open the meeting was made by Steve Paino, seconded by Paul Coombes. All were in favor.

II. Roll Call

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

The Mayor was present for part of the meeting and Councilwoman Jill McGuire and Councilman Ken Hoffman for the whole meeting

III. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the meeting on June 3, 2020.

Motion to approve the minutes from the June 3, 2020 meeting made by Paul Coombes and seconded by Willie Ortiz. Approved by Paul Coombes, Willie Ortiz, Mike Graham, Phil Gianatasio and Joe Vigna. Steve abstained as he was not present at the meeting.

IV. Reports of Officers

Presiding Officer-Bob announced that because of increased work commitments he will be resigning from the Recreation Commission effective June 18, 2020. He thanked the commission members for all the support they had given him during his tenure as presiding officer. He was very appreciative. He also said that he would still be around to help with

the transition and as a volunteer for recreation events. The recreation commission thanked him for all his time and effort commenting that he had done a great job. Everyone was really appreciative of his commitment.

Alternate Presiding Officer – Paul discussed the need to reorganize as Bob is leaving and suggested this be discussed under the item Dates of Next Meeting.

Council Liaison- Councilwoman McGuire reported that the Mayor and Council had the first read vote of the tennis fee ordinance which was at the last meeting. The fee has been set at \$20 for a single person and \$60 for a family. She also thanked Bob for his commitment and service to the Recreation Commission and all the support that she had received from him.

Bob suggested that the Recreation Commission would be able to attend the Mayor and Council meeting for the the second reading and discuss any changes to the fees that they feel appropriate. Councilwoman McGuire said the fee had been agreed. Mike said that he had discussed the fees with the Borough Administrator and agreed the fee as stated above. This would not include any camps or clinics. He and the volunteers who have stepped up want to start the program small and grow as appropriate. Right now, they are working on a locking system so that residents who join the program will be able to get on to the courts but non-members will not. They are also looking at an on-line portal for residents to book court time. Dr. Gatens and Dr. Nisonoff are happy for the Recreation Commission to take the lead on this as they have the return to school and graduation post Covid-19 to deal with. Tennis will not be part of any organized leagues as there are none in the area. There may be some camps over the summer but this has not been agreed yet. Mike thanked Councilwoman McGuire for helping him get the fee ordinance on the agenda of the recent Mayor and Council meeting. As of Friday, all five courts will be open between 9 am and 6 pm. Mike commented that the program would need about \$500 to get up and running and asked if this money could come from the Recreation Commission. This will be tabled until the program is up and running.

Councilwoman McGuire said that NJDOH guidelines have been released and circulated to the Recreation Commission.

Councilman Hoffman thanked Bob for all his hard work and said he would be a loss to the Commission.

Mike commented that the NJDOH guidelines state that each sport should have Covid-19 plan and asked Councilwoman McGuire and Councilman Hoffman if the town was planning to do this or does each sport have to write the plan. They were not aware of any town initiative and thought it would be down to each program. Councilwoman McGuire will check with the Borough Administrator.

Mike also pointed out that the guidance on whether or not visitors, parents, guardians, and staff should wear cloth masks was not clear and asked the Council members for

clarification. Councilwoman McGuire will also check on this with the Borough Administrator.

His final question concerned provision of thermal scanner to take temperatures. The guidelines point out that athletes, families, coaches etc. should have their temperature taken before each practice or game. He wondered if these would be purchased by the town. Willie commented that these could probably be reimbursed through the CARES Act. Bob agreed. Eilish asked who would be responsible for taking temperatures. Phil said the guidelines state that each team should have a safety coach who would be responsible for taking temperatures and handing out questionnaires. To avoid any liability issues all parents/players will have to sign waivers. Steve commented that he had to sign several waivers to attend a wrestling tournament next week. Phil said that baseball is covered by Little League insurance and have not been required to sign waivers. Mike asked Councilwoman McGuire if she would speak to Mr. Hermansen to find out whether there were any plans for the Borough to produce waivers. Eilish asked if anyone from the Board of Health had commented. The secretary replied that most of the Covid-19 monitoring was being done by North West Bergen Regional Health Commission and their current focus is outdoor dining. She will contact NWBRCH and check what they are doing. Councilwoman McGuire will see if the Borough are able to purchase the thermal scanners for baseball and softball using funds made available through the CARES act, if there are any plans to establish a universal protocol plan for all programs to ensure there is no variance, verify who will take temperatures (although the meeting thought this would be the safety coach) and are developing any waiver forms. Once this information is available the guidelines should come from the Recreation Commission and not be created by individual sports boards. Willie commented that someone should check with the Borough Administrator to see if the insurance companies require any forms to be signed. Councilwoman McGuire and Councilman Hoffman have not seen anything from MEL JIF but will forward anything they do receive on to the Recreation Commission. In further discussion about the thermal scanners the meeting agreed that a good policy would be to have each sport list out it's needs and then forward one list to the Borough for reimbursement through the CARES act. In addition to the thermal scanners, quantities of hand sanitizers and wipes should be included. Bob suggested that Councilwoman McGuire and Councilman Hoffman find out what level of funding would be available and they agreed to do that.

Secretary-asked for a list of coaches who will actually be coaching in the summer as opposed to those who were going to coach in the spring for softball and baseball. Softball have sent out a survey to see the level of interest and once that has been returned they will provide the names. Baseball will also provide a list.

Tennis volunteers will need to be background checked when they are involved with youth but there are no current plans for this. Nicole Graham who is 17 may run a camp over the summer. She is under 18 and so does not have to be background checked. During the summer Kevin Abbruzzese who runs the tennis program in Mr. Bayley's camp may be coaching so Mike will reach out to Mr. Bayley to find out what he did about background checks. Mike said that they would not have anyone working with youth who had not gone through the proper background checks. None of this would happen before August. He

stressed again that in the first few weeks all that will happen is that the tennis courts will be open and available to book hopefully through a portal.

Secretary- Nothing to report

V. **Sports Updates and Reviews – Recreation Commission Liaison**

Baseball-Phil Gianatasio. About 140 kids have signed up to play baseball in the summer which is a hundred less than signed up in the spring but is still a good number. They may be in a position to start practicing on Monday but probably won't because they still need to form teams depending on how many players and coaches there are at each age level. Games can start on July 6 but again it's not certain if they will. Phil has spoken to NEBUS and they do have enough players to have a league so there will be a travel program as well. Like softball they will need to take temperatures and have players and their family's complete health surveys. They will need hand sanitizer, particularly for equipment that is shared amongst players who cannot afford their own. They also will need to sanitize the dugouts and rails. They have a plan based on Little League, NJDOH and CDC guidelines. Paul asked Councilwoman McGuire and Councilman Hoffman if they thought the DPW would do the sanitizing. Councilman Hoffman said he thought they would but would check with the DPW.

Willie told the meeting that this type of thing would be covered by the CARES act and a list needs to be sent to County as soon as possible as they are the conduit to CARES. The deadline is June 30 and he suggested that the sports should immediately provide a list of what is needed through December. Councilman Hoffman suggested that all the sports contact the Borough Administrator and he would coordinate sending the list to county. Willie suggested that all Recreation Commissioners should be copied in on the lists. Councilwoman McGuire agreed. She raised another point about whether players should wear masks and what Little League were advising on this. They have recommended that players do not go on the field wearing masks unless they are uncomfortable doing that but urge them to wear them on the bench. Any coaches, volunteers or staff that are not able to social distance should wear them.

Bob requested that all the recreation sports liaisons go back to their sports boards and find out exactly what they need. Then one order can be submitted through the Borough. In the meantime, he suggested that Sports boards buy what they need in the short term. He also reiterated the need for consistent guidelines across all the sports. The exception may be wearing masks as this will not be possible in sports like soccer, track and football. The last thing anyone wants is players passing out on the field. Mike added that the NJDOH guidelines were confusing. The first set said 'must wear masks' and the second set said 'should wear masks. He does not want to see players on the fields in masks but coaches, staff and officials should.

Softball-Mike Graham Updates covered earlier.

Tennis-Mike Graham Updates covered earlier.

Wrestling-Steve Paino Nothing to report.

Football and Cheer-Eilish Viggiani The Board of Ed is e-blasting a flyer with a link for families to register for football. There is no fee. The purpose is to find out how families are feeling about their children playing football in the fall.

Track- Joe Vigna The Track Board have no plans for the fall unless they here that there are leagues that are going to be active in the fall. If that is the case they will put a team together. Bob asked Joe if he could take on soccer as Bob will be leaving the commission. Joe said he was fine with that but Paul said it was probably better to discuss this at the next meeting. Anthony offered to take on Track if Joe moved to soccer. Paul suggested that he could take on soccer and that Joe get involved in field scheduling.

Soccer-Bob Quinones. Registration is ongoing and the soccer board have waived the late fee. Any family that had already paid a late fee will receive refund if they have not done so already.

VI. Unfinished Business

Summer kick off

Paul spoke to the fire official and will meet with him and UE on June 24th to go over the permits for the fireworks. The secretary has the paperwork for the ABC permit and will forward to Paul. The application needs to be approved by the Mayor and Council before it can be submitted and Steve suggested that it be included on the Mayor and Council meeting agenda for June 23rd. Councilwoman McGuire and Councilman Hoffman confirmed that this was possible and Councilman Hoffman will talk to the Borough Administrator. Baseball are good to run the home run derby, soccer will check with the Red Bulls and football will do the punt, pass and kick competition. The band who played at the 2019 summer kick off are available for August 29th. Steve pointed out that anything cooked would have to be wrapped or placed in a container before it could be handed to people to meet Servsafe food handling and Covid 19 outdoor dining requirements. A suggestion was made to use qualified food handlers to ensure these guidelines were met. Funds which will not be used to provide bouncy houses/rides could be put towards this. Anthony suggested that the commission should ask Stop & Shop and Shoprite to donate the same food they did last year and then the ServSafe food handlers would prepare and cook it. The meeting agreed that bouncy houses/rides would not be part of the event because of safety concerns. Whether or not there would be a DJ will be reviewed at a future meeting.

The meeting also agreed that a different name was needed for the event which would be included in the flyer.

Summer Recreation Camp

Bob told the meeting that Mr. Lechman is still reviewing the guidelines but still feels it would be very difficult to hold a full day camp because of the lack of facilities to bring campers into in the event of inclement weather. They are still hoping to do a half day camp. There was a discussion about using the gym at Villano school or the Senior Center. The Board of Ed have decided not to reinstate their summer camp. Councilwoman McGuire

said that the guidelines published by NJDOH make it really hard to re-instate classes by July 6.

Summer Drive in Movie Event

Willie has spoken to the County about using the Soldier Hill Golf Course parking lot and they have a concern about limiting attendance at the movie to Emerson residents. As it is a county property the event should be available to all county residents and county don't want to set a precedent with this event. The other possible location is Grad field. As Bob will no longer be part of the commission, Willie offered to coordinate the event and asked Councilwoman McGuire and Councilman Hoffman to find out what permits may be needed.

Face masks for high school seniors and police officers

These have been ordered and should be available by the end of the week. Paul and Eilish will pick them up and deliver them to the Police Department and the High School or a PTA parent. The police department face masks are black with EPD and a thin blue line printed on them.

Tennis Program

Discussed earlier

VII. New Business

NJDOH Guidelines

Nothing to report

Date of the next meeting

After some discussion, the date of the next meeting was agreed as Wednesday June 24th at 8pm.

Committee Reports

Fundraising – Anthony Gismondi No fundraising activities but Anthony will check the email that accompanied one of the checks received as sponsorship for the summer kick off. He thinks that the sponsor said they were OK to use the funds for a 2021 event if the summer kick off could not go ahead because of Covid-19.

Events – Paul Coombes Nothing more to report

Field Scheduling – Bob Quinones/Eilish Viggiani Two permit requests have been received from baseball. These will be approved on the condition that all NJDOH guidelines are adhered to. Bob will show Joe how to use the system and get him an ID.

Communications –Mike Graham/Liz Morris Nothing to report

VIII. Open Public Comment

Motion to open the meeting to public comment made by Willie Ortiz and seconded by Steve Paino. All were in favor.

There being no further comment by the public a motion to close the meeting to public comment made by Willie Ortiz and seconded by Steve Paino. All were in favor.

IX. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Steve Paino, seconded by Willie Ortiz. All were in favor. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Morris
Recreation Secretary