

WESTWOOD RECREATION DEPARTMENT
RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of September 14, 2015

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 8:03 P.M. by Chair John Toale.

Present: Councilmember Chris Montana, Chair John Toale, Vice Chair Angelo Pira, Board Members Kevin Corcoran, Bobbi Cozic, Jodi Murphy, Ruth Nass, Bermari Roig, Jason Scheffer, Recreation Director Gary Buchheister.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Member Scheffer made a Motion to Accept the Minutes as presented; Member Corcoran seconded the Motion; All in favor, the Motion passed

3. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM: Chair John Toale stated that he will be unavailable for Board Meetings until November but will be available for consultation. The Board wished him well as Mr. Toale departed for another meeting. Vice Chair Pira assumed the Chair responsibilities.

4. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:

Councilmember Montana reported that Administrator Kezmarsky has submitted the Open Space Grant Application for the McKinley Park tennis courts refurbishment. Administrator Kezmarsky and C.F.O Ayers are reviewing funding options for the project.

Mr. Montana also reported that the Council has approved a Coaches Code of Conduct and a Coaches Contract, which all proposed coaches must sign. Director Buchheister distributed the Code of Conduct and the Coaches Contract for Board review.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

a. Summer Re-Cap: Enrollment and financial summaries of the Summer Playground Program and the Summer Camps were distributed for Board review. The Playground Program had a 19% enrollment increase including a large influx of Township residents. The enrollment was curtailed to Westwood residents; later Westwood children were wait-listed to assure proper staff distribution. The Before Care / After Care programs had a slight decrease, due to the expanded program hours. Mr. Buchheister reported that the entire program was funded by the program's registration fees which also allowed for scholarships to residents and the waiver of fees for many Borough Volunteers.

The Voorhis Park water fountain was dismantled due to vandalism more than seven years ago. A temporary source of water has been utilized for programs in the park but a permanent water fountain is necessary for three seasons of programs and resident use. Funding is available and Mr. Buchheister will recommend to the governing body that a water fountain, similar to facilities in other Borough parks be installed.

Playground Program Feedback Surveys were received with very positive comments and a few valuable suggestions including extending the season. Discussion followed on the program, equipment, facility issues and recommendations for 2016.

The August one-week Camps following the Playground Program were excellent with approximately 150 children registered. There has been a very positive response to various scientific and theatrical programs.

Director Buchheister asked the Board Members to consider the 'resident' status of Township of Washington participants pertaining to the Playground Program as well as all other programs. Extensive discussion followed. Mr. Buchheister would like the Board's recommendation by the November Meeting to present to the Council for possible inclusion in the 2016 Fee Ordinance. Mr. Montana requested a summary of the shared programs for Westwood and the Township regarding the residency participation in each of those programs

Summer Concert Series; The Series was excellent with great attendance. Discussion followed on specifics of the program, including some changes of genre for the 2016 season.

Movies in the Park: Three sponsorships of the program allowed the program to run at no cost to the Borough. Attendance each night was very good to excellent. Discussion included the assurance of P.D. Reserves as Crossing Guards at every event; the question of food vendors was raised but for multiple, logistical reasons the policy of not having vendors at the Concerts and Movies will remain.

b. 2015-16 Pre-School registration: The Pre-School program enjoyed the best Opening Day yet. The 4 year program is at maximum with 24, the 3 year program has 14 with more enrollments anticipated.

c. Fall Programs: Mr. Buchheister reported the Fall registration has begun including new programs. Several classes are already near capacity. The season summary was distributed for Board review.

The S.N.A.P. (special needs) basketball program for ages 7-21 and art classes will be held for the Fall session. Discussion followed including the adult, regional Special Needs program in Woodcliff Lake.

Elaine Blumenthal, the senior fitness instructor has taken a leave of absence. Fitness Trainer Jodi Murphy, a Westwood resident and Board Member, will conduct the class with an Assistant for the interim.

d. Background Checks for all Basketball Coaches: Director Buchheister reported that this will be instituted for all Department coaches, utilizing the Instant Verification Co. used by many N.J. Municipalities. Discussion followed on the specifics and fees of the service. The governing body will determine the requirements of coaches background checks for the quasi sports organizations.

e. Capital Improvements:

1. Community Center Façade: The exterior painting will be completed this week. Vines will be removed; gutters and exterior lettering will be cleaned / repaired. Mr. Buchheister reported that a U.S., State, Municipal and seasonal flags will be flown on the front of the Community Center. Lighting will be added to illuminate the 'Community Center' signage.

2. Lights on Fields: Field lighting at Meadowbrook and Westvale parks will be repaired by mid-September including the replacements of bulbs and ballasts as necessary and the control key pad.

3. Community Center Gym Lights: Project funding is in place. The Boswell Engineer design has been delayed. If the design cannot be produced soon by Boswell, it may be necessary to use another firm.

4. Community Center Gym Floor: A manufacturing representative will attend the October Board meeting; the Westwood H.S. Basketball Coach will also attend. The project schedule cannot be determined as the new lighting must be installed prior to the replacement of the floor.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Committee Assignments:

b. Capitol Improvement Plans: Previously discussed

1. Lighting in gym:

2. New gym floor:

7. NEW BUSINESS: Councilmember Montana and Director Buchheister are reviewing the liability insurance for all Westwood sports organizations; changes to the insurance policies may be necessary. Recommendations will be presented to the governing body for review / action. Discussion followed on the various quasi-organizations, their participants and the facilities they use.

One of the two part-time custodians responsible for the Community Center, Fire House, Train Station and park facilities has resigned. Mr. Buchheister and DPW Manager Rick Woods have requested that the governing body reinstitute the full-time position for the second custodian, Michael Lara, who is a diligent worker and a Westwood resident.

A GaGa ball pit has been installed at Brookside Park. Mr. Buchheister wanted to bring this to Westwood when Chris Bergen asked for suggestions for his Eagle Scout project. It is a new dodge ball type game which has been met with a great deal of enthusiasm by many organization across the country.

8. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to Adjourn was made at 9:16 P.M. by Member Cozic, seconded by Member Nass. The next meeting will be October 19, 2015 at 8:00 PM. in the Community Center.