

WESTWOOD RECREATION DEPARTMENT
RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of April 14, 2014

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 8:03 P.M.

Present: Councilmember Christopher Owens, Chair John Toale, Vice Chair Angelo Pira, Board Members Heidi Catalano, Kevin Corcoran, Jodi Murphy, Ruth Nass, Recreation Director Gary Buchheister, Admin Asst Margaret McDonough.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of March 10, 2014: Member Corcoran made a Motion to Accept the Minutes as presented; Vice Chair Pira seconded the Motion; All in favor, the Motion passed.

Recreation Director Gary Buchheister welcomed Councilmember Owens as the Council Liaison to the Recreation Board. The Board Members were introduced to Mr. Owens and Mr. Buchheister reported on the new Council Liaison Committee Assignments.

3. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM:

4. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT: Councilmember Christopher Owens stated that as a new member of the Council he had nothing to report. When asked, Mr. Owens confirmed that Councilmember Miller had apprised him of current Recreation Department matters.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

a. Basketball Program Update: Director Buchheister reported that the basketball season was concluded this past Thursday with the year-end Travel League party. Medals were awarded based on years of participation followed by a pizza party and uniform return.

Director Buchheister held a meeting with all Travel Team Coordinators and Coaches to review the season and discuss improvements for next year including whether all Playoffs should be cancelled to control the level of excessive competition which instigates unsportsmanlike behavior amongst players and parents. The suggestions and recommendations formulated will be reviewed and determined over the summer months.

Despite a few incidents late in the playoff season, Director Buchheister reported that it was a very successful season for recreational and travel teams with a record number of participants.

b. Community Center façade repair (Jefferson Ave): The repair work on the façade will begin the week of April 21 and should be completed with a few days.

c. Banner Program: Mr. Buchheister reported that a new banner was requested today which will bring the total of sponsor banners in the gym to thirteen.

d. Spring Programs: A summary of the current registrations for the Spring Programs was distributed to the Board. Additional registrations are anticipated before the start of the season the week of April 21. Discussion followed including the new 'Chemical Creations' class which was quickly filled so a second class has been added and the Spring (School) Break Camp.

e. Egg Hunt: Director Buchheister thanked Councilmember Owens and the Board Members who had assisted at the event on Saturday, April 12 in Veterans Park. Discussion followed regarding logistical details of the event and the advertisement which was restricted to the Recreation Department Spring Program Flyer and event flyers distributed through the public school system to grades K-3.

f. An Opinion Poll was emailed to the families which participated in the 2014 Winter Program schedule for a season review. A condensed report of the responses was presented to the Board.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Committee Assignments: Director Buchheister requested that Board Members bring suggestions, ideas and resident feedback to him regarding their assigned areas for discussion and implementation. The current assignments are: Over 55 Programs, Ruth Nass; Teen Center, Kevin Corcoran and Heidi Catalano; Youth/ Pre-School Programs, Jodi Murphy; Facility Improvements (Parks/C.C.), John Toale and Angelo Pira; Sponsorship, not assigned.

Discussion followed regarding the Teen Center's Laser Tag Event of April 11 which was partially funded by the Municipal Drug & Alcohol Alliance of which Mr. Buchheister is the Municipal Chair. Other programs that have benefited from the Alliance Grant that is designated for prevention and wellness programs are Project Graduation, Over 55 Programs, Anti-bullying (School) events and many others are planned.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Movies in the Park: Director Buchheister reported that the Movies in the Park Program is almost finalized. Michael Griffin, who resigned from the Board in December, 2013, and Margaret McDonough have been running the program for ten years. The program is very successful with an average attendance of 300 persons each evening in August. The assistance of new Board Members is required although Mr. Griffin and Ms. McDonough will continue to assist. Vice Chair Pira, Members Nass and Corcoran offered to assist. A schedule will be determined during the summer.

The Summer Concert Series has been finalized and Mr. Buchheister explained the tradition of Board Members acting as Hosts at each of the concerts. The host schedule will be determined prior to the summer.

b. Capitol Improvement Plans: Director Buchheister reported that several items which must be addressed are the renovation of the Community Center gym lighting and the gym floor. The lighting is original from the building's renovation completed in 1996 and it is substandard. A suspended floor was installed over the tile floor in 2005 with funds raised by residents and matched by the Borough. The window blinds throughout the Community Center are original to the renovation and are badly in need of replacement.

c. Chair Toale announced that the Westwood Youth Football Association has joined a newly formed league comprised of towns in Northern Bergen County. He reported that the towns in the previous league had populations far exceeding Westwood's which created a competitive imbalance. Every effort was made to encourage neighboring Westwood towns to participate in the new league which many have chosen not to do. Chair Toale and Vice Chair Pira are certain that the new league will be of a greater benefit to Westwood's children.

Discussion continued including: 1: the number of lights out at Westvale and Meadowbrook Parks. Director Buchheister reported that the lights are scheduled for repair.

- 2: The Westvale and Meadowbrook parking lots were discussed including the current surface conditions and materials, drainage issues and the exorbitant costs required to pave those areas.
- 3: The problem of residents walking their dogs unleashed and not cleaning up after their dogs.
8. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to Adjourn was made at 8:47 P.M. by Member Nass, seconded by Vice Chair Pira. The next meeting will be May 12, 2014 at 8:00 PM. in the Community Center.