

WESTWOOD RECREATION DEPARTMENT
RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of March 16, 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, Jodi Murphy, Ruth Nass, Bermari Roig, Jason Scheffer, Recreation Director Gary Buchheister, Admin Asst Margaret McDonough.

Absent: Member Bobbie Cozic

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of February 9, 2015: Vice Chair Pira made a Motion to Accept the Minutes as presented; Member Nass seconded the Motion; All in favor, the Motion passed.

3. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM:

4. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT: Councilmember Chris Montana reported the municipal budget process is proceeding and approval of the McKinley Park tennis courts refurbishment as a Capital Budget / Green Acres matching grant project has a strong possibility for approval. Discussion followed regarding the project being long overdue, the thirty year life span of tennis courts and the improvement of the two courts as a solid investment and asset to the entire community.

Mr. Montana stated that due to the Recreation Trust Account; the Recreation budget is unique as it does not impact or require funds from the Municipal Budget as every other Department does which eases the budget process. The budget will be reviewed on a line by line basis for approval.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

a. Spring Program Update: Registration for the season opened today and Director Buchheister distributed the initial report for review which showed a very good response from the residents.

b. Recreation Staff Meeting: Director Buchheister thanked the Board for understanding the unavoidable postponement of the Meeting and announced a tentative rescheduling date of Tuesday, April 21. Board Members are requested to respond with their availability.

c. New Men's Softball Program – 6 Teams. Tabled

d. Easter Egg Hunt Recap: Easter Egg Hunt: The annual event is scheduled for Saturday, April 4. Director Buchheister reported that the two previous sponsors of the event will not participate this year, new sponsors will be identified. Discussion followed regarding the \$500. sponsor fee, the logistics of the event and possible additions in the future including face painting, etc.

e. Teen Center – shared services? Director Buchheister reported on a recent article in the *Community Life* Newspaper regarding statements made by Township of Washington Mayor Jane Sobkowicz regarding erroneous statements of improper behavior of the participants, lack of supervision of the program and inaccurate numbers of the children participating from Westwood and the Township. Discussion followed on the program, the staffing, the procedures, special events, use of the Community Center and the financial letter of agreement that Mayor Sobkowicz has not signed providing for the Township's teens to participate in the current program and the 2015-16 season. Mayor Sobkowicz is considering charging a fee for Township residents who attend the Teen Center; how the Township would administrate that charge has not been determined.

Extensive discussion continued on the Inter-Borough relationship regarding the many shared programs offered by Westwood and the Wrestling and Lacrosse programs offered by the Township, the 'resident' status of Township residents in Westwood programs, the program fee structure, Facility and Field Use, etc.

5. f. Field Update – soccer field closed Spring/Summer: The date for use of the fields is dependent on the weather and will be announced as soon as possible. The DPW uses the various parking lots for snow disposal, which is also a determining factor of when the fields can be opened for scheduled events. Discussion followed on the Facility Use fee schedule and Policies & Procedures for field use. Director Buchheister will meet with the Presidents of the Westwood Baseball and Softball Association to define the specifics of the upcoming season.

g. Summer Concerts Program: Director Buchheister reported that Re-Max will not continue to sponsor the series. Mr. Buchheister has contacted several potential sponsors who are interested in sponsoring the Series. The sponsorship fee is generally \$2,250. Discussion followed on the current sponsors and potential sponsors for the program and sponsorship for other Recreation Department programs and events.
6. OLD BUSINESS:
 - a. Committee Assignments: Tabled
 - b. Capitol Improvement Plans: Tabled
 1. Lighting in gym: Tabled.
 2. New gym floor: Tabled
7. NEW BUSINESS:
 - a. Basketball Program Update: A very successful Recreational League season is concluding with the Championship games. The Travel Teams have concluded excepting the 6th Gr. Girls and 7th Gr. Boys who are still in the Hillsdale Hoop Tournaments this past week and the very talented 5th Gr. Boys made the Semi-Finals. The 8th Gr. Boys won the very competitive ‘Army’ Division League.
 - b. 2015 Winter Program Update: The final summary of the season was distributed for Board review. Items of discussion included the Afterschool Kids Club with 90 participants and 4 staff persons which is very successful program.
 - c. Department Head Budget Meeting: Director Buchheister reported on a recent meeting when the revenues and expenditures trends of the Borough were reviewed. Department Heads are encouraged to confirm that department fee structures are comparable to surrounding communities and to confirm increased fees reflecting increased services. Mr. Buchheister stated that communities in the Eastern United States are delinquent in utilizing corporate sponsorship compared to Midwest and Western States and communities; that there are many areas that the Department can be more proactive in this regard including sponsorship of facilities/fields, concession services at Westvale Park scheduled in consideration of Westwood sports organizations, etc. He stated that the Department is funding many improvements and maintenance costs without impacting the Capital Budget through facility / field rental, etc.
Councilmember Montana stated that the current budget review is very difficult given the constraints of contractual obligations, utilities, the 2% Budget Cap, etc. Mr. Montana elaborated on the current review of all fee structures within the Borough to provide the maximum services and the most efficient cost for the resident / taxpayers.
8. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to Adjourn was made at 8:52 P.M. by Member Nass and seconded by Member Corcoran. The next meeting will be April 13, 2015 at 8:00 PM. in the Community Center.