

**Regular Meeting
Recreation Commission
Borough of Rumson
February 15, 2023
7PM Borough Hall Courtroom
Minutes**

Present Were:

Commissioner, DellBeneHall, Chandler, Whitehouse, Cecil, Levine and Cavise. Also present was Councilman Conklin.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner DellBeneHall and seconded by Commissioner Whitehouse.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments by the public.

GENERAL INFORMATION FROM RECREATION DIRECTOR

Charlie Hoffmann shared an update on new our software systems. Tennis Bookings has been transitioned to PlaybyPoint.com and is currently live.

We are currently in implementation for our new software Civic Rec with an anticipated go live around April 5.

Martine Science camp registration went live last week (February 9) with minimal issues. All weeks are now full except the two teen weeks.

All other camps opened registration as of today (February 15) at noon. The two camps that are TBA are Crew, which we are working out the dates and Field Hockey, which we are awaiting the appointment of a new HS coach.

Councilman Conklin shared news that an issue is happening in neighboring towns in regards to pickleball and tennis registrations in which the local residents get priority and we should keep an eye on it.

There was no executive session.

Commissioner Cecil noted that he spoke with candidates Mike Rongetti and Mike Roberto, though not in great detail about the Commissioner role. He will follow up with both candidates again soon.

Charlie Hoffmann shared an update on the following recreation programs.

Winter/Spring Sports Update

Rowing

We have started the 7th and 8th grade program. The ergs will be moved from Fair Haven Fields to Bingham Hall around March 10. The booster club organized an erg challenge which raised over \$12,000 and was well-organized & well received. The spring budget is being finalized and we will be meeting with the rowing boosters next week to review and finalize.

Rec Basketball

Charlie Hoffmann shared an update on basketball. One concern was related to the 7th and 8th grade boys games on Friday nights. While it's not one particular child, the collective behavior has become disruptive. The action steps taken included a stern email to the parents asking them to speak to their kids. We also added a 2nd referee so the games will be called much tighter. We are also implementing a sign in sheet so that children are aware of the intent and it should hopefully curtail poor behavior. Commissioner Cecil also suggested not allowing any outside basketballs into the gym. Commissioner Cavise also suggested that parents be called, should there be any issues. Commissioner Whitehouse also suggested that a high school volunteer be on hand to help the situation.

Commissioner Walz shared an update on rec basketball. She noted that it was a struggle to get coaches and it provided difficulty in selecting the teams. Fifth and sixth grade girls now has 6 coaches for 6 teams. We need to come up with creative solutions to attract new coaches. Attendance has not been an issue. For practices next year, we should max out at 4 teams per practice. An evaluation would also be helpful. Commissioner Levine agreed that finding coaches continues to be an issue. He also noted that the season has been fun for both grade levels that he coaches. The practice and game turnout has been good as well. The main issue has been referees, in which they were not making enough calls.

Charlie Hoffmann noted that the evaluation night was helpful in balancing the teams. Commissioner Whitehouse added that she didn't like the term "evaluation" and it should be rebranded differently to something like "open practice". The aim is not to put additional pressure on the kids as they are competition and judged enough. Commissioner Whitehouse also suggested a similar approach for other sports if feasible. Charlie Hoffmann indicated that it may make sense for soccer and flag football but may be more difficult to try with baseball. Councilman Levine added that the drafts are most difficult for the younger grades. Commissioner Chandler made the point that recruiting coaches should be a point of emphasis for all commissioners.

Commissioner Walz also expressed concern about Deane Porter gym not having lines on the court. Charlie Hoffmann noted that 2 teams from girls $\frac{3}{4}$ need to practice at Deane Porter each week on a rotation. Commissioner Walz suggested allocating the 6PM slots at Forrestdale for the 3rd and 4th teams next year.

Commissioner Levine inquired about the heights of the hoops noting that the 9 foot hoops were not ideal for some players. Commissioner Cecil suggested that the teams should be playing 4 vs 4, which may be changed for next year.

Lastly, Charlie Hoffmann noted that there will be scheduling and location changes due to the unavailability of RCDS on the weekend of January 27th and January 28th.

Baseball/Softball/T-Ball

Charlie Hoffmann mentioned that baseball, softball and t ball registration is open and number of teams need to be provided to the league by February 8. Commissioner Whitehouse suggested bringing back the spring sports parade. Commissioner Cavise suggested doing the event at Riverside the weekend after Spring Break (April 22 and April 23). The group agreed and suggested the afternoon would be the best time.

Special Events and Programs (Recap/Upcoming)

Charlie Hoffmann gave an update on the after school classes. Currently underway are Sports Broadcasting and art, both occurring at Forrestdale. The next classes will be Science, acting and creative writing. The Drop and Shop event had to be cancelled due to low enrollment.

The tree lighting went well. We do not envision changing the procedure too much in the future.

Charlie Hoffmann thanked the HS volunteers and Mike Boyle for the assistance with the Santa calls, which we called more than 80 families. Commissioner Walz suggested we look into changing the Caller ID options for next year.

Commissioner Whitehouse suggested and Commissioner Cavise agreed that setting up a career summit/job fair for high school students. It may include local businesses that are hiring young people and provide other resources for students. Having the volunteer options available would also be helpful. The ideal timeframe would be April or May.

Eric Paone-Hurd has been appointed as the Deputy Clerk. He will retain his role as the Communications Coordinator and continue to support the Recreation Department. He thanked the commission for their support over his time here.

Summer Camps

Charlie Hoffmann shared an update on the summer camps. Marine Science camp will be offered to Fair Haven residents in Fair Haven and separately to Rumson residents in Rumson. Marine Science registration will go live on February 9 at noon. All the other camps will go live on February 15. We have more than 30 camp sessions with drama camp and teen marine science being new.

Commissioner Whitehouse suggested adding teen options for the summer including kickball, dodgeball and other drop in events. It was also suggested that similar family nights be added in the summer as well.

New Business

Charlie Hoffmann reiterated that Meadow Ridge Center will be closed for the Spring season. Commissioner Cecil inquired about a timeline for tennis and basketball repairs.

Commissioner Cavise noted the drainage block on the softball turf field and asked if something can be done. Commissioner Whitehouse would speak to the HS staff about options.

Old Business

The group discussed girl's lacrosse at length. After the last meeting, we wanted to bring all the lacrosse leaders for a meeting. That meeting was conducted but we did not have a resolution. The Rec Department will continue to run a program for 5th and 6th grade girls and 7th and 8th grade girls. Commissioner Cavise expressed concern that the Rec lacrosse program should be working in cooperation with travel lacrosse, not competition. Commissioner Whitehouse raised the point that the girls program does not mirror the boys program, which has been run successfully. She expressed concern that the travel program would be taking many of the rec players. Commissioner Chandler stressed that we are looking to continue to provide the same service as we always have in the past.

Commissioner Chandler clarified that the Recreation Commission is advisory and despite voting for an issue, it does not always mean those votes are moved forward. Commissioner Cavise questioned the process when the Recreation Commission recommends something and the Recreation Department opposes such a decision. Commissioner Whitehouse also mentioned her discomfort with the process as well, noting that she wants to be helpful and impactful to the families in town. She also suggested the Rec Department reach out more frequently to the commissioners for help and assistance.

Commissioners Cavise, Whitehouse, Cecil, Walz, Levine and DellBene Hall agreed that the recreation department should be working with the travel lacrosse program for grades 5-8.

Commissioner Cecil expressed frustration on not being able to utilize funds for improvements. Commissioner Cavise echoed that the commission members have an ear to the community and opinions should be heard. Charlie Hoffmann noted that the opinions of the Commissioners are valuable and welcomed, but not all decisions will always be implemented. He also noted that Councilman Conklin is our liaison and does a good job attending our meetings, communicating and being open to questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Cecil noted that he thinks the Commission should spend \$50,000 for the rec shed and 10% on capital projects from the trust fund each year. It was suggested that we see the bylaws at a future meeting, including potential changes.

It was suggested that Tom Rogers be asked to attend a future meeting.

The next meeting will be February 15. The meeting was adjourned at 9:38.