

RUMSON RECREATION COMMISSION

March 20, 2013

Minutes - APPROVED

Attendance

Chairman Lembeck called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The following members were present: Lembeck, Bavuso, Chandler, Dengler, MacGillis, Shanley. Absent: McGinty. Councilman Ben Day arrived at 8.45pm.

Also present: Sarah Orsay, Recreation Director

Public Portion

Dale Oehler and William Garavente, representing RFH Youth Lacrosse, were present. They were seeking additional field space in Rumson for the Rumson – Fair Haven boys K-8 lacrosse program, which has 300 participants and represents rec and select teams (aka “local travel” and “select travel”). RFH Youth Lacrosse currently uses fields in Fair Haven and the RFH HS turf. Their Local travel represents 9 teams, each with 2 weekly practices and a game; Select travel for 4th-8th grade each has 3 practices a week and games.

Rumson Recreation runs the Girls Recreation and Select teams for grades 1-8 programs for both towns, also approximately 300 participants. The girls’ teams are allotted only one practice per week and one game due to limited field availability in Rumson, so the town is unable to provide additional field time for RFH Youth Lacrosse.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Shanley called for approval of the minutes for December 2012 and January 2013, Ms. Chandler seconded, and they were unanimously approved.

Chairman’s Announcements

Chairman Lembeck welcomed Gregg MacGillis as a new member to the Recreation Commission. Greg’s three year term expires in December 2015.

Director’s Report

Parks

Meadow Ridge – Meadow Ridge West baseball is under construction and should be complete by the start of the baseball season. The new dugouts for Meadow Ridge South and Meadow Ridge West are scheduled to be completed by April 1. New turf blankets arrived, but it was too late in the season to use them, but they will be used next Fall.

Rec Baseball, Girls Lacrosse, Rec Travel Baseball, as spring sports, receive priority in field allocation over Rec Travel Soccer.

Mr. Dengler requested that we add “no pitch back” signs on the baseball fences, particularly MRE, and send an email to the coaches reminding them of this policy. Hitting balls against the fences weakens the integrity of the fence and permanently damages it. Ms. Orsay will follow up with DPW and the coaches.

Recreation

Basketball – The First / Second Grade Basketball clinic was extended 3 weeks and ended with regular Basketball season on March 2nd. This extension was favorably received by the participants and it was suggested to include it in the 2014 season.

Baseball – Registrations are down significantly from last year (approx 12%) at all levels above T-Ball. Enrollment in 2013 is approx 375 v 425 in 2012. For girls, this seems to be a migration to LAX and also travel soccer. For boys, it

is competition from travel baseball and travel soccer, as well as a migration to LAX. Many kids dropped out after making travel baseball teams or due to difficulty with competing obligations to other sports (i.e., travel soccer practice often cited). Travel baseball has also drawn experienced coaches from rec and has provided significant competition for field time.

Rec practices begin this week, while T-Ball and the Girls Lacrosse Clinic will begin April 13th. The EMSA Little League season and the Rookie / Prospect League seasons have been delayed one week until April 15th due to low participation numbers across the board and difficulty finding coaches.

Rumson may take players from other towns w/in EMSA for Colt league (7th/8th Grade) as we have 20 sign-ups, too much for one team, not enough for two. Similarly Junior Little League (4th grade) has 10 players per team. Enrollment has been impacted by the development of two 10U travel baseball teams, few of whose players are playing rec baseball, and also competing travel soccer and travel lacrosse commitments.

Mr. Bavuso suggested that having a Little League affiliation might enhance the stature and competitiveness of Rec Baseball, thereby attracting more players. Rebranding Rec into "local travel" and "select travel," similar to boys' lacrosse, was also discussed.

Girls Lacrosse – By agreement, Rumson and Fair Haven boys play rec and select (aka travel) lacrosse via the RFH Youth Lacrosse program in Fair Haven, while the Rumson and Fair Haven girls play through Rumson Recreation.

Registrations for Girls' Lacrosse and Clinic currently number 190 participants in 3rd – 8th grade vs 230 in 2012 (approx 20% drop), where the clinic had a slight rise in participants to 80 from 69. Tryouts were held for a U13 and U15 Tournament Team, which will have one practice a week and play 3 tournaments during the season. Rec practices begin this week, the Clinic will begin April 13th.

For both Baseball and LAX, registrations were delayed. In speaking to other Rec Directors, this seems to be the norm for the Shore Towns this year – lower numbers and huge delays in Rec program registrations.

Travel Baseball – Rec is sponsoring 3 travel baseball teams this year. Frank Lauria's 8U, in its second year, both Tony Scannell's 9U and Joe DiBernardo's 9U teams are new. Todd Herman is still considering creating a 7U team that will be lower key than a USABL team, but at a higher skill level than T-Ball. Several of last year's travel teams folded. Brad Sakele and Nick Ferrara each created a 10U team (i.e., two 10U teams) not sponsored by Rumson Rec. The proliferation of travel baseball teams – particularly having two Rumson teams at one age group, has negatively impacted rec baseball numbers both in terms of coaches and participants. The Commission discussed possible solutions to this problem, including ways in which travel baseball players might be encouraged to play rec, but agreed to discuss further at future meetings.

Travel baseball season opens April 7th.

RFH Rowing – RFH Rowing is open to residents of Rumson and Fair Haven. Winter Conditioning ran from Jan 21 – last week, had 37 high schoolers, consisting of erg training 3x a week & Row-Ga, yoga classes designed for rowers. Young Rowers WC was a new program for 7th & 8th graders that included erg training and Row-Ga, 1x a week each. Young Rowers was very popular and had 24 participants. There was also a Master Women's Rowing WC with 5 participants.

Barry Bunnell, an experienced boater, has volunteered to assist the RFH Rowing high school program and we anticipate will be a valuable addition to the staff.

The Spring High School Rowing team will likely end up with approximately 50 participants.

We have received many inquiries for our summer rowing camps, particularly from Middle Schoolers. We are lining up coaches and dates.

The dock will be put in this week, weather permitting and the boats being repaired and repainted.

RFH Rowing held two parent info session, 2/7 and 2/28. Both were packed houses and well received.

Navesink River Rowing will be sharing our launch space at Victory Park. Their site is currently not usable due to Superstorm Sandy.

Soccer – Jerseys continue to come in and Ms Orsay estimates that we are only about 30 short now.

Travel Soccer – Increased from 8 teams to 10 teams (approx 150 participants from 8U to 14U, girls and boys) and doing 2 practices and one game per week. Ms Orsay noted that the travel soccer commitment was impacting baseball as well as field allocation. The question was raised whether the Commission should consider limiting out-of-season travel sports to one practice a week and increase the number of practices allocated to in-season rec sports. This is a weighty topic and given Mr. McGinty's absence, it was agreed to continue the discussion in future sessions.

Travel Soccer "Friendly" Tourney this Sunday, Mar 24th. The travel soccer season opens April 7th.

Rutgers Certification Meeting – March 5th, 35 attended the Rutgers SAFETY certification clinic for volunteer coaches from both Rumson and FH. Almost 100% of Rumson Rec LAX and Baseball coaches have background check, Rutgers and Concussion course completed. Ms. Orsay expects 100% compliance with all Rec Head Coaches by the start of the season.

Camps: Ms. Orsay is turning her attention toward summer camps. The goal is to be able to offer on-line Registration April 15th – May 31 for the Summer and Fall programs.

Positive Coaching Alliance ("PCA") – Don't have much interest from coaches, considering turning over to members of Municipal Alliance, if applicable.

Other

Kelleher Kids Triathlon – Rumson Recreation is a beneficiary of this fun event, which is in its fourth year. It will be held on Sunday, June 2, 2013.

Stand Up Paddle ("SUP") Event – Proposed Sunday, July 21, 2013 at Victory Park. No Update.

Spring Sports Parade – Remaking baseball parade into Spring Sports Parade for this year only, as it is a way for parents, coaches and rec participants to honor John Hird for his years of service. The parade will be held on Sat, April 13th, 8.15am in the Forrestdale/Piping Rock vicinity.

NJ Parks & Rec Assn Conf – Ms. Orsay attended the NJPRA conference in Atlantic City and earned 8 hours of CEUs. Ms. Orsay indicated it was very informative covering topics such as grant writing, sponsorships, concussions, communication, multi-generational park use and field maintenance, to list a few.

Treasurer's Report – [need to update]

Available funds still approximately \$124,000 as no new significant expenditures have occurred.

Old Business

Martello Field – In order to formally reintroduce the topic to the Borough Mayor and Council, the commission needs to submit a formal proposal to the Council. Key questions to be answered are where will the initial funding come from, as well as the on-going maintenance funding and ultimately, replacement funding.

Defibrillators – Ms. Orsay passed out literature and proposed having LifeSavers come and present their best suggestion for defibrillators to the Commission. LifeSavers has installed defibs in many parks in NJ, can answer all questions, and bring sample. All agreed was a good idea and Ms. Orsay will follow up to arrange for April or May meeting.

CPR/First Aid Refresher Course – It was suggested Ms. Orsay contact the Red Cross to run a program in town.

New Business

RFH Rowing – Mr. Lembeck indicated that RFH Rowing would need to rent two 8s at a cost of approximately \$2500-\$3000 each. There was some discussion around the cost of maintaining the program and it was agreed to devote a future discussion in the near future to a detailed business plan for the program.

Flag Football – Mr. Bavuso confirmed the participant age is being raised to include 11 & 12 year olds this fall. He also indicated that he will need help from a parent coordinator on Saturday's to run the program.

Communication updates – With the significant support of time, effort and expertise from Councilman Day, the www.rumsonrec.org web site is very current and informative. Field Updates will now be posted daily as needed on the Home Page and the "hot-line" will be eliminated. Ms Orsay also created a Rumson Recreation Facebook account, @RumsonRec Twitter feed. Mr. Day created a live Twitter account feed on the web home page.

On-Line Registration – Rumson Recreation has engaged Community Pass, an organization that specializes in on-line systems for Parks & Recreation Departments, to set up an on-line registration system by April 15th. The first year's cost is \$6000, while the on-going costs will be approximately \$2 dollars a participant. This will include the cost of credit card processing, which will be offered to on-line payees only. Participants may still pay via cash or check at Borough Hall, but are requested to register on-line regardless of how they are paying. This will make keeping track of participant information, generating team rosters, financial reporting, etc., much easier and more efficient.

Rumson Recreation **Late Fees** have been \$10 for many years and this is markedly lower than any other shore town (Shrewsbury - \$100; Little Silver - \$50; Long Branch - \$25; Fair Haven - \$25; Red Bank - \$15) and the low fee does not provide a meaningful deterrent to late registration. It was proposed that the Late Fee be increase to \$25 starting with April 15 on-line registrations. Mr. Dengler made the motion that this be passed, Mr. Shanley seconded the motion, and all agreed.

Minimum Age for Travel Teams - Due to the measurable negative impact on Recreation sports, the Commission considered imposing a minimum age for Travel teams. It was agreed to continue this discussion in the April meeting.

Administrative Fee for Summer Camps - Currently, external camps using Rumson fields are charged the greater of \$250 or \$5 per participant. It was suggested that a \$5 Administrative Fee per participant charged to all Rumson Recreation sponsored summer camps was justifiable and reasonable, in addition to the cost of insurance. This fee will offset the cost of on-line registration, marketing costs, and Rumson Rec staff and Borough Finance Department staff time associated with running the camps. Ms. Chandler made the motion, Mr. MacGillis seconded it, and the motion was unanimously passed.

The session ended at 10.07 pm and the meeting was adjourned.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: April 17, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

**Sarah Orsay
Director of Parks & Recreation
Borough of Rumson**