

WYCKOFF DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
June 12, 2023

Doug Arone opened the Recreation Board Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Wyckoff Recreation Department with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act. “This Regular meeting of the Wyckoff Department of Parks and Recreation Board is now in session. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting has been posted on the bulletin board in the Memorial Town Hall and the Recreation Office; a copy has been filed with the Township Clerk, *The Ridgewood News*, *The Record*, and *The North Jersey Herald and News*, all papers with general circulation throughout the Township of Wyckoff.” At least 48 hours prior to this meeting the agenda was similarly posted, filed and mailed to said newspapers.

Members Present: Doug Arone, Patti DePhillips, Jen Saxton, Moe Ismael, Mike Ferrara, Tom Valente, Chris Perneti, Chris Beane, John Giovacco

Members Absent: Jeff Eischen, Rich Sica

Staff Present:

The minutes of the April 17, 2023 meeting were discussed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Tom Valente and seconded by John Giovacco. The motion was carried.

Recreation Director Report:

Recreation Soccer:

The Chairman reported that the Torpedoes Soccer Club has agreed to run a free recreation soccer camp for all recreation players at the end of August just before soccer season begins. More details will follow on this joint initiative between the Recreation Department and the Torpedoes.

Fall Registration Complete:

It was communicated that all fall registrations are complete and while more will sign up during the summer, we have a good grasp on our numbers for the fall. Football and cheerleading continue to have historic numbers, especially cheer. More than 175 cheerleaders have registered for the fall with 3rd grade leading the way with over 60. While this is positive news, the higher numbers here have caused our Recreation Soccer numbers to decrease slightly but we still have plenty to have a great soccer program as well. As is typically the case in football, Pee Wee and Junior numbers are high and senior numbers are lower but still strong. Almost 50 boys are playing Seniors, 65 are playing at the Junior level, and over 75 are signed up for PeeWees this year. The Director will be challenged once again to schedule 4 games each week for the Juniors and Pee Wees and 3 for the Seniors.

One concern that the Chairman communicated to the Board was that our Volleyball Director, James Parks, will be unable to run the girls Volleyball program this coming fall. He has personal matters to attend to so the Director is searching for an alternative to ensure the program continues. Without someone running this program that can manage the volunteers and girls, this program will not be able to go forward. This is a top priority for the Director to ensure this very popular program can continue.

Recreation Baseball/Softball/Lacrosse Review – Seasons Complete:

The Chairman advised that the spring recreation season had come to a close. Baseball and softball, including the travel spring seasons, and boys and girls lacrosse, including the 1st and 2nd grade lacrosse clinic finished their seasons within the last week and all reviews and feedback have been positive. The 3/4th grade boys baseball championship was observed by the Director and he reported that the underdog team won with an amazing catch by the right fielder on a ball that was hit very far and very high with two outs. It was great to observe both teams play so well and for a recreation player to make the winning catch in the final.

Facility Use/Rental Applications Review:

The Chairman requested the Board review the following field use application, based on the Township's procedure of involving the Recreation Board in the approval process for field rental after a review of the paperwork by the Recreation Director and Township Administrator. One application was reviewed and discussed by the Board and approved for use/rental. The application at this meeting included the following:

1. Advance Soccer Training: this group is a training facility that would like to utilize Community Park and our turf soccer cage for soccer training in the summer. Andy Meaney of the Torpedoes Soccer club has vouched for the company and explained that the head trainer is one of their coaches.

The Chairman advised the Board that that the Director's review of the application, Hold Harmless and Indemnification Agreement, and Certificate of Insurance for this request determined the applications to be in order.

Finding the application in order and discussing the history of successful use by both programs, the Recreation Board unanimously approved all of the above applications after a motion to approve them was made by Chris Perneti and seconded by Tom Valente.

Men's Softball:

The Chairman advised that the Men's Softball program is underway and the game schedule has changed dramatically this season. In the past, many complained that the playoffs took place when many of the players would be on vacation. Many requests over the years were made to move the season up to end earlier. It was always explained by the Director that condensing the season would cause issues including too many games in a week which could lead to injury and lower attendance due to other commitments that the guys have. It appears that this warning is playing out exactly that way and there is already talk of going back to the old schedule or, at least, another modified schedule where teams don't have to play up to 5 games in a week. The Director is working with the program to come up with a better schedule for next year that takes into consideration both the vacation concern and the much too condensed schedule we came up with this season.

Canada Wildfire Smoke – Air Quality Concerns:

The Chairman reported that the air quality concerns over the past few days have been handled appropriately by the Director. On the day when the air quality was so bad that the smoke and

haze could be seen and smelled, games and practices were canceled. Calls were received to cancel the entire week of activities like some high schools were doing but after researching the situation, the Director found it more prudent to be patient and see if the smoke cleared up. After a day and a half, the air quality came back down to tolerable numbers and the smoke was no longer visible or noxious. The Wyckoff schedule returned to normal while others who acted hastily in other towns and school districts were completely canceled. The Board acknowledged the Director's measured handling of the situation and ability to safely keep our programs on track better than others who overreacted.

Memorial Field Update:

The Chairman reported that work continues on the Concession Stand and Press Box and that those two buildings are almost at completion. The area where the fans congregate has also been improved to include several high quality picnic benches donated by the Football Boosters and flat fenced in areas where residents can sit comfortably and watch the action. The only item not being completed for this year is the bathroom building and the Board expressed concern about this. The Chairman followed up with the Director who spoke with the town and the DPW Director and it is simply a matter of manpower and time. Our DPW is doing the lion's share of the work on the facility to save considerable taxpayer dollars and they can only do so much. The work they've done has been nothing short of incredible but it takes time and starting the bathrooms at this point will only leave us with a partially done project in the fall. The DPW Director assured the Director that the bathroom building will be top priority immediately following the football season and will definitely be done prior to the spring/summer of 2024. In the meantime, the bathrooms under Company 1 will be opened and maintained for the football season and portajohns will be utilized closer to the field as well.

Report From Board Members:

None

New Business:

None

Old Business:

None

The Board adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Arone
Chairman, Wyckoff Board of Parks & Recreation