

WYCKOFF DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
April 16, 2018

Doug Arone opened the Recreation Board Meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Recreation Office at 195 Woodland Avenue 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, Tom Valente, Chris Beane, Moe Ismael, Rich Sica, Mike Ferrara, Ann Smith, Jeff Eischen

Members Absent: Heather Alnor, Sue Buchanan, Hayley Rooney

Staff Present: Tim Shanley, Township Committee Liaison to Recreation Board

Guest Present: Caroline Brothers, Resident

The minutes of the March 12, 2018 meeting were discussed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Jeff Eischen and seconded by Tom Valente. The motion was carried.

Prior to the Recreation Director reporting to the Board, he welcomed Caroline Brothers to the meeting. Ms. Brothers was in attendance to request the assistance of the Recreation Board in starting up a new program for new moms in town. Her idea is to have a venue where new moms and their young children could meet in a support group setting. Ms. Brothers is a certified Life Coach and explained that these moms could benefit from meeting with other new parents in the same situation as themselves. Ms. Brothers needs a space to meet for 90 minutes a session once a week. She asked for the Recreation Board’s help in finding a facility that could accommodate a group and also to potentially advertise once her meetings are set. The Board was supportive of her idea and asked the Director if he could check town locations for a meeting space. The Director advised that he could check with the Library and that he would communicate with Ms. Brothers over the next month. The Director also advised that we could send emails out to our mailing lists for this new program. The Director will research and report back to the Board in May. The Board thanked Ms. Brothers for attending the meeting.

Recreation Director’s Report:

Recreation Baseball & Softball Season Starts Today, Lacrosse Day:

The Director advised the Board that Recreation Baseball and Softball games began at 6pm today. He reported that the weather was not very cooperative during the preseason so practices were hard to come by but the teams were prepared to start this week and are doing so. The Director also invited the Board to attend the Mayor’s First Pitch on Saturday morning, April 28th at 10:45am at Community Park. In addition to Mayor Scanlan throwing the first pitches for the season, an 8th grade student from town, Taline Banks, will be singing the National Anthem for all in attendance. Four games will then be played at 11am on the four fields at Community Park.

On the same day, our Lacrosse program will be holding Wyckoff Lacrosse Day at Pulis Field from 10am-5pm. In addition to all of our different age levels playing games, there will be fun

activities and food throughout the day. All Rec Board members were also invited to stop in at Pulis on April 28th.

Travel Softball & Recreation Baseball & Softball Head Coach Recommendations:

The Director presented a list of Travel Softball and Recreation Baseball and Softball Head Coach Recommendations to the Board. All on the list have completed the proper education and background checks and are preparing for the summer season. Tom Valente made a motion to approve all of the candidates and Chris Beane seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Director will communicate to the Coaches that they have been approved for the 2018 season.

Travel Baseball Head Coach Recommendations:

The Director presented two Head Coach Recommendations to the Board for our 8u Travel Baseball teams who were formed at the end of March. Both have completed the proper education and background checks. Ann Smith made a motion to approve the candidates and Mike Ferrara seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Director will communicate to the two Coaches that they have been approved for the 2018 season.

Recreation Baseball Equipment Change Discussion, 4th Grade & 5/6th Grade

The Director advised the Board that Little League Baseball made a dramatic change for this season to the types of bats that are allowed to be used in Little League games. Most other baseball leagues have followed suit to be in line with Little League. The new bats, prominently labeled with a “USA Baseball” stamp, are being equated to wood bats in that the ball comes off the bat at the same rate of speed as with wood bats. The Director has witnessed himself how much of an impact the USA bats are having on batted balls and since they have been deadened to the point of wood bats, is recommending, based on requests from the Recreation coaches, that the Board approve that our 4th and 5/6th grade players be allowed to use the new USA bats if they so choose. Obviously, wood bats would remain legal as well. After a robust discussion, the Board felt that changing the bats this close to the season would have a few negative ramifications. Parents would feel like they need to buy their sons a new bat which cost anywhere from \$90-\$300. But of greater concern, the Board felt that Recreation level players, who have not heard of the new rules regarding the USA bats, might see someone using an aluminum bat and think that they can bring any aluminum bat from their garage that does not meet the USA standards. This would present a danger to those in the field as the ball would come off the older bats at a much higher rate of speed. The Board recommended educating the program about the new bats this year, but advised that changing to the new USA bats should wait until next season. The Director will take this under advisement and report back to the Recreation Coaches.

Facility Use/Rental Applications Review:

The Director requested the Board review the following field use applications, 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. Two applications were discussed by the Board and approved for use/rental. The applications at this meeting included the following:

1. Play at the Plate New Jersey – This group has submitted its application and insurance to utilize the Memorial Baseball Field for their adult baseball games in the spring and summer on Sunday mornings. Since most of our teams do not play on Sunday mornings on the big field, this program does not interfere with our programming at all. The revenue for the 15 Sundays they would use the field would be \$1500.
2. Renegades Baseball Club – This club baseball organization, based in Wyckoff, has submitted its application and insurance to utilize township baseball fields in the

spring and summer for its practices and games. The estimate revenue from this program would be approximately \$1500 across the spring and summer.

The Director advised the Board that that his review of the applications, Hold Harmless and Indemnification Agreements, and Certificates of Insurance for these requests determined the applications to be in order.

Finding the applications in order and discussing the history of successful use by both programs, the Recreation Board unanimously approved the above applications after a motion to approve them was made by Rich Sica and seconded by Chris Beane.

Travel Coach Tenure (2 Year) Policy Discussion:

The Director questioned the Board as to whether or not it made sense to review and possibly revise the current policy involving travel coaches being limited to 2 consecutive years with the same team. The Director advised that there are circumstances where the head coach who has performed his duties for two years is very well liked and respected by all involved and the coach is willing to continue with the team for a 3rd year. The Board discussed at length and determined that the policy has a section that specifies that if no one else volunteers for the position, the current coach could continue with the team. The thinking is that if no one else volunteers, it indicates a level of satisfaction with the current situation and that a change isn't warranted or necessary. After discussion, it was determined to leave the current policy unchanged.

Coach Training – National Alliance for Youth Sports:

A resident had asked the Director last month if the coaching certification received from the Rutgers Safety Course could also be obtained via the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS). The Director researched this question and found that the state of New Jersey does specify both the Rutgers Safety Course and the National Alliance for Youth Sports course as the only two courses that protect volunteer coaches from frivolous lawsuits resulting from their participation as a volunteer coach. After researching further into the actual website, the Director found that the NAYS course is actually a 3 hour online course instead of a course where the volunteers have to go to an actual class. The website also offers additional training on specific sports coaching and has an online concussion training course as well. The Director explained that with this new information, volunteer coaches will now be required to take either the Rutgers course OR the NAYS online course. The Board commented that it would be much easier now for volunteers since they could take the course online and not have to go on specific dates and times to an actual class. This will certainly help the Department in the recruitment of new volunteers.

Football Update:

The Director updated the Board with a new football league development. Two new teams have entered the league giving us a total of 15 teams now. Both Fair Lawn and West Milford have successfully been voted into the league and both have accepted. The league we participate in continues to grow and is quickly becoming one of the most well respected leagues in the state of New Jersey. Eric Knight, our football program director, has also taken over Secretary duties with the league meaning Wyckoff, one of the founding members of the league, now has a member on the league's Executive Committee.

Open Comment Period:

No comment.

Report from Board Members:

Moe Ismael asked the Board to consider registering to become a 501(c)3 organization and have our Booster groups of our individual sports fall under the Board's umbrella. The idea was tabled until May's meeting.

New or Old Business:

None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Wingfield
Director, Wyckoff Recreation & Parks