

Reading Recreation Commission
7:03PM
3rd & Spruce Recreation Center
Minutes of the October 21, 2014 Meeting

The Reading Recreation Commission was called to order on Tuesday, October 21, 2014, at 7:03PM by James Washington.

The Board performed the Pledge of the Allegiance and then the roll call of members. There were eight of eleven board members present and they included: Christopher Daubert, Carl Geffken, Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz, Eddie Moran, Manuel Guzman, Otis Smith, Donald Taddei, Jr. and James Washington. Dave Ruyak joined the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The following board members were absent: Allen McCloud and John Santoro. Staff in attendance: Daphne Klahr, Executive Director and Rebecca Swoyer, Business Manager (recording secretary). Guests: Ann Toole, Toole Recreation Planning and Frank Denbowski, Special Assistant to the Mayor.

Minutes

The minutes from the August 12, 2014 meeting were reviewed. Carl Geffken made a motion to approve the minutes. Manuel Guzman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

New Business

Carl Geffken presented the 2015 budget to the board. He reviewed each page, Administration, Tennis Programs, Pool Programs, Recreation Programs and Sports Programs.

He stated there is an increase of \$155,000.00 in the 2015 budget which is due to the expansion of programs and staff. He stated the 1st year the commission was just getting off the ground. The 2nd year we started to grow. Now in the 3rd year we are making great strides. We won 2 State awards which is amazing! Playgrounds programs went from 0 to 4. We are now up to 7 with the possibility of 10 in 2015. We applied and were accepted for the CACFP (child and adult food care program) through the Department of Education. Starting in the summer we began making our own meals for the children at our Recreation Centers. This program pays for itself. We are still in the process of applying for the DPW certification. Ball field rentals has increased greatly. We are expanding our sports programs (soccer, baseball, basketball, dodgeball etc.). With this growth there is a need for additional staff. Carl talked about a part-time marketing position, food service position, park youth maintenance position & sports program manager position. Discussion followed regarding the new positions and costs associated with those positions. There was also a discussion regarding the difference between a part-time marketing position and a development director position.

Chris Daubert made a motion to accept the 2015 budget as presented. Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Daphne contacted Matt Ward from Johnston, Pa. For \$5,000.00 he has agreed to complete an evaluation of the commission and give us a mini plan. Discussion followed regarding funding, grants & marketing. Daphne again stated that it was never the intent that the commission would be self-sustaining. The Lancaster Recreation Commission has been around for over 100 years and they are not self-sustaining. The focus turned to the difference between a part-time marketing position and a development director again. It was decided that we would include a dollar amount in the budget for the position and details can be discussed later. Carl made a motion to add \$20,000.00 into the budget for

the part-time marketing position. Chris Daubert seconded the motion. Roll call: Christopher Daubert – yes; Carl Geffken – yes; Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz – yes; Eddie Moran – yes; Manuel Guzman – yes; Dave Ruyak – yes, Otis Smith - yes Donald Taddei, Jr. and James Washington – yes. Motion passed 9 – 0.

Discussion followed regarding the CACFP food service program and cell phone reimbursements. The tennis budget was also discussed. The board was provided the participation numbers report that provides a break-down of children that we service in our tennis program. The annual report was also referenced. Currently we provide services to 2,600 children in the Reading School District. The pool was discussed as well. This budget reflects the months the Schlegel pool was open which was only 2 months. The late opening due to the repairs and the cool summer is the reason the numbers are down. We are using the Reading School District pool for swim lessons. We are asking if we can use the JCC for pool programs. It was noted that the JCC is now called the Performing Arts Center.

Daphne discussed the DPW certification. She stated that we could charge more for membership but parents would still only have to pay a small percentage of the fee and that the rest of the fee would be reimbursed by the state. We have been working on getting certified since the beginning of the commission. If we get certified it will be a positive change for the commission.

Jim asked that in the future the board be provided with a summary of staff, full-time, part-time, seasonal, etc. in an Excel spreadsheet to show positions.

Guest speaker: Ann Toole, Toole Recreation Planning, is attending the meeting to talk about the Comprehensive Plan. Ann has been here all day interviewing individuals for their feedback for the plan. The planning team has been hard at work, out at the parks and doing interviews. The goal is to have a plan that the city will be proud of. One that attracts businesses and alleviates problems. We will be meeting with Sean Garrigan in December. We will provide what we found and what the direction of the plan will be. 2015 will be formulating the strategy. We are consolidating the information and spending most of our time developing the strategies. Reading Recreation Commission has made a great dent. Ann stated that Daphne is the voice of parks and recreation in the City of Reading. She stated what she found is that Daphne has great respect from this community. They see her as the face of the changes that have been made. Ann stated that we keep her as the face of the commission because she has the respect of the community. When Ann visited the parks in the summer the playground leaders knew what they were doing, activities were taking place and the kids were engaged. She was impressed and excited. Her goal is to help us sustain this. In the interviews she found that the people were worried about the sustainability and the time frame of the agreement. At the same time they were impressed by the accomplishments made thus far and have seen the improvements. In programming the variety, quality and participation numbers are increasing. The focus is on us and the expansion into young adults. They want you to do what you can in a high quality way.

Guest speaker: Frank Denbowski, Special Assistant for the intergovernmental rules to the Mayor, is attending the meeting to discuss the playground association agreement. He said to think about what the commission has done in 3 years, and [that] the city playground program was restored! The grant from DCNR to pay the Executive Director's salary saved the City money. Usually, the City would have to pay for the Executive Director salary. Regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Daphne stated that we were asked to have our solicitor draft a preliminary MOU. Frank stated there is a couple of issues with this agreement and it is being reviewed. Frank feels we need to reestablish the current relationship with the playground associations. We have to develop parameters and provide them to the associations that are following the old models. He stated that playground associations should have to

follow the same rules that the commission currently has regarding volunteer clearances. Additionally, there has been a lack of oversight of fiscal matters concerning the associations for years. He stated that a concern is when an organization is using city property, and getting it for free that we need to ensure that the money raised is being used directly to benefit the playground. Our solicitor got back to Frank in one day. Their solicitor looked at this yesterday. Daphne stated that these playgrounds associations have not been audited since 1998. At this time there are 2 active playground associations. Frank is basically asking the commission to administer on the City's behalf. Once Daphne receives the draft she will provide to the board. When Frank sends the draft it would be on the December agenda for approval.

Otis Smith would like to discuss the facility fees and usage. He thinks we need to reopen facility fees and resolution make sure that is in place for the beginning of next year. Otis will forward his issues to Daphne. We have a resolution to adopt the fee schedule. The board has to approve the fee schedule and then it goes to city council to review. We won't update our fees till December.

Treasurer's Report

Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz discussed the Treasurer's Report. Current balance is \$350,000. We are still waiting for City and School District 4th quarter payments. Marcia reviewed the following reports: Profit and Loss budget vs. actual; Balance Sheet Previous Month Comparison which compared months July and August and August and September; Administration Profit and Loss budget vs. actual; Programs Profit and Loss budget vs. actual; Tennis Profit and Loss budget vs. actual; Pool Profit and Loss budget vs. actual; Income Detail Report and Expense Detail Report.

Marcia asked if there were any questions. There being none, Dave Ruyak made the motion to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Manuel Guzman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Old Business

None

Executive Director's Report

Daphne gave a verbal Executive Director's report for August and September 2014.

Highlights:

1. Daphne met with BCIU and Chamber of Commerce regarding the Girls Leadership Program. They are interested in partnering with us. There is a new superintendent. The school board is voting on this tomorrow night. We would like to do 4 programs running with 120 girls every year.
2. Met with Thomas Coleman – solicitor
3. Wyomissing Rotary asked to write a \$7,000 grant for Girls Leadership
4. Berks Community Foundation Maintenance grant for Ebony to oversee parks maintenance in the summer
5. Hosted Urban Core State Meeting
6. Boxing program will be leaving Baer Park if they do not provide a level of insurance.
7. Met with Kim Johnson regarding the YMCA initiative. We originally were not a part of this but we are now. Any 7th graders from Southwest can receive a free membership to our recreation center.
8. Spoke with Matt Warden from Sustainable Strategies

9. Went to NRPA conference
10. Met with the new director of the Olivets Boys and Girls Club..

Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the board, Dave Ruyak made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15PM. Chris Daubert seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Upcoming meetings:

December Recreation Commission Meeting – Tuesday, December 9th at 7:00PM, 3rd and Spruce Recreation Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Swoyer
Recording Secretary