

Reading Recreation Commission
7:00PM
3rd & Spruce Recreation Center
Minutes of the October 8, 2019 Meeting

The Reading Recreation Commission was called to order on Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at 7:00PM by Donald Taddei, Jr.

The board performed the Pledge of the Allegiance. Daphne Klahr took the roll call of the members. There were six of nine board members present and they included Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz, Ralph Johnson entered at 7:03PM, Donald Taddei, Jr., Brian Twyman, Tyler Washington & Patricia Wright. The following board members were absent: Bernardo Carbajal, Joseph Kelleher & Jesse Leisawitz. Staff in attendance: Daphne Klahr, Executive Director and Rebecca Swoyer, Business Manager (recording secretary).

New Business

Discussion of 2020 Budget will take place at the November 12, 2019 meeting. There was a brief discussion about the park at 3rd & Spruce specifically related to the opioid and overdose issues, removal of picnic benches, and inside bathroom accessibility.

Daphne informed the board that she is holding a budget workshop on Thursday, October 17th @ 6:00PM at 3rd & Spruce rec center. Please let her know if you will be attending the budget workshop.

Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz asked Daphne if she would be interested in presenting at the Berks Opioid Collation about how the parks and playgrounds are dealing with the opioid problem and how you are addressing it. Daphne stated she would be happy to do that. Marcia stated she would speak with one of the co-chairs and see if that is something they would be interested in presenting.

Minutes

The minutes from the August 13, 2019 meetings were reviewed.

Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz made a motion to approve the August 13, 2019 minutes. Patricia Wright seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Daphne presented the treasurer's report. She referenced the Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual report stating that the net income is just over \$2,000.00. We currently have approximately \$125,000.00 in receivables including \$33,000.00 from the school district for their 4th quarter payment; approximately \$30,000.00 from DCNR for the final payment of the open space plan, \$40,000.00 from Radsport sponsors & approximately \$25,000.00 from BCIU for the Teachers In the Park program. We are also coming into our fall programs (afterschool programs, basketball, tennis, etc.) which are revenue generating. The following reports were available for review: Balance sheet Previous Month Comparison which compared months August & September 2019; Programs Profit & Loss budget vs. actual; Administration Profit & Loss budget vs. actual; Pool Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual; Tennis Profit & Loss budget vs. actual; Income Detail Report & Expense Detail Report. Daphne asked if there were any questions.

Patricia Wright made the motion to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Tyler Washington 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 & September 2019

Highlights:

Daphne informed the board of upcoming special events and passed out flyers for those events.

1. Our annual Halloween Hayride is being held Friday, October 18th & Saturday, October 19th from 6:00PM to 10:00PM at Schlegel Park. Daphne asked all board members in attendance if they were able to volunteer at this event. She stated that the Alvernia baseball team volunteers every year for this event. Patricia Wright stated she will reach out to the school district and the key club to see if she can get volunteers.
2. Our 3rd annual Trunk or Treat night is being held Friday, October 25th from 5:00PM to 7:30PM at 3rd & Spruce rec center. Daphne asked the board to attend this event. We had over 1,000 children attend this event last year. They trick or treat from the trunks of teachers cars and then come inside for a night of dancing, food and a costume contest!
3. The COR tennis Turkey tournament skills competition is being held on Tuesday, November 19th at Hampden Park starting at 5:30PM.
4. Our annual Cookies with Santa event is being held on Saturday, December 7th at 10:00AM at Pendora Park Field House.
5. The South of Penn basketball open run started last night, Monday, October 7th. It is being held every Monday night from 8:00PM to 9:30PM. We had 45 boys playing basketball last night. The doors are locked at 8:00PM. Once they are locked if they leave they cannot reenter. This program will run through December. Our winter basketball league starts right after this event ends. Light refreshments are available.
6. Our Girls Leadership program is starting tomorrow, Wednesday, October 9th. We have 5 locations this year: North East Middle School, North West Middle School, 3rd & Spruce, Bethany's Children's Home & Reading High School. We have 3 major corporate sponsors this year which are Saint Joseph, Hewlett Packard and Performance Toyota. 1 program will be held for the high school girls and the remaining are middle school girls
7. On Friday, October 25th, the night of Trunk or Treat, we are going to be decorating South 3rd Street with scarecrows that the kids make in the art club.
8. On Saturday, October 26th the Wyomissing Foundation, donors from the Wyomissing Foundation and the trustees who have donated money for the South of Penn Façade improvement project are coming down to inspect that project.
9. The kids from the afterschool program will be in the holiday parade again this year. Dance preparations have begun.
10. The Christmas Pajama Dance will be held on Friday, December 20, 2019 starting at 5:00 p.m. The Reading Hospital is "adopting" our kids from both rec centers and programs and purchasing a pair of pajamas and a book for each child. If anyone is interested in sponsoring kids please let Daphne know.
11. Daphne will send out a calendar with all these events
12. We just received a grant from Berks Arts Council for \$3,000.00 for our summer arts program at Pendora Park. That will be used for the summer of 2020.
13. We received a 2nd grant for youth camping trip with Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club.
14. We received 2 grants for the Girls Leadership Program from Hewlett Packard and Performance Toyota.
15. Daphne provide an update on the South of Penn Façade program which is almost completed with a few exceptions of a couple of hand railings and some windows and doors. The houses look fantastic. We also have a possible solution to getting the sidewalks done. Some of the residents asked Daphne if she could help to coordinate a decorating contest or just getting the houses all decorated for Christmas.
16. Daphne met today with Dolan Construction to get some pricing on installation of a walk-in here at 3rd & Spruce. That is moving forward. She will have more of an update in a couple of weeks. It is looking very positive for both location walk-ins.
17. Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz asked for an updated on the project at Pendora Park. Ralph Johnson stated that they are hoping to have it completed before winter.
18. Heather & Daphne attended the PA Conference for Women in Philadelphia. There were 10,000 women in attendance. There was a bus of women from Berks County that went. They went to some great workshops. Ava Duverney who is a producer in Hollywood was one of the key note speakers. Elizabeth Gilbert from Eat, Prey, Love and Jasmine Ward who is an author were just a few of the fantastic speakers. They had sessions which were based on capacity building. Daphne made a few great connections. There were a lot of girls in empowerment programs and other similar programs. There are 2 companies, SheKnewSheCould and a Girls Empowerment Fair, which we are going to connect our girls with their events. One individual is going to come up to Reading and observe our Girls Leadership programs to see what she can do.
19. Success for Teens which is our Boys Leadership program will start in the winter when basketball starts. All the boys in the basketball program attend that program.

20. Daphne met with Chris Winters the new CEO of Olivet's Boys and Girls Club. Heather Boyer, Matthew Lubas and Adonis Fleming all attended the meeting which was very positive. We are going to work collaboratively with them on the youth flag football team and basketball. Bernie Nowotarski is working for them part-time to help coordinator sports programs right now until he goes to coach with the Philadelphia Soul. He stopped down here today. He is working with Adonis Fleming on flag football and coordinating basketball.
21. Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the neighbors have been talking to her about the parking issue at Pendorf with the field house and Olivet's Boys and Girls Club. Ralph Johnson stated that it is public parking and no one can be told where and where not to park. Marcia stated she will talk to Chris Winters regarding this.

Brian Twyman made a motion to accept the Executive Director's report as represented. Tyler Washington seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Ralph Johnson asked if the auditor from RKL sent the recommendations that the board has asked for. Daphne stated we have not received that information. Ralph asked Daphne to remind them. Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz asked if the rec commission sends the audit statement to the City. Daphne stated that we send electronic and hard copies of the audit to the City and School District every year.

Ralph also asked for an update on the status of the Parks and Recs master plan. Daphne stated that we are waiting on the close out letter from Ann Toole in order to process the final payment request. Daphne needs the letter from Ann in order to close it out. There were a couple of minor changes that were made. Daphne needs the final copy of it which she has not received. Ralph asked what we have to do to get this completed. Daphne stated that the pressure has to come from Harrisburg. Daphne has a call into our advisor to ask to help push this along. Ralph asked if Daphne could draft a letter from the board stating that this must be completed by December 31, 2019. The board all agreed on this.

Brian Twyman asked for updates on the following: Reading Youth, 9th & Marion, 11th & Pike, Schlegel Pool & Hillside pool. Daphne stated that the 11th & Pike improvements are moving along. The soccer field looks good and the grass is growing. The fence is up. We have to put in a handicap accessible path and install some benches. We are looking for this to be completed by next spring.

Donald Taddei Jr. stated there is not an update on Reading Youth. It has been hard to get everyone together. Patricia Wright added that she is not sure if it is under Reading Youth or the rec commission but she has gotten a lot of inquiries about Lacrosse. She stated that Reading is probably one of the only districts that does not have it and although we have cohorts with Berks Catholic for Wrestling, Swimming and Water Polo it is not double sided and Reading kids cannot go over for Lacrosse. There were talks about having it at the high school level but we don't have a feeder program. Daphne stated that Lacrosse has been something we have thought about for several years. We received a grant for Lacrosse equipment which we used at our sports camp at Baer Park. Lacrosse is a very expensive sport. It is also a sport that is started at a young age. We could do an elementary program. The issue we have is the cost per player. Daphne asked if the school district is interested in creating a club program for Lacrosse. Patricia Wright said yes they are. Tyler Washington stated that we could look into Albright since they have a pretty involved Lacrosse program. Brian Twyman stated that Daphne could put together a mock analysis cost to run the program (equipment, insurance, coaching) and see if people are interested. A lengthy discussion followed regarding Lacrosse and the costs involved in with that program.

Daphne stated she doesn't have an update on 9th & Marion or Hillside. Both issues involve action by the City. Ralph Johnson also stated that he does not have an update at this time. He stated that 9th & Marion is an idea that is just sitting there and there is no update on Hillside.

Brian Twyman asked if there is a sustainability plan for Schlegel Pool in response to what happened with the flooding there this past summer. Ralph Johnson stated that they are investigating the storm sewer systems that run behind the pool.

Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz asked what is under reading recs purview as far as the park areas vs the playgrounds. She is thinking especially of Mineral Springs Park. Daphne stated it is a mix. We have some parks that we have more purview over than others. Mineral Springs is one of the parks that we do have programs at except for minor use from the playground program. It is more the East End Club which the City is dealing with. We use it more for programming and hiking. Marcia also asked about Egleman's park and if that is just used for rentals of the pavilions. Daphne stated that it is rentals of the pavilions but we also use the fields. Donald Taddei Jr. asked how much the Egleman's ballfields get used. Daphne stated that we have a lot of ballfield rentals. The fields are used heavily by youth and adult leagues. Donald stated it would be nice to revisit City County Baseball for ages 11 and up. That's where we lose children. Donald stated that he used to attend the meetings for City County Baseball and he would be more than interested to reach out to them. Daphne suggested that Donald sit down with Matthew Lubas and brainstorm. Brian Twyman stated that it could be a conversation to have with Chris at the Olivet's Boys and Girls Club. A discussion followed.

Brian Twyman then mentioned Rugby. Donald stated there is a Berks County Rugby team. Daphne stated that we do have a Rugby team that plays at Brookline.

Patricia Wright asked if there was any update on the tennis courts at Hampden Park. Tyler stated that tennis courts should be resurfaced every 4 to 8 years. Last time they were resurfaced was in 2008. Daphne pulled the agreement. It states that the City and School District agree to joint maintenance of the property. It reads that the School District is responsible for grass, trees, grounds maintenance, athletic fields, tennis courts, comfort station, snow removal and joint security activity. The City is responsible for maintenance of the pump house, police protection, road ways and park ways. Tyler mentioned that speed bumps need to be installed. Patricia stated that there needs to be more parking available.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the board,

Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10PM. Patricia Wright seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Upcoming meetings:

October budget workshop – Thursday, October 17th, 2019 at 6:00PM, 3rd & Spruce Recreation Center.

November Recreation Commission Meeting – Tuesday, November 12th at 7:00PM, 3rd & Spruce Recreation Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Swoyer
Recording Secretary