

Reading Recreation Commission  
7:07PM  
3<sup>rd</sup> & Spruce Recreation Center  
Minutes of the June 12, 2018 Meeting

The Reading Recreation Commission was called to order on Tuesday, June 12, 2018 at 7:07PM by Donald Taddei Jr.

The board performed the Pledge of the Allegiance and Daphne took the roll call of the members. There were seven of nine board members present and they included Christopher Celmer, Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz, Joseph Kelleher, Donald Taddei, Jr., Brian Twyman, Tyler Washington and Patricia Wright. The following board members were absent: Bernardo Carbajal & Luke Schultz. Staff in attendance: Daphne Klahr, Executive Director, and Rebecca Swoyer, Business Manager (recording secretary).

**New Business**

Donald Taddei, Jr. asked the board to please reply to Daphne's board meeting e-mails with their attendance. We need to have enough members present to have a quorum. He stressed again how important attendance is.

Donald Taddei Jr. took a moment to introduce our new city appointment to the board, Mr. Tyler Washington. Welcome Tyler we are very happy you are here!

**Resolution**

Daphne presented the Resolution for the youth scholarship to be named after James Washington II. James was one of the founders of the RRC. He recently passed away suddenly. The RRC wanted to do something to honor his memory. He was such a force for the RRC and an advocate for children in the City of Reading. At our last workshop we discussed changing the name of our youth scholarship account to the James E. Washington II youth scholarship fund. We use this scholarship fund a lot from afterschool to swimming to tennis...all sports. We would change this on our website and put a tab with his name and youth scholarship and have the application right there. We can have a biography of James on the website & his contributions to the Commission. After this discussion Daphne was asked to draw up a resolution. She read Resolution No. 2018-1 renaming the youth scholarship fund to the James E. Washington, II Youth Scholarship Fund.

*Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz made a motion to accept this Resolution No. 2018-1. Brian Twyman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

We took a brief intermission from the board meeting. Jim from the Reading Eagle came to interview Tyler and a few board members. Jim is doing an article on James E. Washington II. Daphne stated that she will make a copy of this resolution so he has it for his article.

Meeting resumed at 7:18PM

Daphne informed the board that she still does not have all the wording from our solicitor on the Bylaw changes. She has the resolution but does not have the amended Bylaws. That is why it was not included in the agenda. That will be moved to the August board meeting.

Bryan Twyan asked what the proposed changes are. As discussed in the workshop meeting in April, it is proposed Bylaws changes for board membership. That is someone is a Reading Alumni or owns a business in the City of Reading they would be eligible to be appointed to the board. Brian asked what the Bylaws currently state. Daphne stated it is restricted to city residents only and in the city you can only serve on one board. A discussion followed.

**Minutes**

The minutes from the March 13, 2018 meetings were reviewed.

*Christopher Celmer made a motion to approve the March 13, 2018 minutes. Joseph Kelleher seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

### **Treasurer's Report**

Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz asked Daphne to summarize. We currently are in good financial shape. We are current on our payments from the City and the School District. Right now is our biggest time of year for income generation. We have registrations coming in for 9 playground programs, tennis program registrations and the swimming pool. Daphne reviewed the Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual report. Marcia asked Daphne if there was there anything that stood out. Daphne stated that once again John Gilmore of the Gilmore Henney Foundation donated the money to fund Barbey's playground program. He was very happy with everything last year and signed on again for this year! We are continuing the program and the partnership with the Union Baptist Church there.

We also received funding for the Teacher in the Parks program. The union sent it out the Reading School District today. This program is a literacy program that is being offered to students in Reading for free this summer. It is 11:00AM to 12:30PM 2 times a week for 6 weeks, June 26<sup>th</sup> – August 2nd. It is being taught by qualified Reading School District teachers. We have had a great response from teachers and all our positions are filled. The response from the kids has been fabulous! We are receiving funding from Title 1 money which is coming directly to us from the BCIU. It is a really great opportunity for our kids. We are having it at Barbey's, 3<sup>rd</sup> & Spruce & 11<sup>th</sup> & Pike. We are the first urban pilot program and if it is successful they will expand it next summer.

The following reports were available for review: Balance sheet Previous Month Comparison which compared months March & April 2018 & April & May 2018; 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. Marcia asked if there were any questions, there being none,

*Patricia Wright made the motion to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Joseph Kelleher seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

### **Old Business**

Daphne gave an update on the Schlegel Park Pool Transgender training. Brian Twyman had recommended that we reach out the LBGT center of Reading which she did. We had a training here at the RRC that was mandatory for all staff. It was held May 9, 2018. Jocelyn Young who is the director of the center ran that training. She primarily went over the issues surrounding the LBGT community. It was a very interesting training. We did not get a lot of questions answered about our specific issue at the pool because nobody has ever been faced with the issue. Jocelyn thought that we had a good solution. Daphne met with Public Works and asked them to come up with divided dressing areas. So now when you go in the locker rooms there are actually dressing rooms with curtains. So now anyone can go in and it is private. Ralph Johnson & Jesse Blanco and his crew did a really great job. As a result of this Ralph Johnson reached out to Jocelyn and is having a transgender training at the public works building for his public works employees. So we have resolved the issue. Not legally because there is no other case law. A discussion followed about scheduling another training with Jocelyn for board members as well as city council and school board members. Daphne will e-mail Jocelyn and copy the board members.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Daphne gave a verbal Executive Director's report for April & May 2018

#### **Highlights:**

1. Daphne made the board members aware that the RRC was featured stated wide in the Keystone Edge. They reached out to us. This is not an article we solicited. They heard about the Commission, our awards and the different things that were going on. They did interviews with different organizations & our staff. They did their research and spent several months preparing and came out with this. We have received so much positive press and publicity for this article. A copy of was given to each board member.
2. The Pennsylvania Urban Alliance exchange asked the RRC to host their annual meeting this year. Last year it was held in Allentown. We will be meeting at 3<sup>rd</sup> & Spruce in the gym tomorrow for training. We have individuals from different cities that come together to meet as a group to discuss issues that happen in parks. We are having a presentation by Michael Gombar from the Berks County District Attorney's office on the opioid crisis and how it has affected Berks County and our parks. Michael gave the City of Reading a compliment stating that they have seen a decrease in drug activity in City Park. He stated that since the park is being maintained properly there has been a lot of positive activities going on & people coming through the park. The park looks well kept. They have seen a decrease in crime there for drug activity. Also, at the meeting a commissioner from Philadelphia will be talking about how Philadelphia has dealt

with the opioid crisis in their parks system. Approximately 30 of the RRC staff will be in attendance as well. Daphne invited all board members to attend.

3. The RRC is one of the lead partners in the façade improvement program which is helping to improve the facades on the 300 block of South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. This is being modeled after West Reading's Program. The partners of the Wyomissing Foundation & the South of Penn Task Force, which Daphne is on representing the RRC, have chosen this block because there is a high number of home owners. A lot of people have lived here for a long time and they take care of their homes. So we are looking for façade improvements like lighting, porches, roof shingles, windows and things like that. However, when they went around and did their assessments it was determined that most of these homes needed more than the original allotted \$2500.00. Through some discussions with the City, the City of Reading has agreed to match the money from the Wyomissing Foundation. So now we have twice the amount of money to work with and are going to improve this block. Our goal is this can be the model and it will continue to approve the city. It is important that we have safe routes to our schools and recreation centers. Nothing has been started yet because they are working on final numbers. Daphne will keep the board updated on the progress.
4. We also met with CarTech. Heather Boyer and Daphne presented to the carpenter cares committee. They were instrumental in supporting our summer playground program last summer for the art program/event at the Reading Public Museum. They are supporting it again this year!
5. Daphne attended Dr. Anna Weitz's retirement on behalf of the RRC as requested from the incoming president of Reading Area Community College, Dr. Susan Looney. We are working very well with them.
6. We are continuing our partnership with Bethany's Children's Home this summer with our Girls Leadership Program.
7. Our playground programs are starting June 18<sup>th</sup>. We have 9 playground programs with about 450 kids registered. 3 of those camps are specialty camps – Baer is sports camp, Pendora is art camp & Schlegel is swim camp. We have a partnership with the Opportunity House. They purchased 24 spots for children to attend Baer park sports camp. Camp is 12:30PM to 5:00PM. We will again be serving lunch and snacks to all the kids. Daphne invited all board members to come check out our playground programs!
8. The other exciting partnership we have this summer is with Berks Nature at Angelica Park. Each park is attending an afternoon there to experience everything they offer. The kids are having the time of their life.
9. Patricia Wright asked how often the other playground programs go to Schlegel pool. All parks get 2 trips to the pool. This prompted a discussion about the sprinklers in the parks. We would like to model the sprinkler system that was installed at 11<sup>th</sup> & Pike.
10. A lengthy discussion regarding the East Reading Pool & Hillside Pool followed. Daphne was asked to send an e-mail to Glenn Steckman, the Mayor and Cindy Caster to see what the status is of the East Reading Pool because the board is recommending that it move forward unless there is other information to indicate that something is happening at Hillside that we need to revisit.
11. Patricia Wright asked about the spray garden at Barbey's pool. Daphne will e-mail Ralph Johnson regarding this.

*Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz made a motion to accept the Executive Director's report as represented. Patricia Wright seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

### **Public Comment**

Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the former residents and people considered alumni of East Reading are having a reunion this year where they expect approximately 500 people to come to the reunion which will be in September. As part of that they are setting up a fundraising committee and the group is going to create license plates that they are going to sell at the reunion. With that money they want to contribute and do some work at Pendora, Neversink or 10<sup>th</sup> & South. Marcia felt it would be best for recommendations to come from the RRC to the East Reading Reunion Association on where this money could be spent. Marcia asked for a needs assessment on Neversink. Daphne will reach out to Ralph at Public Works.

### **Adjournment**

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

*Christopher Celmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:27PM. Brian Twyman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

Upcoming meetings:

October Recreation Commission Meeting – Tuesday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM, 3rd & Spruce Recreation Center.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Swoyer  
Recording Secretary