

Reading Recreation Commission  
7:03PM  
3<sup>rd</sup> & Spruce Recreation Center  
Minutes of the August 12, 2014 Meeting

The Reading Recreation Commission was called to order on Tuesday, August 12, 2014, at 7:03PM by James Washington.

The Board performed the Pledge of the Allegiance and then the roll call of members. There were six of eleven board members present and they included: Christopher Daubert, Carl Geffken, Eddie Moran Manuel Guzman, Otis Smith, and James Washington. The following board members were absent: Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz, Allen McCloud, David Ruyak, John Santoro & Donald Taddei Jr. Staff in attendance: Daphne Klahr, Executive Director and Rebecca Swoyer, Business Manager (recording secretary). Guests: Diane Kripas, Division Chief, Partnership Division of DCNR and Mr. Stratton Marmarou, City Council.

**Minutes**

The minutes from the June 10, 2014 meeting were reviewed. Carl Geffken made a motion to approve the minutes. Manuel Guzman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Guest speaker: Mr. Stratton Marmarou is attending the meeting to talk about Engleman's Park. He stated he was under the impression other individuals would be attending the meeting. He came to discuss the confusion with phone calls between Mr. Craig Holman and Mrs. Daphne Klahr. Mr. Holman contacted Mrs. Klahr regarding his interest in Engleman's Park. Mrs. Klahr explained to all involved in the conversations that the Reading Recreation Commission just received the park in May. We are looking to expand youth programming. A discussion followed. Mr. Marmarou exited the meeting at 7:10PM.

**Executive Director's Report**

Daphne handed out her Executive Director's report for June & July 2014.

**Highlights:**

1. Daphne informed the board that we have received \$5,000.00 from Lisa Meredith who donated this money from her mother's estate (Carol Meredith). Lisa is a Reading High School graduate and resides in Berks County. She saw our Face Book post about our Back to School event and contacted us. Don Spatz from the Reading Eagle would like to feature this story in the Reading Eagle for the Good Morning Reader feature. Lisa agreed to have this story published.
2. The City of Reading & the Reading School District are current with their payments. 4<sup>th</sup> quarter requests will be sent in September.
3. Our Back to School Event will be held on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. There will be raffles for back to school back packs filled with school supplies; clothing for \$1.00, haircuts with 3 Barbers and 2 Hairdressers for \$5.00.
4. Our Halloween Hayride at Schlegel Park will be held October 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>.
5. Our Cookies with Santa at the Pendora Fieldhouse will be held December 6<sup>th</sup>.
6. Summer volleyball ended on August 7<sup>th</sup>. The winter league will begin in November.
7. The Summer Playground program ended August 8<sup>th</sup>. We had 300 kids participating in 7 locations. The end-of-the-year lantern parade at City Park was a huge success and featured a

storybook theme with carnival games, lanterns and banners. Congratulations to Schlegel Park for their winning banner featuring the Rainbow Fish.

8. Keffer Park Art Camp was a notable success and derive congratulations for their winning design in the Wright Build Design Competition. This competition was held at the Reading Public Museum. There was a reception at the museum on July 24<sup>th</sup> where judges from the museum and Lee Olsen from Olsen Design Group Architects judged the designed houses. The houses were made of 75% recyclable materials in the spirit of Frank Lloyd Wright. As their prize Keffer Park Playground traveled to Pittsburg, PA on August 11<sup>th</sup> and visited Falling waters, a house that Frank Lloyd Wright built. It is a museum with a water fall running through it.
9. The Girls Softball Summer program at Baer Park ended very successfully on August 9<sup>th</sup>. The championship game was held at Angelica Park. The final two teams were Azteca Plumbing and Santiago Homes. Santiago Homes won 9 – 4. The Girls Softball program will continue in the fall at Engleman’s Ball Field.
10. The 18U Tennis team won the Pennsylvania Eastern District Title and traveled to Princeton, New Jersey to participate in the Middle States Sectional Championship. The team lost in the tie-breaker and came in 2<sup>nd</sup> place.
11. Schlegel Pool revenues are lower than expected due to the delayed opening and generally cooler weather.
12. We will be conducting swim lessons at Reading High School starting September 15<sup>th</sup>. There will be 2 sessions, 4 weeks each with lessons twice a week.
13. The Afterschool Program will begin on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Registrations are now being accepted.
14. The fall Adult Basketball program will begin September 14<sup>th</sup> at 3<sup>rd</sup> & Spruce. Teams from Body Zone are interested in the program.
15. We are currently applying to be a feeding preparation site for our afterschool program. This will bring in additional funding to our program including covering staff costs for food preparation.
16. The work on the 11<sup>th</sup> & Pike kitchen will be completed in the next few weeks, in time for the afterschool program. The HVAC unit is also being repaired. Larry Zerbe’s office was moved to the smaller computer room. His old office was turned into a homework room to give the kids more space to do homework in the afterschool program. Additionally, we are painting the cafeteria room and fixing up the lounge with furniture and a new TV.
17. We are currently working on a cooking program initiative that will offer cooking classes throughout the city one day a week, including our recreation center. The program will be funded by St. Joe’s. Volunteers will come in and show the kids how to cook.
18. Pendorf Park will be home, once again, to the Reading Youth Football program.
19. Daphne submitted the EITC application to the state. She is waiting for final approval.
20. The Department of Public Welfare application was submitted for review. It was returned for additional information including clearances, and a current DPW Group Care Training certification.
21. Daphne submitted 2 grants. One to the Berks Arts Council grant to support the 2015 Art program at Keffer Park. The other was a \$10,000.00 grant request to the Berks County Community Foundation for a summer maintenance pilot project: COR Youth Park Maintenance Program; Maintaining and Sustaining Community Parks.
22. Daphne met with Sean Garrigan and Ann Toole with regards to the 106 building in City Park. They discussed the scope of work and scheduling the community focus groups.
23. Daphne was invited to give a 20 minute presentation to the West Reading/Wyomissing Rotary Club in September. She will be discussing what the Reading Recreation Commission provides for city youth and review the 2013 Annual Report. She was also invited to present to the Muhlenberg Lions Club in October.

24. Daphne was asked to meet with representatives from the Chamber of Commerce concerning a leadership initiative that they are starting in the Reading School District. The program is called SOAR.
25. Daphne will be attending the NRPA conference in October in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Eddie Moran spoke regarding implementing a special needs project. Possibly a soccer program that could be held at 11<sup>th</sup>& Pike. We have some funding for the event. We have the building which is handicap accessible. Eddie asked if anyone has contacted the Special Olympics which will be a great resource. His son is in a special needs soccer program at Wilson School District. He stated it is a very successful program. Eddie will provide Daphne with contact information.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Daphne Klahr discussed the Treasurer's Report. City Council was very impressed with how we are handling our money. Current balance is \$462,994.64. We are looking to add a few positions – maintenance staff and afterschool staff. Daphne will be meeting with Carl to review the budget in September. The budget will be presented to the board at the October board meeting. Daphne reviewed the following reports: Profit and Loss budget vs. actual; Balance Sheet Previous Month Comparison which compared months May and June and June and July; 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.

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

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

Diane Kripas from DCNR presented her annual review with the board. Diane stated that she will be giving Daphne a list of all the lands that were funded with Federal and State funds. DCNR is now doing inspections on federally funded parks. This information should go in our Comprehensive Plan. This is supposed to be used for open use. They found many properties listed on federally funded parks.

Diane provided background information on the circuit rider program. She stated that Daphne is their 38 circuit rider. She stated our city needed a plan. There are a lot of gems that are hidden under deferred maintenance. We are in our 3<sup>rd</sup> year of funding and will have to apply for the 4<sup>th</sup> year. We have to look at the agreement from City and School District. She stated that our agreement is 5 years and we should be looking for funding for 6<sup>th</sup> year. There is a very high and unrealistic expectation that the Reading Recreation Commission will be self-sustaining in the 6<sup>th</sup> year. Diane stated that we cannot start looking for alternative funding sources soon enough to help supplement our current funding streams. She stated that DCNR is in it for the long haul. They will help if they can. She feels we need to deliver and we are delivering! In 2 years time much has been completed. We received 2 awards which their chairman came out to accept those awards with Daphne. It is amazing to receive State and National recognitions! She feels Daphne is doing an amazing job and would like to give her acknowledgment for all her hard work!

Diane briefly discussed the Comprehensive Rec Plan which has a lot of needs. The planning process should identify a 5-year program and to work with the City of Reading. We need to decide the highest needs and look for funders (private funders) and work on those parks.

She ended with asking 2 questions to each board member.

1. What do you think has been the Commission's greatest success to date? Answers included: improved and expanded programming, the hiring of Daphne as the Executive Director, improved facilities, bringing back the playground program, and community partnerships.
2. What is one concern about the Commission's future? (Sustainable funding is probably a given. Anything in particular?) Answers included: losing our public funding, not gaining enough public support through fundraising, not marketing ourselves enough, maintenance in our facilities

Discussion followed.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to be brought before the board, Carl Geffken made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30PM. Manny Guzman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Upcoming meetings:**

**October Recreation Commission Meeting – Tuesday, October 21st at 7:00PM, 3<sup>rd</sup> and Spruce Recreation Center.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Swoyer  
Recording Secretary