



City of Ansonia

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Ansonia, Connecticut 06401

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ANSONIA RECREATION COMMISSION

May 6, 2014

Regular Meeting

Present: Al Smith, Chairman
Michael Cratty
Frank DeLibero
Jeff Devine
Anne Lynch
Steve Sobolisky
Paul Velardi

Others Present: Jeff Coppola, Recreation Director
Alison Rublemann, ANC Director
Sean Rowley, PWD Representative

The Regular Meeting of the Ansonia Recreation Commission was called to order by Chairman Smith at 6:00p.m.

All present rose and Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

The secretary called the roll.

There was a quorum present.

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Director Reports

Football

Jen Millea, and Lou Criscuolo were present.

Mr. Criscuolo said they have submitted their report to the Commission. He said there is a free Clinic in July. He doesn't have any dates yet because he is waiting for availability of the field. These are weekly clinics that average about 50 participants.

Mr. Sobolisky asked if there were any clinics scheduled for June.

Mr. Criscuolo said yes, there is Spring practice in June that begins June 2, 2014 through June 30, 2014 – pending field availability. They are off in July for practice and the season begins August 4th. They are opting for a clinic in July but it depends on field and coach availability.

Mr. Devine asked if the clinics are voluntary or mandatory.

Mr. Criscuolo said the clinics are not mandatory. They are held two hours every Wednesday and there are about 50 kids every week.

Ms. Lynch asked if this clinic is taking the place of the Zuraw Camp? She asked who is overseeing the Zuraw Camp this year.

Mr. Criscuolo said J. Benjamin and J. Chryznowski will do the Zuraw Camp. He said all practice sessions and clinics up to August 4th are voluntary.

Ms. Lynch said the dates should be picked soon so the mailings can go out to the kids. It may increase participation.

Mr. Criscuolo said June 1st is the date that you can get the kids together. We will get a head start on fundamentals.

Mr. DeLibero asked if the coaches will be at the clinics.

Mr. Criscuolo said they had a coaches meeting to see who was coming back because they want a reliable staff. The Coach and two Assistants will be there.

Mr. Devine said there was discussion a few months ago regarding the use of this year's registration money to pay the past due bill.

Mr. Criscuolo said they have reached an agreement with the company and they are on a payment plan.

Mr. Devine asked if these payments are through the Parent's Association.

Mr. Criscuolo said yes.

Mr. Sobolisky said the Parent's Association would like to use Nolan Field because they are holding a Flower Sale Fundraiser on May 10th and 11th and May 17th and 18th.

There was discussion on the use of Nolan Field and the parking lot on those dates for the Flower Sale. Mr. Coppola said on May 10th the AHS and DHS Freshman football game is scheduled at 10:00 a.m. but there should not be a problem. Mr. Criscuolo said he will set up in the main parking lot.

Mr. Sobolisky made a motion to allow the Football & Cheer Parent's Association to use Nolan Field Main Parking Lot on May 10, May 11 and May 17 and May 18 for a Flower Sale Fundraiser. Mr. DeLibero seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Cratty made a motion to accept the Football and Cheer report. Mr. Sobolisky seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Soccer

Mr. Chris Sheehy was present.

Mr. Sheehy said the Soccer report was in the Commission's packet. He asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Sheehy said there was an issue with ATV vehicles being driven on the field. A neighbor called the Police Dept. and he called the Police Dept. At the Nature Center field someone did "donuts" on the field by the playground.

Ms. Rublemann said someone broke the gate.

Mr. Devine said the gate was broken early Sunday afternoon.

Ms. Rublemann said a master lock could be put on the gate but in an emergency and if you would have to get down to the field and if it is locked you have to get the key.

Mr. Devine said to discuss the situation with Lt. Williams because there was an issue at Linett Park. They are aware of the problems.

The commissioners discussed the issue of locking the gate to stop the ATV's and other vehicles from driving on the fields. There are programs at those fields all the time and cars driving down to the field all the time. Soccer parents should not be driving down there. If the gate is open everyone drives down to the field.

Mr. Sheehy had an invoice for \$705 which he submitted to Mr. Coppola.

Mr. Velardi said that invoice doesn't include U16 and U19, they are paid separately.

Mr. Sheehy said the U16 and U19 in Ansonia only use the Soccer CJSA membership. That is the only link between them. He said he breaks it out for them and they pay their part. They are not under an umbrella of Recreation programs. The U23 team will be the same way as the U16 and U19. They will come to Recreation for use of the fields. They will purchase their own uniforms and pay their own expenses. The U23 cannot take preference over the Recreation Soccer program. He said it has not been an issue in the past.

Mr. Sheehy said he is happy to facilitate the program as long as it doesn't interfere with the Recreation Soccer program.

Mr. DeLibero made a motion to accept Mr. Sheehy's soccer report. Mr. Velardi seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Baseball & Softball

There was no one present.

Mr. Coppola said they are at their games.

Mr. Coppola said he has been working with Public Works Dept. on getting a Flag Pole for Nolan Field. He said they are trying to find the money to pay for the flag pole from a line item because it is being installed on City property.

Basketball

None

Public Session

Chairman Smith asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to address the commission.

Mr. Bart Flaherty
28 Pinecrest Ave.
Ansonia, CT 06401

Mr. Flaherty said he watched a two hour documentary on head trauma in sports i.e. football, girl's soccer and the latest was hockey. The NFL put millions of dollars away to research head trauma and help those who are suffering from it. Hockey is also doing the same. There were two articles in the New Haven Register on this subject. He said he is concerned with allowing

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contact sports for six year olds. He said he is not an expert on this and it is not personal but as a citizen of Ansonia we should be holding seminars on head trauma for the people involved in the programs. These people involved should become familiar enough to recognize head trauma in a child. You don't have to be knocked out for head trauma. It could be the constant steady bang, bang, bang. He asked if there is anyone being trained for this to recognize head trauma and this type of injury. He said the commission is doing a great job with the programs and he wanted to bring the subject of head trauma in all sports to the attention of the members so we have all of our coaches and personnel aware and trained because it will be an issue.

Mr. Sheehy said that there is a training video on head trauma for soccer that was produced in 2012. He will get it and have the coaches review it.

Mr. Flaherty asked for a written schedule of fees for the Recreation programs (football, cheer, softball, baseball, basketball).

Mr. Coppola said he will give him a copy of the fee schedule.

Mr. Flaherty said he is here to support the commission and the programs and is not critising anyone. The article in the New Haven Register said to get people trained especially if you have 6 ½ year olds.

Ms. Lynch said there was a committee on why we don't have tackle football until third grade.

Mr. Flaherty said he is here to get our people trained in this.

Mr. Sobolisky said we have it and we have to attend the classes.

Chairman Smith said years ago it was decided not to have contact at six years old and it hasn't been much of a problem.

Mr. Criscuolo said they have "Heads up Cert" which is a 45 minute on line course that gives the warning signs on head injury and trauma. He said not just the head coach but everyone on the roster should take the course.

Mr. Velardi said it is not required for soccer.

Mr. Flaherty said there is more and more research being done and it doesn't have to be a "bell ringing" trauma it could be the constant bangs and hits but I can't speak to it, I'm not trained.

Ms. Lynch asked who will follow up to make sure our coaches do the training. Mr. Criscuolo and Mr. Sheehy both have training videos and on line courses.

Chairman Smith said soccer should do the training also.

Mr. Velardi agreed. He said that the "Heads up Cert" training is geared toward football. Soccer has a similar video they will use.

Mr. Criscuolo said some of it is but it gives you all the warning signs.

Mr. Devine said this training is something that we could recommend to the programs.

Chairman Smith said it is to our advantage for the kids in the program. It is not for ourselves.

Mr. Criscuolo and Mr. Sheehy said they will get training for their staff and coaches.

Jorden Guevara, representing
Juan Carlos Fiallos
126 S. Cliff St.
Ansonia, CT 06401

Mr. Guevara said Mr. Fiallos sent an e-mail requesting to use the field at the ANC for U23 team for home games and practices. There will be 10 games, played two times a week (Tuesday and Thursday). He requested a Certificate of Insurance and is waiting to hear back from them. He said he just needs approval to use the field.

Mr. Coppola asked Mr. Guevara if he is opposed to using the AHS soccer field.

Mr. Guevara said AHS doesn't want them to use their field.

Mr. Coppola said they never said no to you. He said there is nothing going on at the AHS soccer field. If they use the AHS soccer field our field will be in better shape.

Mr. Guevara said they want to use the ANC field because they have used it for the last three years.

There was discussion on the Board of Education field and Mr. Coppola will give Mr. Guevara the paperwork so that he can go to the Board of Education and request the use of the AHS soccer field on Prindle Avenue.

Mr. Guevara said they charge \$30 a player to participate. He explained the game schedule stating there are 5 home games and 5 away games. The games are Tuesday and Thursday at 6:00 p.m. He will provide a schedule of fees and games after they get approval to use the field.

Mr. Velardi said if they play into August, there is the Fall practice sessions for Recreation soccer. There may be a conflict.

Mr. Rowley said they will be renovating the parking lot at the ANC this summer and there may be an issue with parking.

Mr. DeLibero suggested Mr. Guevara send a letter to Board of Ed telling them that the ANC is having work done and the field is not available.

Ms. Rublemann said the work will begin late June, July and August after the Recreation Soccer program ends. They will be working in the Parking lot also.

Mr. Velardi asked if the U23 is Co-Ed.

Mr. Guevara said it is a men's league.

Mr. Velardi asked how they register for the U23 league.

Mr. Sheehy said they never came to him in the past. He said he never heard of a U23 program.

Mr. Velardi said if they are under the Ansonia Soccer Club, they are registered. The Club is unto themselves and they will be treated separately.

Chairman Smith said they are "themselves". They are not under Recreation programs. They only come here to request the use of the fields. Ansonia Recreation never had any Adult programs for soccer.

There was discussion on the above. Mr. Devine said next month will be too late for them to begin play. He suggested they conditionally use the ANC if they need to if they cannot get the AHS soccer field.

Mr. Sheehy said he will work with them if there is a problem with using the soccer field at AHS.

Mr. Devine made a motion to approve conditionally the use of Ansonia Nature Center soccer field if the use of the AHS soccer field is not available for the U23 team. Mr. Cratty seconded. All in favor, so carried.

There was a discussion on the amount of wear and tear on a field with adults vs kids using the fields. Adult teams that request use of fields must provide the City of Ansonia with a Certificate of Insurance. Mr. Guevara, Mr. Sheehy and Mr. Coppola will work together on the fields.

Chairman Smith closed the public session.

Reports: Alison Rublemann, Ansonia Nature Center Director

Ms. Rublemann is present this evening.

Ms. Rublemann said everyone should have her report. She said there will be a Riverwalk clean up day on Saturday, May 9, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. at the Ansonia Riverwalk. They will meet at the Gazebo. She said the Friends of the ANC are sponsoring a fundraiser at Antonio's. Anyone that goes to Antonio's 20% of their bill goes to Friends of the ANC.

Ms. Rublemann said there was a fire at the Nature Center on Easter weekend that was contained by the Fire Dept.

Ms. Lynch asked when the parking lot would be repaired at the Nature Center – July and August?

Ms. Rublemann said it will be done so that it doesn't interfere with the soccer program. She is waiting for the game schedule. She said Matt Edwards planted 20 Pine Trees at the Nature Center on Earth Day. Dan McClaren cleaned the stairs down to the playground.

Ms. Rublemann thanked the Soccer program for cleaning up the area at the Nature Center.

Mr. Velardi said if Ms. Rublemann has anyone else that needs to do community work the goals need painting.

Ms. Rublemann said there are a few groups that will be at the Nature Center to do community work and she will look into it.

Mr. Sobolisky made a motion to accept Ms. Rublemann's report. Mr. Cratty seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Reports: Jeffrey Coppola, Recreation Director

Mr. Coppola is present this evening.

Mr. Coppola said he will add Ansonia Nature Center on the list with Linett Park for the Police Dept. presence. He said they did nice work at Linett Park.

Mr. Coppola said there is a \$2500 quote to repair the fence at Colony Pond. He said the flag pole at Nolan Field needs to be replaced. He would like to purchase a new flag pole for the field. There is an issue on who will pay for the flag pole.

Discussion on the purchase of a new flag pole continued. Mr. Coppola said he will bring it up at the Mayor's meeting on Wednesday. Mr. Nimons said he will give a donation for the flag pole. Mr. DeLibero said maybe Little League and AYP Football and Cheer can donate toward the pole.

Mr. Coppola said there will be a Fishing Clinic held on Thursday, May 22, 2014 and Saturday May 24, 2014. This is the same program held last year.

Mr. Coppola said there will be a Summer Program for the children. It will begin one week after July 4th. He said he will spend one week in Derby to see how they run their program. He said he will hire six (6) counselors over 18 years old.

Ms. Lynch suggested Mr. Coppola start to advertise now to hire these counselors so that he can begin to get the paperwork sent out for the program. She said Derby sends their paperwork out next week.

Mr. Coppola said registration for the program will be at the Prendergast playground the same day the camp begins. He said it will be one week after Derby.

Mr. Rowley said it will cost \$1800 to do the fence chain link section. He explained the condition of the fence stating there are bent pieces underneath the fence along the ground and if you are going to fix it, it would be best to go with the \$2500 repair that includes the top rail. He said it is not used for many games and it is an eye sore and a hazard. He said it might be best to take the fence down eliminating the problem.

Mr. Sobolisky suggested the Police issue tickets to the people who allow their dogs to go on this area. He asked who plays on the field.

Mr. DeLibero said the little kids in the Minor League.

Ms. Lynch said they also use the field for make up games.

Mr. Devine said the field was regularly used last year for Little League. Now the games are played at Nolan Field because of the concession stand.

Mr. Rowley said the money will be from the Little League budget for the fence repair. He said Little League needs drainage at Nelligan Park and the money spent on the fence could be used to get a contractor in to fix Nelligan Park the right way. He said he spoke with Jeff Coppola and Bob DeFelice about having a company come in and do the drainage and field right and they said it is up to Recreation to fix it.

There was continued discussion on the repair of the fence at Colony Park and the pros and cons to removing the fence or keeping it up and fixing it.

Mr. Sobolisky made a motion to accept Mr. Coppola's report. Mr. Cratty seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Harry Danley came into the meeting at this time – 7:06 p.m.

Mr. Danley asked what the decision was on the fence at Colony Park.

Mr. Sobolisky said the cost is \$2500 for Walsh Fence to do the work. That is their estimate.

Mr. Rowley said Walsh Fence gave the estimate of \$2500 for everything that needs to be done with the exception of the poles. They will use the existing poles. He said you need a fence all across right field, there is a gap at the bottom of the fence and spots where a hand could get caught. The chain link needs to be replaced and the tops are broken. If you are going to do it then you should spend the \$2500 and do it right.

Mr. Velardi said do you think something should be done.

Mr. Rowley said yes.

Ms. Lynch asked the cost to remove the fence.

Mr. Rowley said the field was used as the Eastside Field years ago.

Ms. Lynch asked about the Tennis Court fence.

There was discussion that there is a potential that this field may be used again next year. Chairman Smith said if you take it down and then we need it in two years we put up another fence in its place.

Mr. Coppola said there are no plans of using it. If we are doing anything there we should do it all at one time.

Mr. DeLibero said if we need a field we can use Prendergast School.

Mr. Sobolisky said if we take the fence down now and then we need it in two years will we need everything to replace it in two years.

Mr. Rowley said the cost to do the work now and replace everything except the poles is \$2500. If you have to install new poles in two years there is an extra \$1500 for the poles. So now the cost is \$4000 to \$4500 to replace the whole thing in two years if needed.

Mr. Devine said once it goes away it will never happened again, look at Nolan Field.

Mr. Sobolisky asked about the liability.

Mr. Rowley said it is an eye sore and safety hazard.

Mr. Coppola said the fence has to either get fixed or it has to be removed.

Mr. Rowley said Public Works will not do the work, Walsh Fence will do it.

Mr. Danley said do you have an estimate for a new fence and an estimate to repair the fence.

Mr. Coppola said it is \$2500 to repair the fence from one end to the other end.

Discussion on purchasing a brand new fence. Mr. DeLibero said we are not playing games there. Mr. Danley said it doesn't need a brand new fence. He said three feet into right field is not that bad.

Mr. DeLibero said the commission is trying to cut corners and we can't afford a flag pole.

Mr. Danley said he will give the Commission \$200 toward the flag pole.

Mr. Sobolisky thanked Mr. Danley stating "you care about the Town".

Ms. Lynch said the exact amount is \$2500 for Walsh to replace the fence one end to the other. She asked if the quote to repair the section missing in right hand field and the spots missing at the bottom where the kids could get hurt are included.

Mr. Velardi said the commission doesn't have that quote.

Mr. DeLibero discussed the cost to replace the top rails because they are a safety requirement.

Mr. Velardi said Public Works Dept. made recommendations and something has to be done with the fence. We either vote to remove it or we vote to repair it for \$2500.

There was discussion on finding someone to repair the fence instead of replacing the fence. PWD can secure quotes for this. There are two options at this point. Mr. Danley said he will take time to get quotes from a fully insured contractor.

Mr. Coppola said what is in front of the Recreation Commission are these options:

1. Fix the fence at \$2500
2. Remove the fence.

There was discussion on taking a vote now or waiting until the Commission receives a price for a new fence.

Mr. DeLibero made a motion to remove the fence on the Little League field at Colony Park. There was no second.

Mr. Velardi said he would like to request that they explore repairing the fence at a lesser cost before we say remove the fence. He said the recommendation from PWD is to remove or repair the fence or to ask to get another quote to resolve this issue.

Discussion on the above.

Mr. Velardi made a motion to ask the Public Works Dept. to secure a contract for the minimum repairs to resolve the safety issues. Mr. Sobolisky seconded. All in favor, so carried.

There was discussion on getting a second quote for the repair or replacement of the fence. Mr. DeLibero was concerned with the safety and liability of the fence if it is not repaired. Mr. Coppola asked if he can handle this issue tomorrow at the Mayor's weekly meeting.

All of the Commissioners were in favor of Mr. Coppola handling this tomorrow at the Mayor's meeting and reporting back to them.

Mr. Danley said he will purchase the flag poles and bring them to Public Works for Nolan Field.

There was discussion on the purchase of the flag poles. Chairman Smith suggested that Mr. Danley go to Public Works and tell them what he is willing to do.

Committee Reports

There are no committee reports this month.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Sobolisky made a motion to accept as written the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 1, 2014 meeting. Mr. Velardi seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Approval of Bills

Mr. Coppola presented the following bills:

1. Soccer – CJSA Monthly Invoice. Inv. # C0005223 dtd. 5/1/14 for \$705
2. Babe Ruth Stipend from the City's Line Item: \$1500

Mr. Sobolisky made a motion to pay the bills listed above if found to be correct. Ms. Lynch seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Correspondence

1. Juan Fiallos re: Men's under 23 years old soccer team. E-Mail dated 5/5/14
2. Doug Novak, Supt. PWD re: Fence at Colony Park dtd. 4/25/14
3. J. Marini, Corp. Counsel re: Legal Opinion 2014-3 Performance of Municipal Employees
4. Ansonia Playground Summer Camp Program Form
5. Six (6) Pictures of fence at Colony Park

Any other business to come before the commission

Mr. Paul Velardi presented a draft Oversight Policy Proposal outline for the Commission members to review. He suggested they go over it section by section and make recommendations. He would like to see the commission adopt a set of Rules and Policies for the Recreation Commission and Administration to adhere to and run the programs.

Chairman Smith said the Commission can discuss it. He said the Recreation Director cannot do anything without coming to the Commission.

Mrs. Flaherty said there was a set of Rules & Regulations and Coaches Guidelines and Director Guidelines that the Commission had in the past. She said she will try to locate them and send them in the packets along with Mr. Velardi's proposal outline.

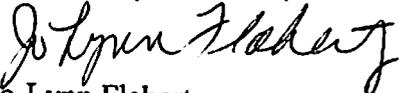
Executive Session

None

Adjourn

Mr. Cratty made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Mr. DeLibero seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Respectfully submitted,


Jo-Lynn Flaherty
Secretary