

March 10, 2009

Regular Meeting

Present: Al Smith, Chairman
Steve Kichar
Sean Rowley
Jamie Puro
Lynda Williams

Absent: Linda Darling
Tom Lynch

Others Present: Jeff Coppola, Recreation Dir.
Donna Lindgren, ANC Dir.
Joseph Miller, Jr., Comptroller
Robert Jaskilka, Auditor
Keith Maynard, Alderman
Scott Nihill, Alderman
Joe Jeanetti, Alderman
Ed Norman, BOAT

The regular meeting of the Ansonia Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Al Smith.

All present rose and Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

The secretary called the roll.

There was a quorum present.

Public Session

Chairman Smith asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to address the Commission. He asked three (3) times and there was no one.

Mr. Rowley made a motion to close the public session. Ms. Williams seconded. jAll in favor, so carried.

Minutes

Mr. Kichar made a motion to table to the next meeting for corrections. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Bills

Mr. Coppola was present.

Bill #7

Mr. Coppola said that the Parent's Association didn't have enough money to pay for the uniforms. He is asking if the Recreation Commission can pay the invoice.

Chairman Smith said that is something the Recreation Commission should not start doing. If we do this for one sport we will have to do it for every other sport. The Invoice should go to the Parent's Association.

Mr. Coppola said that the Parent's Association will give the Recreation Commission the money for the invoice.

Mr. Kichar said that the Recreation Commission added extra money to the fee for incidentals such as this – to help out if there is an emergency.

Chairman Smith said that the Recreation Commission can't do that.

Bills #10 – B&L Invoice

Mr. Coppola said that this bill is for coaches shirts which is a requirement. It is for \$703.00

Chippeo

Mr. Coppola said that \$975 was paid.

City Stitchers

Mr. Coppola said the bill for City Stitchers is \$1863 for Little League.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to pay all the bills presented this evening except the Invoice for #7. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Correspondence

There is no correspondence.

Director's Reports

Baseball & Softball

Mr. Ron Sells was present.

Mr. Sells gave everyone a copy of the Manager's List for Baseball.

Mr. Smith said you can't be a manager in a different program. Jeff Coppola submits the list to us so we know they are all OK.

Mr. Sells said that they met last night and this list was agreed to. He said the following people will serve the Commission:

Marty Mikos – Director of Majors
Dominic Roval – Director of Minors

Mr. Sells said there is no conflicts with these Directors because they will flip flop in their roles. They will not be Director of the program that they are coaching in.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to approve the Little League Baseball Managers for the Minors and Majors. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. rowlwey said to get the minors list and make sure that the Recreation Commission gets the list to approve it.

Mr. Sells said that they are down 100 kids. They have to restructure the teams with the nub mers that they have.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to approve the Little League Softball managers as listed.. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Sells said that there are 242 kids that have registered so far this year. They are down 100 kids.

Mr. Kichar asked where the kids are from last year.

Mr. Sells said that 19 kids it is the age, 12 kids moved out of town and the rest just don't want to play. They want to play high school ball and no summer ball.

Chairman Smith said the kids are involved in other things also. Maybe we held registration too early. The kids will sign up once they start to play.

Mr. Sells said last year there were over 300 kids. We will take registrations up to opening day but we have to run registration early so we know how many kids to plan for.

Mr. Sells said that they are having to contend with the travel teams, soccer and lacrosse.

Mr. Kichar said Ansonia is half the size of the other towns.

Mr. Sells said the minor league is down 35 kids. Last year there were 80 kids in the program. The Majors have 4 teams because of the numbers and the Minors have 5 teams because of the number this year. He said he is hesitant to bring the kids up from the Instructional league because of the safety risk – if they are too young and not ready they should stay at the coach pitch level.

Chairman Smith said the cut off date for registration passed and what happens if 4 or 5 kids want to play – do you make allowances to let them play.

Mr. Sells said that they will take kids up to opening day. This year Opening Day is 4/26/09 for Softball and Baseball will be held the same week. He will advise the Commission of that date.

Chairman Smith said in the past we have had a Director for the Girls and a Director for the Boys.

Mr. Sells said that they do have that. The Director for the Girls gives him a report. They have their Director meetings and she is there.

Chairman Smith asked why the numbers are so low.

Mr. Sells said that 90% are back.

Mr. Kichar said there is no Jr. softball team.

Mr. Sells said yes they have some girls from Derby who want to come over and play with our girls. This would give us enough players for a team. Without the Derby girls we won't have a team.

Mr. Rowley said the Minors are the youngest team, the Majors are in the middle and those teams are fine and the Juniors are the older kids ages 13 to 15. There is no team for them.

Mr. Kichar asked Mr. Sells if he has enough kids to field the teams.

Mr. Sells said he needs 2 to 3 players per team for the girls team.

Mr. Kichar said he is not against the Derby players coming to Ansonia if they make the numbers.

There was a discussion on bringing in the Derby players to field the teams.

Chairman Smith said he doesn't want any animosity with Derby. If the Board is OK with it he is OK with it. He said he wants to know what they plan to do.

Mr. Kichar said Mr. Sells needs 2 to 3 kids to make a team so Ansonia can play. Derby doesn't have a team. He said Ansonia should allow the 9 & 10 year old Minor girls from Derby to join the team to make the numbers.

Kathy Paskiewicz said they have 7 girls who have signed up to play. She said Seymour and Shelton have 13 and 14 year olds. She discussed combining with them and make 2 Jr. Teams. Two out of seven are interested in doing that.

Mr. Rowley said he doesn't care if they go somewhere else to play however the funding from the City is for City of Ansonia or the Parent's Club can fund the team. He said Recreation can't fund teams for all out of town players.

Mr. Sells said the District fees would pay for that.

Chairman Smith said Ansonia supports the Sports Program for the kids. Someone from Seymour or Derby is playing we would have to see more continuity in the plans for the program. He said his concern is the sports budget from City of Ansonia that Ansonia is paying for Derby. As long as the City of Ansonia is not paying for Derby.

Mr. Sells said the registration fee is going into the budget and the sponsors are paying for the uniforms.

Mr. Kichar said that 4 or 5 more girls sign up from Ansonia the Derby girls have to understand that they can't play.

Mr. Sells said that is wrong. They all will have a fair share. The Ansonia girls can play first.

Mr. Rowley said that it is wrong to say that about the Derby girls, they are OK to play when we need them and then they can't play.

Chairman Smith said the girls from Derby will have playing time with Ansonia girls. But we will have Derby girls playing in the game and Ansonia parents saying my girl is sitting on the bench. I don't want that to happen.

Mr. Kichar said without those girls there would be no team. We have 9 girls now and with them we are up to 18 – two teams with 9 girls each.

Mr. Sells said that Opening Day is Sunday, April 26, 2009 at Nolan Field – he will let the commission know the time.

Mr. Sells said he will provide a Fundraiser List to the Commission. They are currently looking for sponsors for the uniforms.

Mr. Kichar asked Mr. Sells if any parents have stepped forward for Baseball to participate as a Parent's Association and help with the Concession Stand.

Mr. Sells said no. He hasn't tried to get parents because he is going for sponsors for the uniforms.

Mr. Kichar said that the sponsor of the uniforms has to equal the cost of the uniforms.

Mr. Sells said yes. The cost for the uniforms will be between \$2600 and \$2700 plus the Coaches shirts. They are getting bids right now. He said Kathy was approached by the District 3 Softball Coordinators for 7 & 8 year olds for softball. The Softball travel program has 8 towns in the League. He asked if there was a field at Nolan Field they could use.

Mr. Rowley said they should not use the second field at Nelligans because it is beyond repair and there is a safety issue and liability to the City. Nelligan field #1 is good field but it will be under water to Memorial Day if it continues to rain.

Mr. Rowley said that the Recreation Director should sit down with Mrs. Soldra, Athletic Director at the High School to ask if Recreation could use the high school field if we need it.

There was a discussion on the fields in Ansonia that could be used for recreation sports. There are some fields that are the Board of Education that may be able to be used if our fields are not playable. Colburn Field behind the Middle School was used by the Recreation programs however the gate was locked and we were not able to use it last year.

Mr. Kichar said that a letter to Carol Merlone, Supt. of Schools asking her if Recreation could use these fields.

Mr. Rowley said we could use Colburn Field for the Instructional Program if the gate is not locked.

Mr. Rowley said there are the high school fields off of Prindle Avenue that may be used also if we get permission from the Board of Ed.

Mrs. Williams said how are we going to get income for softball if we can't use the field where the Concession Stand is located.

Mr. Sells said re-position the Concession Stand so it can be used by both the Baseball and Softball parents association.

Mr. Rowley said the money will be an issue to fix the fields - they need clay. The field is not bad but it has not been clayed in a few years. Money is tight right now to get this work done. The softball field at Nolan Field can be used as a Little League field but you have to get the ball going now to fix it so it is ready to play.

There was discussion on playing night games with the lights on if they use the field at Nolan Field. The Firemen's League used it when they had their league. We have to bring the field up to par if we use it.

Mrs. Williams said we knew the fields weren't going to be good. Why spend money to get a stove, etc. for the Concession Stand if we can't use the fields there.

Mr. Kichar said he called Public Works Dept. to get the fields done.

Mr. Coppola said that the Valley Men's League is interested in playing their games there. The Firemen are there every Monday.

Mr. Coppola said that he, Mrs. Williams and Mr. Rowley met with the Baseball Executive Board last week and they have a new structure and they understand the Recreation Commission's position. They understand there is no power struggle.

Mr. Coppola said that the umpires will now be paid through the Accounts Payable system for the City of Ansonia. He has provided W-9's for the umpires to fill out so that they may be paid.

Soccer

Mr. Coppola said that Mr. Paul Velardi called him from Florida. He said he will be home on Monday and will provide Mr. Coppola with a roster and a manager/coach list. He and Mr. Velardi will sit down on 3/15/09 to discuss the soccer program.

Basketball

Mr. Coppola said the program is going well. Next week is the last week for the league. He said Mrs. Williams girls program is also going well, no problems. They will finish next week also.

Connecticut Speed School

Mr. Kichar asked about the letter and flyer received from John Coughlin on a Connecticut Speed School to be held in the Armory on April 13 through April 17. He said that this was not voted on by the Commission.

Reports: Donna Lindgren, ANC Director

Ms. Lindgren was present.

Ms. Lindgren reviewed her report with the Commission members. She discussed Bret Beatty and his request for an outdoor venue. She said she has no knowledge of this company.

Mr. Rowley asked if Ms. Lindgren was in favor of this activity.

Ms. Lindgren said not really, unless she saw it. She said it could take place on the ball field but she doesn't know how the screen would be installed.

Chairman Smith said there could be 200 people there with chairs on the ball field.

Ms. Lindgren said the request doesn't mention money. She said she has no opinion on it if we should consider it.

Mrs. Williams said they have one in Shelton.

Chairman Smith said the Commission needs more information. He discussed some of things that need to be addressed ie: clean up, police, outdoor toilets, parking, etc.

Mr. Rowley said it is a good thing if you saw it and how it works.

Ms. Lindgren said this is not a one night stand it would be up for the entire season.

Mr. Rowley said if it is good, worthwhile you can invite them to come back. If it is not good you can ask them to leave – you are in charge and you know best as to what is good at the Nature Center. If it is set up and left here it is not good.

Mr. Tim O'Reilly said they are usually 35'x35' inflatable screen and they are portable. It takes 10 minutes to set up.

Ms. Lindgren will decide if it is good for the Nature Center or not.

Ms. Lindgren said with regard to the hunting and trapping issue. She sent a request to Corporation Counsel and he has contacted DEP. She said she thought the Commission was going to do the same. This request goes back a few months. She asked if the Commission was interested in pursuing this.

Mr. Rowley said the Commission doesn't want any hunting on the State property adjacent to the Nature Center.

Chairman Smith said he agrees with Mr. Rowley, he can't see hunting up on that property. He advised Ms. Lindgren to find out more about what is going on there.

Mr. Rowley said that any letter regarding the hunting on the State property should come from the Board of Aldermen with a letter to Board of Aldermen with our recommendation that there be NO hunting there.

Ms. Lindgren said that Corporation Counsel recommended that she post a border marker but they are shot with holes and ripped down.

Ms. Lindgren presented her Spring Calendar of Events for the Commission's approval. She invited the members to attend Earth Day on Saturday April 25, 2009. She said that the Recreation Commission ball games can continue to be played on that day. The parking lot will be crowded but the games don't have to be cancelled or rescheduled.

Ms. Lindgren reviewed the Calendar of Events with the members.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to accept Donna Lindgren's report and approve the Calendar of Events. Mr. Rowley seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Reports: Jeff Coppola, Recreation Director

Mr. Jeff Coppola was present.

Mr. Coppola said the Armory use is limited. Baseball use in the Armory is limited. The Softball and Baseball people are using hard balls on the basketball court and they should be using only the batting case and softballs. They use the Armory on Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. Coppola said the Mayor told him to minimize the use of the Armory – use it only in the afternoon.

Mr. Kichar said the Men's Basketball program uses the Armory and it was trashed. Are they keeping it clean.

Mrs. Williams asked about the floor.

There was discussion on the condition of the Armory floor and that it cannot take any abuse from the people using it.

Mr. Coppola said Basketball program's West Point game and trip didn't work out this year. They will not be going to West Point.

There was a discussion on trips that the programs take with the children such as the West Point trip, Yankee Stadium and Shay Stadium to see a baseball game.

Mr. Kichar suggested Mr. Coppola look into taking the kids to see the Minor League in Bridgeport where the Blue Fish play. These games are reasonable and the kids can go for \$10 for a day.

Mrs. Williams said the Boys and Girls Club is open. She asked if the Recreation Commission has any involvement with them.

Mr. Coppola said no.

Mr. Coppola explained that John Coughlin would run the Connecticut Speed School. He said the money collected will go to pay the Instructors. The remainder of the money goes to the City and we pay the Instructor through the line item. No check are made out to them.

Mr. Coppola said that Soccer and Baseball don't give anyone permission to use the field without Public Works Dept.

Mr. Kichar said The Speed School the cost per age group is \$50 x 30 kids where would the money go.

Mr. Coppola said to pay the instructors and the City.

Mr. Kichar asked what the pay is for the instructors.

Mr. Coppola said they will not know what that is until they know the number of kids enrolled. That would determine the pay for the instructors. He said the Commission never came up with what the City would charge to use the Armory. He said that Corporation Counsel wants a report on how the Recreation Commission will handle scheduling and use of the Armory. He also wants to know the funds generated from the Armory. He asked for suggestions on how the Commission wants to do the report to Corporation Counsel. He asked if the scheduling will come through him and the commission.

Mr. Kichar said anything scheduled in the Armory without money Mr. Coppola can schedule with the approval of the Commission. If there is money involved it would have to be approved by the Commission first before it is scheduled.

Mr. Coppola said there are only Recreation Commission programs going in the Armory.

There was a discussion on using the Armory and making money when using the Armory.

Mr. Coppola said there was a suggestion that the Commission doesn't allow any parties, etc. in the Armory.

Chairman Smith said they always held Gala Affairs in the Armory. He said there is no sense in talking about it until the floor is fixed in the Armory.

Mr. Coppola said he has to find out about the A.Y.F. Football equipment. He said he met with Stadium Systems last Tuesday to discuss the equipment and refurbishing, etc. and the cost. Stadium Systems responded and their prices are identical to Clean Gear. He said Clean Gear didn't respond. He is recommending that the Recreation Commission go with Stadium Systems to do our gear.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to send a letter to the Board of Aldermen requesting to waive the bid for Stadium System to do the A.Y.F. Football gear. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Rowley made a motion to accept Mr. Coppola's report as presented. Mrs. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Executive Session

Mr. Kichar made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 8:25 p.m. and to invite Joe Miller, Bob Jaskilka, Ed Norman, Keith Maynard, Scott Nihill, Joe Jeannette. Mr. Rowley seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to go back into Regular Session at 9:55 p.m. There were no motions or decisions made during Executive Session. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Any other business

Mr. Kichar said that the Armory is booked during the week of April 13th through April 20th for the Charters 100th Anniversary Ball. The Connecticut Speed School cannot use the Armory during that week.

Mr. Kichar said there is a problem at the football field. There are two Sundays in the morning where there are kids playing on the football field. He said he called the Police Dept. to go up there and ask them to leave and no one from the Police Dept. came up to the field.

He said they have been asked to patrol the field on the weekends to stop anyone from playing on the football field and damaging it because it is not ready to be used.

Mr. Kichar said the fence is down and that is giving access to the football field. If the fence is replaced the kids and the dogs can't get in there. The fence was up and the next day it was down. We have asked Public Works if the fence could remain in place to Spring. The fence is down.

Mr. Jeannette said to go back to PWD and ask who removed the fence.

Mr. Kichar said the football field is damaged and it should be fixed right of way. He said he called Beth Lynch and Mayor Della Volpe and it is not fixed yet.

Mr. Norman said go to the Board of Public Works and ask them to fix the field and repair the fence. If it doesn't get done go to the Board of Aldermen and tell them.

Mr. Kichar said if PWD knows on Monday morning they should send someone up there to fix it.

Mr. Kichar said he was at the Nolan Field looking at the baseball field and there are weeds, etc. on the field and it needs to be cleaned up. He said that the Commission never received a letter from Luba Soldra, Athletic Director requesting use of the field.

Mr. Maynard said it should be determined if the field could be used.

Mr. Rowley said that there were kids on the field this weekend and there was significant damage done to the field.

Mr. Kichar said AHS is not playing the Blue/White football game on the field this year to give it time to establish itself and grow and be ready for the Fall season.

Mr. Coppola said that the Practice field is not done yet.

Mr. Puro said the football field was fixed and re-sodded and now it is damaged. He asked if there was damage to the outfield.

There was discussion on the use of the baseball field this season. Mr. Rowley said that when the high school baseball season is over the Commission wants the fence put up so the people will stay off of the field until it is established.

Mr. Kichar said that Legion Baseball and Babe Ruth can use the other field. He said practice starts 3/21/09 and they will use the Main Diamond because they can't use the Practice field. The Freshman Team uses the Ansonia Nature Center field and the JV and Varsity team use Nolan Field.

Mr. Kichar said the field has to be taken care of properly.

Mr. Maynard said to write a letter to the Board of Public Works and ask them to take care of the field.

Mr. Norman said that it should not be in a letter. Sit down with Mike Schryver first and ask him to walk the field with you and tell him what you want.

Chairman Smith said Steve and Jeff should go to the High School and talk to them also. Explain what is happening with the field and ask them to work with the Commission on getting it fixed.

Mr. Kichar said we have a committee that says when the field is usable or not concerning the weather conditions.

There was a discussion on the fence that was removed and the dogs and kids that are at the Field.

Mr. Kichar said there is a 2 to 3 month window of cooperation that the Commission is asking for.

Chairman Smith said Mr. Kichar and Mr. Coppola should go to the Board of Public Works and then go to the High School and tell them what we want.

There was discussion on the jurisdiction of the fields. The Charter states that the maintenance of the fields is Public Works and the scheduling is Recreation.

Mr. Rowley said the Lupus Foundation Lupus Walk will be held on Saturday June 27, 2009 at Nolan Field. This was previously approved by the Commission.

Adjourn

Mr. Kichar made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 p.m. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Lynn Flaherty
Secretary

