

ANSONIA RECREATION COMMISSION

September 1, 2009

Regular Meeting

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

Absent: Tom Lynch
Sean Rowley

Others Present: Jeff Coppola, Rec. Director
Donna Lindgren, ANC Director
Mike Schryver, PWD Supvr – arrived 7:30 p.m.
Scott Nihill, Alderman

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.

Dominic Valenti
Connecticut Flag Football Association

Mr. Valenti said the field that his association currently used is undergoing construction and they cannot use the field. They have 6 teams and they play on Sunday mornings. He is asking for use of a field if there is one available for his teams to play their games. He will provide all of the information the Commission requires. He said the Commission can verify the teams and that the field is undergoing restoration by contacting Barbara Smith, Facility Manager at Norwalk Community College.

Mr. Coppola asked Mr. Valenti what is season is.

Mr. Valenti said from September to November/December for rain outs. He said they will take any field that is available.

Mr. Coppola suggested Pine Lot. He asked if there is enough room there to play a football game.

Mr. Kichar asked if the field is safe for play.

Mr. Valenti said they don't require stripping.

Mr. Coppola said they are not asking for stripping or cutting of the grass.

Mr. Kichar said our football fields are not available. He said that Mr. Valenti's group would be required to provide insurance certificate if they play on our fields.

Mr. Coppola said he will get on Board with Public Works to see if Pine Lot is OK.

Mr. Valenti said they are moving out of Norwalk because the field will not be available to them for next year. This will be a small season this year. There are 6 teams and maybe 8 teams.

Mr. Coppola asked if they would be available locally if Ansonia could get the teams.

Mr. Valenti said they are open to more teams. They have 3 or 4 teams from Norwalk. The games last about 1 hour.

Mr. Kichar asked the game time.

Mr. Valenti said 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. H said he is always the last one there and he makes sure the field is cleaned up after they have finished.

Mr. Kichar said if Pine Lot is available and it is OK with Public Works – OK.

Mr. Valenti asked the fee to use the field.

Mr. Coppola said they would need to provide the City with a Certificate of Insurance and a written request to the Recreation Commission stating what they are planning to use the field for and if they are a profit or non-profit organization.

Mr. Valenti said he runs the teams. He would be willing to make a donation.

Mr. Coppola said to come up with a donation.

Chairman Smith asked if there was anyone else who wished to address the commission. There being none he called for a motion to close the public session.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to close the public session. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Director's Reports

Baseball & Softball

Softball:

Kathy Paskiewica reported on the Fall Softball program. She said that the season will begin on September 12, 2009 and everything is going smoothly. The Parent's Association will pay for the softballs.

Mr. Coppola said the Fall Softball program is run by the registration fees. The City only lets them use the fields.

Mr. Kichar asked how the tournament went.

Ms. Paskiewicz said Ansonia was highly commended by District 3 for the tournament held at Nelligan Field. There was a problem with the fields however they were flooded with the amount of rain we had but overall everything went very well. There were some changes that had to be made because of the weather and rain and field conditions. Berlin was upset with the fields but overall the other towns commended Ansonia on how well the tournament was run.

She said that District 3 will be giving Ansonia more tournaments in the future. They liked our fields and the way the tournament was conducted.

Baseball

There is no one present this evening for Little League Baseball.

Soccer

Mr. Coppola said that Mr. Velardi will be here later in the evening.

Basketball (Boys & Girls)

Mr. Coppola said he has nothing to report this evening.

Football

Steve Cavanaugh was present.

Mr. Cavanaugh reported that there are 135 boys and 61 girls registered at this time for the AYF Football program. He said if the registration continues this is a 20% increase in three years.

Mr. Cavanaugh said that they are planning a Comedy Fundraiser and he is asking if the City will match this fundraiser dollar for dollar for new equipment. He said they had to order more equipment and they want to have equipment ready when the kids come in to play.

Mr. Cavanaugh said that the signs are a fundraiser and he is requesting permission to allow the Parents to hang the Ad signs at the field in the end zone for home games. He said week 7 of game play Ansonia hosts two teams. They are out of town teams and not in the league.

Mr. Cavanaugh said the Cheer program purchased a sound system for the Armory because they do most of their practicing and events at the Armory. Public Works will mount it.

Mr. Cavanaugh discussed parking at Nolan Field. He said the gate at the top is reserved for Handicap and there are parents and high school kids parking up there. It is getting out of hand and becoming a high traffic area. There is a big concern for the safety of the children. He said it has to be addressed.

Mr. Kichar said that he and Mr. O'Reilly met with Mayor Della Volpe and Mr. O'Reilly is getting stickers made that will allow people up there. The license plate and sticker has to be registered with Chief Hale. The cars will be ticketed if they don't have a sticker.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked if this could be done for this week.

Mr. Kichar said that if they have the information they could get it to the Police Dept. If there is a Friday night game the High School football players and cheerleaders is allowed to park up there. The handicap can park up there.

Mr. Kichar discussed the AYF game schedule for the team. He said that he, Sean Rowley and Jamie Puro discussed the signs. He said AYF is holding a fundraiser for equipment. The jerseys are at maximum capacity and they have to expand inventory.

Mr. Coppola said before the City comes to matching fundraisers the Football Parents group has the registration money and the money from other fundraisers that were held which has to be used first. There is money in the budget also.

Mr. Coppola said that the Commission has to get an idea of what is needed by the Football program. At the end of the season we have money left over we'll put it towards new equipment.

There was discussion on the number of children who registered to participate in the football program and the cheer program. The game schedule is posted on their website.

Mr. Kichar said that Ralph Mann will be fixing the leaks in the field house. There is some equipment that has been ruined.

Mr. Coppola said they need the rosters (children, coaches) and schedules submitted to the Commission.

Mr. Kichar said that he, Sean Rowley and Jamie Puro reviewed them and approved them. He will get them to the secretary.

Mr. Kichar said that Mr. O'Reilly gave a complete roster of everyone involved in the program.

Reports: Donna Lindgren, ANC Dir.

Donna Lindgren was present.

Ms. Lindgren gave everyone a copy of her report. She also stated she mailed copies to the members.

She reviewed the report with the Commission. The Western Orienteering Club will use the large pavilion and soccer field on 5/1/2010. She said she is requesting the use of the soccer field early so that no games will be scheduled. She asked Recreation Commission to authorize the use of the field on Saturday 5/8/2010.

Mr. Coppola said there is nothing scheduled for 5/8/09 at this time so they can have the field.

Chairman Smith asked what Orienteering is.

Ms. Lindgren explained the event to Chairman Smith.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to approve the Orienteering Club request to use the Soccer field and the ANC pavilion on Saturday, May 8, 2010. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Ms. Lindgren thanked the Commission for their support. She just returned from the ANKA Conference (8/25 through 8/28). She said they benefited from the conference.

Ms. Lindgren said the Redwing Pond house is vacant. She would like to open a Nature Base Pre-School in the Fall of 2010. The Friends of the Nature Center are holding fundraiser for this. The Fundraiser Dinner will be 9/12/09 at \$60 a ticket.

Ms. Lindgren discussed the SCRA Water Shed Fund. She is looking for a grant request to teach about watersheds. She said she would like to do that and hopefully get grant money through the City's Grant Writers for these programs.

Ms. Williams made a motion to support Ms. Lindgren in her effort to get a grant for to teach about the watersheds. Mr. Kichar seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Ms. Lindgren said she is working on the Annual Report and will give the Commission a copy.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to accept Ms. Lindgren's report. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Public Session – Re-opened

Mr. Kichar made a motion to re-open the Public Session to allow Scott Nihill and Paul Velardi to speak. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Nihill said he is asking for permission to allow the Ansonia Gridiron Club to hang up Vendor signs along the fence for the football season for advertising because these vendors have contributed to the AHS Athletic programs.

Mr. Kichar said that the AYF program asked to hang up signs during their home games. He said as long as the AHS signs don't interfere with the AYF signs.

Mr. Kichar moved to close the public session. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Soccer

Mr. Paul Velardi is present.

Mr. Velardi said that the Spring season went well. They had to cancel games because of weather but all games were made up. They have recovered all equipment. There were complaints that there was soccer games played on Mother's Day. This year they will skip the games on Mother's Day.

Mr. Velardi said the Youth 14 Boys and Girls teams were undefeated. This was a banner year for Ansonia.

Mr. Velardi said Fall registration closed. Final Date was 8/11/09. There are 184 registered vs. 189 from last year. There is \$17,680 registration fees collected this year. \$18,589 last year. \$150 registration fee.

He said there is a co-ed youth 14 team this season. The Fall season is from 9/5/09 to 11/15/09. The fields are OK and he has spoken with Mike Schryver.

Mr. Velardi said he held a coaches meeting. The uniforms are on order and expected in shortly. The Financial Statement starting balance is \$17,680.

Mr. Velardi said the count is down for boys and girls – they are in their teen years. He is hopeful the news articles will help with registration. Ansonia is very competitive with soccer.

Mr. Kichar said Ansonia's Travel Team does great. He asked Mr. Velardi what contributes to this success – coaches. Clinics??

Mr. Velardi said they haven't spent much on clinics. Ansonia has a large percentage of Europeans with a lot of soccer talent. We've had really good coaches – they have good coaching skills and are very collaborative. The program is supported by High School coach Jerry Labriola who has been very helpful.

Mr. Kichar said the same thing happened with the Youth Football program and the high school.

Mr. Velardi apologized for arriving late to the meeting.

Mr. Kichar said the Commission understands that he was attending a CT Soccer meeting. He asked Mr. Velardi if there was someone else who could attend the Recreation meeting for him. He suggested that the report can be faxed in to the Mayor's office and given to the secretary.

Mr. Coppola said that Mr. Velardi will take care of it.

Mr. Kichar said that someone or a Financial Report has to be here every month.

Mr. Velardi requested the use of ANC fields for practice Monday through Friday from 5:00 p.m. to sundown to the end of the season on 11/15/09. The games are played at Emmett O'Brien field.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to accept Mr. Velardi's report as presented. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Reports: Jeff Coppola, Recreation Director

Mr. Jeff Coppola was present.

Mr. Coppola said there was an issue with the late start at the practice field at Nolan Field. Someone put something else in there.

Mr. Kichar asked who stopped it.

Mr. Coppola said Corporation Counsel.

Mr. Coppola said he is working with Easy Travel (Rosemarie Spatafore) on doing the trips. He asked if the commission can vote to give him permission to book a trip he thinks Recreation Commission can sponsor during the month. He said he will then bring it up at the meeting and advise the commission of the trips he booked during the month.

Mr. Kichar asked if these are the same trips that Mr. Cannata runs.

Mr. Coppola said he met with Mr. Miller on this and it was the best way to run a trip. Easy Travel collects all of the money, books the trip and runs the trip and all we have to do is have our name on the trip – "sponsored by the Recreation Commission".

Mr. Kichar said you are asking the Commission to allow you to OK and run these trips without our OK.

Chairman Smith said it is part of the job.

Mr. Coppola said there is no money coming to the City. Easy Travel collects all of the money.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to allow Mr. Coppola to coordinate trips through Easy Travel between meetings but the Trips must be approved by the Recreation Commission at the next meeting. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Ms. Lindgren said could she call Jeff to run a birding trip, etc.

Mr. Coppola said she should call Rose Spatafore because she runs the trips she just uses our name – Recreation Commission.

Mr. Coppola said the Baltimore Trip was run by Dattco. He had to use the City of Ansonia's credit card for this trip. The fees collected will reimburse the City. He said the money is brought to Mr. Fuller, Finance Dept.

There was a discussion on running trips through Easy Travel and through Dattco.

Mr. Kichar questioned if this was more efficient to do it this way.

Mr. Coppola said that our name is out there and we are not responsible for anything.

Mr. Coppola said that Mr. Miller send a letter requesting a meeting. He said the Commission can discuss this later.

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

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Kichar made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes of the last meeting. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Approval of Bills

Mr. Coppola said that little League hasn't ordered their uniforms yet but the money is encumbered. He said baseball has three concession stands with enough money to purchase the uniforms. They should receive permission to use the money for what they need for Little League and Basketball.

Mr. Kichar said why is Little League is getting money. The President has refused to come to the meetings. There is sponsorship money not accounted for.

Mr. Coppola suggested a Special Meeting with the Little League Board to discuss these matters.

Mr. Kichar said no Fall Baseball until it is resolved.

Mr. Coppola said that Mr. Sells said there are no schedules yet.

Mr. Kichar said no fields for Fall Baseball until we receive what we have been asking for. He said he met with Rich Bshara and he agreed no fields if the financial reports aren't presented and they are not doing what they are supposed to do. Mr. Sells is running the Concession Stand and he is not supposed to.

Mr. Coppola said that he will try to contact Mr. Sells tomorrow on this.

Mr. Schryver said the girls program has been in contact and they are all set.

Mr. Kichar asked how kids are practicing at our fields.

Mr. Coppola said they should not be practicing on the field.

Mr. Kichar asked who is giving them permission to use the fields. He said the group is saying the girls can do it why can't we do it.

Mr. Kichar asked Mr. Coppola for the bills that should be paid.

Mr. Coppola said if you give me the OK to use the encumbered money I can pay the bill.

Mr. Kichar said if there is a few thousand dollars left over we can use it for the practice field.

Mr. Coppola said you can only use the funds for what they are in the budget for. Money can only be spent for that specific program. You can't use baseball funds for the soccer program.

Chairman Smith asked what happens to the funds that are left over.

Mr. Coppola said it drops to the bottom.

Correspondence

1. Rev Thich Minh Duc, Chairman The Phuoc Long Buddhist Temple of CT, Inc. Request to use the parking lot at the Armory on Sunday, 9/18/09 for their grand opening.

There was discussion on allowing other Groups to use the parking lot at the Armory. It was decided that the Buddhist group could use the parking lot as long as it didn't interfere with the Assumption Church Mass schedule because they use the lot and the street for parking.

The letter requests different dates – September 18, 2009 is not a Sunday. They are not consistent and the commission is not clear as to when they are holding their Grand Opening.

Ms. Williams made a motion to deny the request because the Dates and Times are inconsistent with the calendar. Mr. Kichar seconded. All in favor, so carried.

2. Luba Soldra, Athletic Director AHS Ansonia Athletics, Request to use Nolan Field for Fall 2009 season from 8/15/09 through 12/15/09 for practice and games.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to accept and approve the dates submitted by Ms. Soldra for the AHS program with the condition that any change made to the schedule must be approved by Rec. Director Jeff Coppola. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

3. Joseph Miller Jr., Memo requesting a meeting with the Commission.

Chairman Smith said this memo will be discussed later in the meeting.

4. Sharon Toscano request to use the Armory for Group Exercise program two night a week Monday and Thursday 6 to 7 p.m. for 8 classes 4 weeks. 2 classes per week. Charge \$40 for 4 week class.

Mr. Kichar said that there is no time available in the Armory for this activity. The Cheer groups are using the Armory.

Mr. Coppola said that the Armory times are full. The Cheer program uses the Armory all week for their practice session.

Chairman Smith asked if the group was a non-profit group.

Mr. Coppola said no.

There was discussion on the use of the Armory for non-profit vs. profit.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to deny the request by Sharon Toscano for use of the Armory for Group Exercise classes because there is no room in the schedule at this time per Mr. Coppola. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

5. Craig Behun request to use the Armory for Men's Adult Basketball program on Sunday nights from October through the end of December.

Chairman Smith said the floor in the Armory is not good. He said he thought the Commission was limiting the use of the Armory to save the floor. Will the use by this basketball program cause more damage to the floor and ruin it.

Mr. Kichar asked the time they would be using the Armory.

Mr. Coppola said between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Sunday nights.

There was discussion.

Mr. Puro made a motion to allow Craig Behun/ Men's Adult Basketball program to use the Armory on Sunday nights from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. from October 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Chairman Smith asked who is liable if there are injuries.

Mr. Coppola said that Corporation Counsel will write up something for a waiver for them to use.

Chairman Smith is concerned should someone get hurt playing in the Armory with the condition of the floor.

There was discussion on the condition of the floor.

Mr. Kichar said that they have to provide a Financial Statement to the Commission.

Mr. Coppola said that they use their funds to pay for the referees, the time clock attendant and shirts.

6. Amelia Butler, Ansonia Cheer Coordinator requesting the use of the Armory for the AYF Cheer program from Monday through Friday from 5:15 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. beginning the week of Sept. 6th.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to accept the request and approve the request for the use of the Armory by the AYF Cheer program. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

7. Verbal request by Dominic Valenti, CT Flag Football to use a field.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to allow Mr. Valenti, CT Flag Football to use the field as long as the field is available and proper insurance certificate has been received and a written letter is received requesting to use the field. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Kichar said the Commission doesn't want a fee for the use of the field however they could make a donation to the concession stand for something.

Mr. Valenti said he will make a \$300 donation for hot dogs.

Mr. Maynard said the commission should go up there and meet with the parents and Mr. Valenti can present them with a check.

8. Verbal request by Scott Nihill, Ansonia Gridiron Club to post signs at the end zone by AYF Football during the home games.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to approve the request by the Ansonia Gridiron Club to post signs at the end zone during the Football Games and they must remove the signs after the game. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

9. AYF Game Schedule and Rosters for Coaches and Participants

Mr. Kichar said that there was a meeting this summer in July with the Football Board regarding the approval of the coaches and game schedule. He said he, Sean Rowley and Jamie Puro met with Tim O'Reilly and his Board to discuss and approve the coaches and schedules because there was no July meeting.

Mr. Kichar made a motion to approve the following for the AYF football program:

1. AYF Game schedule
2. Coaches
3. Roster
4. One game at Ansonia with two out of town teams.

Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Any other business to come before the Commission

Mr. Coppola said that there are concerns with the registration money being held by the Parent's Group and not turned into the City as income. The commission discussed the registration money and how to handle it. He is suggesting that the Commission hold a Special Meeting to discuss this and a restructure of the programs. He asked that Kevin Blake, Corporation Counsel be present.

Mr. Kichar said he is requesting that Rich Bshara is invited also.

Chairman Smith said that it is required that the money collected for registration must be turned into the City and deposited into the line item. He asked why this isn't being done.

Mr. Coppola said that if the City takes all the programs money and they have no money for daily operations. If the City doesn't take the registration money and gives them a stipend they can run their own program and provide a financial statement to the Commission.

Chairman Smith said the registration money is to be turned over to the City from each program and put into the line item. The line item will pay the expenses.

Discussion on registration money, bids for uniforms, supplies, etc. continued.

Chairman Smith said all purchases should go through Mr. Coppola.

Mr. Coppola said at last month's meeting we gave football and soccer permission to keep their registration fees and pay their expenses.

Chairman Smith said they are not supposed to keep the registration fee. It goes to the City.

Mr. Kichar said that Recreation Commission never had the registration money in the past. Let the Football Board keep the money and spend it for what they need.

Mr. Coppola said they need it for their daily operation.

Chairman Smith asked Mr. Coppola if he will give a Financial Report every month for football.

Executive Session (if needed)

Ms. Williams made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:00 p.m. to discuss Little League. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Ms. Williams made a motion to reconvene to the regular session at 9:30 p.m. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Puro made a motion to hold a Special Meeting on Wednesday, September 16, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss Little League and invite Mr. Ron Sells and Mr. Darwin Elias. Ms. Williams seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Adjourn

Ms. Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m. Mr. Puro seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Lynn Flaherty
Secretary

