



City of Ansonia

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Ansonia, Connecticut 06401

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ANSONIA RECREATION COMMISSION

January 5, 2016

Regular Meeting

Present: Al Smith, Chairman
Jeff Devine – left meeting at 6:40 p.m.
Anne Lynch
Steve Sobolisky
Paul Velardi

Absent: Michael Cratty

Others Present: Jeff Coppola, Recreation Director- arrived 6:25 p.m.
Alison Rublemann, ANC Director
Matt Edo, 6th Ward Alderman

The Regular Meeting of the Ansonia Recreation Commission was called to order by Chairman Smith at 6:10 p.m.

All present rose and Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

The secretary called the roll and there was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Velardi made a motion to accept as written the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 8, 2015. Mr. Sobolewski seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Rec 010516

Public Session

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

Brad Zealor said the proposal for football and cheer will be presented with the Football Report.

Colleen Rondon asked if all of the Recreation Directors could receive a copy of the Robert's Rules Amended so they will be able to follow the same rules the Recreation Commission follows for their meetings.

Alderman Edo stated the amended Robert's Rules of Order are on line and the Mayor's office has a copy of them.

Ms. Lynch stated she has the e-mail addresses for the Directors. She will give them to the secretary.

Chairman Smith asked if there was anyone else who wished to address the Commission. There was no one.

Ms. Lynch made a motion to close the Public Session. Mr. Velardi seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Reports: Alison Rublemann, ANC Director

Alison Rublemann was present.

The Commissioners received her monthly report. (copy on file in the Town Clerk's office)

Ms. Rublemann reviewed her monthly report with the Commission members. She said that the Nature Center will be on Channel 8 – Good Morning America this Saturday Jan. 9th at 7:45 a.m. She said she is reviewing all of the grants with Eileen Ehman to bring them to completion. She said Ms. Ehman is trying to finish up the old grants. They are working on the parking lot signage. They have picked the final design for the parking lot. The parking lot will be very nice and will add parking spaces. The Maple Festival is scheduled for March 5th. They are working on the ventilation system grant and they have \$50,000 grant for the Playground.

Mr. Sobolewski asked about the Wildlife Reports that must be filled out.

Ms. Rublemann said the Nature Center takes in wild animals and they hold Federal and State permits to keep live animals at the Nature Center. They have to be logged in and details of their stay are logged and reported to the Wildlife Service and the State DEEP.

Mr. Sobolewski asked about stocking the Nature Center pond with fish.

Ms. Rublemann said that they are working on something with Dave Connolly and the DEEP. The DEEP is in the process of doing an enhancement for the pond. There is not enough money to dredge the whole pond.

Ms. Rublemann said the B&L Engineering firm is helping write the grant for \$60,000 for additional work at the Nature Center. She said the parking lot will be partly paved and part will be Honeycomb which will allow the water to percolate through because there is a wetland area located there. It is a great design and the PWD trucks can plow it. We gained about 90 parking spaces. She said that the Engineering firm will work with the soccer programs during construction of the parking lot.

Mr. Velardi asked about the status of the ventilation system.

Ms. Rublemann said that Eileen Ehman is helping Sheila O'Malley with the grants and she has taken the ANS projects to see them through. She said she is 100% sure they will get done. She said they were going to see if they can change the scope of the work for the grant if they don't want to do the ventilation system. She said maybe they can put some of the money to re-doing the exhibits. These exhibits are from 1976 and should be updated.

Mr. Sobolewski moved to accept the Nature Center report. Ms. Lynch seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Reports: Jeff Coppola, Recreation Director

Mr. Coppola was not present.

Mr. Devine stated Mr. Coppola said he may be a little late this evening.

Mr. Velardi moved to take up Mr. Coppola's report when he arrives at the meeting. Mr. Devine seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Director Reports – Soccer

Mr. Chris Sheehy is not present.

Mr. Velardi presented the Soccer Report for Mr. Sheehy. He stated Mr. Sheehy had a previous engagement and could not be present this evening.

Mr. Velardi said that Spring Registration will be held on January 26 and January 27 at the Armory from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Mr. Sheehy worked out the dates and times with Mr. Coppola. The balance in the account is \$5,289.60. The Financial reports are included in the

packet submitted. Mr. Sheehy said he is waiting for Mr. Coppola to pay the CT. Jr. Soccer Assn. Invoice in the amount of \$1366.00. CJSA called and advised Mr. Sheehy that Ansonia's invoice has not been paid.

Mr. Coppola stated that the CJSA invoice has been paid. He said he will check tomorrow with Finance to verify payment.

Ms. Lynch asked whether Mr. Sheehy will stay through the Spring season.

Mr. Velardi said that he will stay until someone new takes over. Hopefully there will be someone in the Spring.

Alderman Edo said he spoke with Mr. Sheehy and that there was someone interested in taking over the Soccer program. He said Mr. Sheehy will speak with Recreation on this. He said that there is another person whom may be interested also. Mr. Sheehy will transition the program to the new director.

Mr. Sobolewski made a motion to accept the soccer report as given. Ms. Lynch seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Reports: Jeff Coppola, Recreation Director

Mr. Coppola came into the meeting at this time.

Mr. Coppola said the Basketball program is underway. The 3rd and 4th graders will play at Irving School on Wednesday and at Mead School on Friday and the 5th and 6th graders will play at Mead School on Monday and Wednesday and Irving School on Friday.

Mr. Coppola said he is in the process of getting quotes for the Little League Field and the Varsity Field and when they are ready he will bring them to the Mayor. He said the Little League field at Nolan Field will be the first field done.

Mr. Velardi asked the scope of work to be done.

Mr. Coppola said the entire field must be re-done. They will have to break it down and re-do it. He said he will bring the quote to the Aldermen and then it will have to go out to bid.

Ms. Lynch asked if Ms. O'Malley can find a grant for this work.

Mr. Coppola said he has been working with Ms. O'Malley on the Emmett O'Brien turf and the shared use of the fields. Hopefully Ansonia can play some football games at Emmett. Repr. Gentile is helping with that project also.

Ms. Lynch asked about the backstops at the Little League fields.

Mr. Coppola said they are almost finished. Teodosio & Sons is doing most of the work.

Alderman Edo said they quoted out the block wall and the manufacturer send the wrong block so they are waiting for new blocks to be delivered. It was a manufacturer mistake.

Mr. Coppola said the Walking Program will begin again in the Armory. The skating rink will be installed at Nolan Field (outfield) in February for skating. They are looking at having skating with the lights on Friday and Saturday nights. There are some details that have to be worked out, i.e. Police, outdoor toilets, etc.

Chairman Smith asked the time for the skating.

Mr. Coppola said 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. with the lights and on Sunday afternoons.

Ms. Lynch suggested that Mr. Coppola get this information out to the public so the people will know they can use the skating rink.

Ms. Rublemann stated that there are "No Skating" signs at the ANC pond. They have been there for 2 years and she doesn't understand why they are there. She said she used to check the ice for safety and people used the pond for ice skating.

Alderman Edo said there are DEEP guidelines on safe ice. He said he will check and see why the no skating signs were put up at the Nature Center.

There was discussion on the thickness of ice and no skating.

Mr. Devine asked if there is an update on the securing of the fields with locks since the transition at Public Works.

Mr. Coppola will check with Public Works on the locks.

There was discussion on the Ordnances for no dogs in the parks and no smoking in public parks.

Mr. Coppola said he spoke to Corporation Counsel Marini and he is looking into them.

Alderman Edo said at the last Board of Aldermen meeting, Chief Hale said he will get the "no smoking" signs put up at the fields and parks. He said they are looking at a smoke free zone at all of the parks but the City has to follow the rules from the State.

Ms. Lynch made a motion to accept Mr. Coppola's report. Mr. Sobolewski seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Director Reports – Baseball & Softball

Colleen Rondon, President of the Little League Executive Board was present.

Ms. Rondon said that she will have the financials ready for the next meeting. She said that they have not collected any money and there were very little expenses. Registration begins Saturday January 9th. They have a new on-line system so people can register on-line. Chris Saddler will preview the new system to make sure it is ready. She will register her children before the system is launched to make sure all systems are working properly. The on-line registration should be operating by the end of the week. There will be two morning dates and two evening dates for registration at the Armory. The winter clinics begin in February at the Armory. She will prepare a schedule with Mr. Zealor for the commission.

Ms. Rondon asked that she be kept updated on the condition of the fields. She said Little League would like to begin practice by the end of March pending field conditions.

Mr. Coppola said he would keep her updated. He said Colony field is clay and rolled out. Nolan needs a lot more work and he is not sure on Nelligan Field. He asked if the games begin the second week of April.

Ms. Rondon said if they are delayed the season will run until August and they have Fall baseball beginning.

Mr. Coppola said they wouldn't do anything without contacting Ms. Rondon regarding the fields.

Mr. Velardi asked if this is the first time they are accepting credit card payments.

Ms. Rondon said in the past on-line only. Cash, check or money order in person. They are now accepting credit cards in person, checks, money orders and NO CASH. She said by the end of a couple of hours of collecting cash there is a lot of money. It is safer to use checks, money orders or credit cards.

There was discussion on the charge for the credit card machine and the on-line credit card service.

Ms. Rondon said that Little League allows out of town children that go to school in Ansonia to register in Ansonia Little League. She is making the Commission aware should someone come to them and say there are out of town children playing in the Little League program it is because they allow them to play if they go to school in Ansonia. This practice began last year.

Mr. Velardi asked if this is permissible or requirement of Little League.

Mr. Zealor said they don't know if Little League makes it a requirement.

Ms. Rondon said Little League wanted to allow kids to play with their friends from school.

Mr. Velardi asked if this permissible or required that you accept them. He asked that they check this for Little League rules and report back to the commission.

Mr. Zealor said it may be required. If a child lives in Seymour and goes to Assumption School in Ansonia he is allowed to play Ansonia Little League.

Mr. Sobolewski said that may be according to Little League but it is not allowed in our town. If our town doesn't allow out of town children to play in our programs they can't play. If the parent gets a waiver from the Board they can play.

Mr. Velardi said Ansonia Recreation doesn't permit out of town people to play in our programs.

Discussion on whether the Little League statement is allowable or permissible. Can Little League make it mandatory because this is a conflict between our rules and their rules?

Mr. Velardi asked does their allowance of out of town players attending schools in the town – does this make it an allowance or requirement. If it is a requirement Little League has to let Ansonia Recreation know because there has to be a request for exemption to allow them to play in our program.

Chairman Smith said the residents of Ansonia pay money for the Recreation teams and we have to look at this carefully. If someone comes in and wants to know why we are paying for Seymour kids we have to be able to answer.

Ms. Rondon said the numbers last year were Ansonia kids playing. She said she only knows of two children who played that were not from Ansonia in the past.

Mr. Zealor said the registration fees are paid to Little League and that is what funds the child in the program.

Mr. Velardi said the City of Ansonia funds Recreation. He asked Ms. Rondon to report back on the Little League ruling regarding children from out of town and if it is a requirement, mandatory or allowable or how it is stipulated by them.

Ms. Rondon said she would get that information for Mr. Velardi for the next meeting.

Mr. Velardi made a motion to accept the baseball/softball report as presented. Mr. Sobolewski seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Director Reports – Basketball

Mr. Coppola said he covered basketball in his report.

Director Reports – Football

Mr. Brad Zealor, AYF President and Mr. Keith Maynard were present.

Mr. Maynard said there have been many meetings with the different leagues to determine which league would be most beneficial to the Ansonia football program. He said the Shoreline conference is affiliated with AYF. There was good information received at last night's meeting with them but the Executive Board hasn't decided on what league/program they will join.

Brian stated he contacted Pop Warner and the North conference has 3 teams committed and the South conference has 2 teams committed. He will set up a meeting with them.

Mr. Maynard said Colonial is not an option. They discussed going into an Independent League but that is "off the fence" now. At Nationals in Florida, Brad Zealor spoke to a representative and they are coming up to Connecticut for a meeting with us. If we go Independent we will not have a Charter. There are 6 independent towns interested. Brad and Keith had no contact with the 6 towns. These towns have moved on from Ansonia because we offer 5 teams and everyone one else has less than 5 teams.

Mr. Sobolewski said Shoreline has 18 teams and they have a full schedule or two full schedules. They break it down to teams for competition. He said in his opinion Shoreline has everything Ansonia is looking for in a league. Pop Warner is looking for a pilot program and with the Independent program they don't have a full schedule. Shoreline with 18 teams is the biggest league in the State which constitutes a lot of work. There are competitive games. There are one or two things on setting up the schedule that have to get clarification. He said they are trying to get our home games so they are played in the same week on the same day. He said his opinion is it is the best option for Ansonia.

Mr. Maynard said that Shelton is very happy in the Shoreline league.

Mr. Sobolewski said there are a lot of pros with Shoreline. We are not guaranteed a full schedule with the other leagues.

Mr. Coppola asked if all the home games will be the same week.

Mr. Maynard said there are 2 teams home and 2 teams away.

Brian said the league is a Sunday league.

Mr. Maynard said they are ranked by team whether they are home or away. They are trying to get the schedule so we can have everyone home at the time but it is difficult.

Mr. Sobolewski said he is pretty impressed with the Shoreline operation. They run a tight ship.

Alderman Edo said Shoreline has been around for a long time.

Brian gave a brief history of how Shoreline was formed with the high school coaches.

There was discussion on the Cheer program going into this league. Mr. Sobolewski said they may not vote us in if Cheer doesn't come with us.

Colleen Kiley, representing Cheer, said they cheered under Colonial. She said they are with CT Youth Spirit Conference. She said the girls will cheer at the football games.

Mr. Zealor said he asked Lisa if the girls attend the games will they be able to cheer and he was assured they would be able to cheer.

Mr. Sobolewski said there is a total of 8 games.

Chairman Smith said he wants to be sure Cheer is welcomed at these 8 games.

Mr. Sobolewski said that the girls will be able to cheer at the games. He asked what has to be done to get the process going.

Mr. Coppola said at Shoreline's February meeting they would vote Ansonia into their league.

Mr. Sobolewski said Colonial hasn't had an 8 game schedule.

Ms. Lynch said approve Shoreline by Wednesday and their Board can vote us in at their February meeting.

Mr. Maynard said we haven't ruled out Pop Warner but we want to expedite Shoreline to see if we can get into their league.

Ms. Lynch asked going forward what's next.

Mr. Sobolewski said if we get accepted in February we have to see what is best.

Ms. Lynch said if accepted in Shoreline in February you should put the pros and cons on paper for the parents to see.

Mr. Sobolewski agreed.

Mr. Maynard said they have to accept us.

Chairman Smith said it would be better to discuss this at the next meeting.

Mr. Maynard said he will let the Commission know what happens.

Chairman Smith said it's important to think about the City and the children.

Mr. Zealor discussed separating the Cheer and Football programs. They would revise the existing By-Laws by removing the wording "Cheer" and "Football" from the language. They would be pretty much the same by-laws.

Mr. Velardi said both organizations are under the same Ansonia Executive Board of Directors. The proposal is to completely separate each Board with separate Board members, separate budgets, etc.

Ms. Kiley said the Cheer program is under the CT. Youth Spirit Conference which is under AYF.

Mr. Velardi said so each Executive Board will be separate and then all of the committees will be separate.

Mr. Zealor said yes. He said that the program received \$4500 from the Concession Stand and Fred Williams.

Mr. Zealor said the proposal is set and there is a lot of work that has to be done to separate the programs. The Executive Board would like to continue in office until the separation is complete and then hold a general election. This would enable them to separate everything, get the new handbooks, new accounts, set up the new websites, get the 501K's set up and get all of the accounting done before they turn everything over to each new group. The Board of Directors is willing to get this work done for both programs – Keith Maynard for Football and Brad Zealor for Cheer. The present Board of Directors will serve both.

A discussion followed on the existing Executive Board of Directors remaining in office until all is complete and final with the separation of the two programs. Football will not know until February whether they have been voted into the Shoreline League. They may be able to have elections sometime in February. Cheer picks their own Board and Football picks their own Board by a public election.

Discussion on the election of a new Board in February. Discussion on how the AYF&C elections are defined. Recreation approves their Charter and their rules and if they propose a deviation from the rules, they can make an amendment and Recreation can approve the amendment after their Executive Board approves it. Ms. Rondon gave a brief explanation on how the Little League Constitution holds their elections for the Executive Board. She stated that to be considered a member in good standing and be able to vote or hold office you have to be on the approved volunteer list as of August of that year.

Discussion on who is allowed to vote in the election of the Executive Board of Directors – parents, volunteers, anyone from the public. Ms. Lynch suggested they look at what the other towns do for their election of officers and Executive Board.

Colleen Kiley, Cheer Coordinator stated both teams that went to Nationals in Florida placed 1st. She said the banquet will be held on January 17th at Villa Bianca. The cost is \$25 ticket. The players and coaches are free. There are two tickets per child and there is a waiting list.

Mr. Zealor said the Board of Directors will not be dissolved.

Mr. Velardi said the Board of Directors remains in tack. The Board of Directors for both will remain simultaneously and all of the people presently in the program will remain. Splitting of the Football and Cheer will not happen until the next election.

Mr. Sobolewski made a motion to table the separation of the Football and Cheer program and keeping the Board of Directors the same until the Football program is settled. No second.

Discussion on the voting for each of these programs. There was discussion on appointing an Executive Board until elections are held. Mr. Velardi stated he is not comfortable appointing an Executive Board. Separate the Cheer and Football and they will remain under one Executive Board until elections. The current Board will continue to make the decisions as in the past until everything is set up and operational.

Mr. Sobolewski said it has to be set up. There are two options: 1 – operate simultaneously for 1 to 2 months or 2 – operate simultaneously for one year. There is not an option were Recreation picks the officers.

Ms. Lynch said in February request an extension and request to hold elections in April.

Discussion continued on their rules regarding elections. Mr. Sobolewski suggested the Executive Board is left as is until everything is decided and defined. The same people are on the Executive Board and they will be able to make decisions for both Cheer and Football.

Mr. Coppola said there are pros and cons to all of this.

Alderman Edo said amend the by-laws to vote for officers in February.

Mr. Velardi made a motion to separate the Cheer and Football programs. No second.

Discussion.

Alderman Edo said there is a motion to separate.

Ms. Lynch said they should rewrite their proposal to separate the Cheer and Football. It should be clarified.

Mr. Velardi said separate the organization tonight and have elections whenever they decide to hold elections.

Mr. Sobolewski said they should bring an amendment posting elections for both organizations after the separation.

Chairman Smith said there will be two separate Executive Boards – one for Cheer and one for Football.

Mr. Coppola said you have to do it legally to vote how long the current Executive Board will stay together.

Alderman Edo said they should come in with verbiage for the Recreation Commission to approve an interim Board – one for Cheer and one for Football with the understanding there will be a public election date.

Discussion.

Alderman Edo said next month they will have an interim Board for approval.

Mr. Velardi made a motion that the Ansonia Football and Cheer will come to the February Recreation Commission meeting with a proposal to separate football and cheer organizations that will include a request for approval of an interim Board of Directors for each organization and postponing each organizations elections. Additionally, modifications to their election rules will also be proposed. Mr. Sobolewski seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Zealor requested to withdraw the proposal brought forth this evening to separate the Football and Cheer that was submitted to the Recreation Commission.

Ms. Lynch made a motion to accept the withdrawal of the proposal to separate Football and Cheer submitted this evening by Mr. Zealor. Mr. Velardi seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Mr. Sobolewski moved to accept the Football & Cheer report as presented. Mr. Velardi seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Approval of Bills

Mr. Coppola presented the following bills for payment:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. City Stitchers: Basketball Shirts: | \$842.00 |
| 2. CT.Jr.SoccerAssn: | \$1366 |

Mr. Velardi made a motion to pay the bills presented. Mr. Sobolewski seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Rec 010516

Correspondence

None

Executive Session

None

Any other business to come before the commission

None

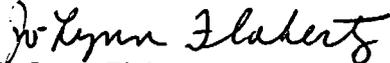
February Meeting

The February meeting will be held on Monday, February 1, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjourn

Ms. Lynch made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Mr. Sobolewski seconded. All in favor, so carried.

Respectfully submitted,


Jo-Lynn Flaherty
Secretary