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FEB 12 2020
Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
January 13, 2020

Commissioners Present: Jane DeBarbieri, Scott LaBombard, Douglas Morash, Vincent Olinski, Michael Tirrell, Sara Unger and Robert Veronesi

Commissioner Absent: Kenneth Magarian

Staff: David Billips, Director, Scott Hathaway, Deputy Supt. and Peggy Goralczyk, Head Clerk

City Councilor: Cindy Harris

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. with Michael Tirrell, Pro-Tempore Chair presiding asking if anyone was taping or recording the meeting to state their name and address.

Motion made by Douglas Morash to accept the minutes of December 9, 2019 motion seconded by Robert Veronesi. All in favor.

Motion passed

Public Participation: William Babinski and Mike Raposa

City Council Communication:

Cindy Harris stopped in to inform commissioners are doing a great job!

Business or Items for Discussion:

Michael Tirrell welcomed William Babinski, Westfield Horseshoe Club President who is here tonight requesting a renewal permit for Municipal Playground Horseshoe area. William said this is their 20th year, he is requesting Mondays from April 13 through September 14 and the times are 5:30 to 9:30 pm (Permit attached)

Michael Tirrell asked how many teams he has in the league this year and William Babinski responded 20 teams at the beginning of the season, and then we end up with 14 teams. He invited the commissioners and everyone in the room to join the horseshoe leagues he would love to have more players.

Motion made by Scott LaBombard motion seconded by Vincent Olinski to approve Municipal permit for William Babinski dates, times as presented for the Westfield horseshoe league. Vote as follows: Sara yes, Jane yes, Vincent yes, Michael yes, Douglas yes, Scott yes, Robert yes. All in favor.

Motion passed.

Michael Tirrell thanked William Babinski for attending and wished him luck in the upcoming horseshoe league season.

Michael Tirrell welcomed Mike Raposa, Westfield Little League Vice President and Scott LaBombard, President. Mike Raposa went over the renewal permits for Westfield little league areas ballfields at Cross Street, Papermill, Sadie Knox and Hampton Ponds playgrounds. Times and dates listed from March 1 through October and said this is Westfield Little League's 70th year were it started in 1950. He went over a few issues at Sadie Knox playground and believes everything has been resolved.

Scott LaBombard, President said the little leagues goals are to get more children involved in playing ball to improve their skills and talents that will transition them into real life. He said that they would like to reinstate the carnival and bring it back on opening day April 18. We will have a few vendors, food, games and a parade. He brought up the league is looking into buying a new scoreboard at Sadie Knox playground and have asked Westfield Gas and Electric if they will install it.

Sara Unger suggested we add the scoreboard sign request on the February agenda.

Motion made by Douglas Morash to accept Westfield Little League permits times and dates as presented. Motion seconded by Robert Veronesi. Vote as follows: Sara yes, Jane yes, Vincent yes, Michael yes, Douglas yes, Robert yes, Scott Abstain. All in favor.
Motion passed.

Michael Tirrell thanked Westfield Little League reps for their update and will see them next month.

Michael Tirrell went over the seasonal rates from the sub-committee meeting held by members Scott LaBombard, Douglas Morash, Jane DeBarbieri and himself. He explained the commission has the authority to set rates to seasonal staff each year and went over the states increases. He explained they did research on other communities and this is what the subcommittee came up with to support and make recommendations to seasonal increases. He asked David Billips if the city account has funds to city staff until June. David Billips said he put extra money in the budget and it should be fine. Michael Tirrell went over the charts presented by the subcommittee who all agreed on the following: Day Camp Leaders (attached) \$12.75-\$13.25 Day Camp Directors \$13.75- \$15.75 (chart attached) Playground Leaders \$12.75-\$13.25 and Playground Directors \$13.25 -\$ 13.50. (Attached)

Michael Tirrell said subcommittee members reviewed positions that have not been increased in a few years. He went over positions and recommendations for 2020, Adult Supervisor \$15.00 hr. Field Hockey \$16.00, Pickle Ball Instructor new position \$15.00 hr., Tennis Instructor \$ 22.00 hr. Other seasonal positions increase recommendations Baseball Supervisor, Basketball Supervisor and Soccer Supervisor from \$12.00 hr. to \$14.00 hr. in 2020. (Chart attached)

Motion made by Robert Veronesi to accept the Sub-Committee seasonal salaries increases and rates for all positions as presented for 2020. (2020 Salary Charts Attached) motion seconded by Vincent Olinski. Vote as follows: Sara yes, Jane yes, Vincent yes, Michael yes, Douglas yes, Robert yes, Scott yes. All in favor.

Motion passed

Michael Tirrell brought up a request for a sign at Whitney Playground, in memory of Jose Torres and asked David Billips and Scott Hathaway who requested them. David Billips responded that Peter Miller received a call from Dan Torres who is the brother of Jose Torres and requested if we could install signage at the playground. He asked Peggy Goralczyk to research minutes to see if commissioners approved signage.

Sara Unger said possibly we did vote or said we would install a sign and time has passed by and it was overlooked. Michael Tirrell handed around pictures to commissioners of signs one is an example of a nameplate that could be mounted on the playground equipment and another one is a wooden higher structure sign with wooden beams.

Scott Hathaway suggested from the pictures that we use the smaller plaque and mount it on the playground equipment itself and his concern for the larger wooden sign would be damaged, or vandalized.

Vincent Olinski brought up the signage the commissioners voted on in all parks. Sara Unger responded that we voted on a big rock or boulder with the plaque mounted on it. She said this would make it consistent with the other parks that we have with signage. We have benches with a small plaque she does not have a problem mounting a sign on the playground equipment. However, the boulder with gold plate is what we prefer.

Robert Veronesi asked why the brother could not attend the commission meeting if he wanted to place a sign at Whitney playground, and most people have to attend the commission meeting for approval.

David Billips said we will contact Peter Miller to invite him to the Feb, meeting or get his contact information and we can ask him to attend the February commission meeting.

Sara suggested the signage be tabled until next month to see if the brother can attend.

Motion made by Sara Unger to table the signage request at Whitney in honor of Jose Torres until next month. Motion seconded by Scott LaBombard. Vote as follows: Sara yes, Jane yes, Vincent yes, Michael yes, Douglas yes, Robert yes, Scott yes. All in favor.
Motion passed

David Billips went over his presentation of retirement letter next October. (Attached) He said he had the opportunity to work with some great board members and staff over his years. He is putting together goals and transition them in place. One goal is a parking lot at Sadie Knox that is needed, all the fields have come a long way and are in good shape. He has talked to the Mayor requesting additional maintenance staff to take care of the of parks/playgrounds because his concern is the bike path when completed will most likely follow under the parks and recreation dept. and there is not enough employees to handle all the additional maintenance work. His goal is to have a plan in place for when he is replaced. He applauded the commissioners and asks them if they need anything while he is going through the transition to let him know. He went into details on the next step of replacing his position due to he is the department head to several departments and hopes to be part of the search committee. He said

Fran Cain serves as the assistant department head to the same departments. David Billips said he is excited about retiring next fall with mixed emotions.

Vincent Olinski praised David Billips saying it has been a pleasure working with you as a commissioner and he is very impressed with his professionalism over the years and thanked him for everything he has done for the commissioners and department.

Michael Tirrell said to David Billips that he is upset to see him retire so soon and appreciates everything you have done for the commission and he will be missed. Commissioners thanked him as well and reminded him he has several months left.

Monthly Staff Report

Schedule of bills: Designated Board members -Robert Veronesi and Vincent Olinski (Attached)

Vincent Olinski brought up fees in the brochure and who has the authority to set rates and questioned if board members ever worked on this. Peggy Goralczyk said she does not remember the commissioners approving brochure fees and explained it used to be under the dept. head. Vincent thought that Jim Blascak might be adding prices in the brochure and conversation came up to who has the authority or where does the dept. come up with a fee to charge. He is also requesting reports to each program and suggested to see if Jim Blascak can bring to each meeting as his report.

Peggy Goralczyk said some programs have a contract split like AJ stables for the horseback riding camps. Other vendors we have a few that are a 70/30 split.

David Billips said that he would check with the Law department, he believes that the department can establish the fees for the program.

Scott Hathaway said he suggested to increase the departments programs by five dollars for programs the departments run.

Scott LaBombard the pickle ball liaison brought up that Nancy Stolpinski will be attending the February commission meeting for permit approval of the pickle ball courts and tournament. He also said that they be willing to repaint the tennis courts and get a quote and possibly pay for it. The commissioner said that Nancy could bring this up next month at the next commission meeting. He also brought up the pickle ball group wanted new fences and are willing to donate funds. He informed commissioners she had a meeting with Scott Hathaway a month ago.

Scott Hathaway reminded Scott LaBombard the liaison to have Nancy return the shed and bathroom key that she signed out for last year. Our policy is if you borrow a key and sign out for it, you need to return them at the end of the permit season. He asked commissioners if we should continue to them to play during the winter months or shut it down for the winter season.

Scott LaBombard said this past weekend it was in the 60's to 70's and obviously everybody wanted to play pickle ball. He is requesting that they have that option to play during the winter months. He also informed commissioners that they have a quote to refurbish the courts for

\$25,000. He is not sure if a company associated with Nancy Stolpinski may pay for it. They also want to place a small sign to advertise pickle ball hours at the courts.

Sara responded the pickle ball group reps need to attend a commission meeting for approval of all requests presented tonight. Scott LaBombard responded she would attend next month and we will add her to the agenda.

Vincent Olinski's concern was at one time we used to lock the gates all the time especially during the offseason or winter months were nobody could get onto the courts to keep out the vandalism.

Sara Unger said she supports keeping the back tennis courts open to the public to play tennis only. St. Mary's school uses the courts for the high school teams.

Peggy Goralczyk reminded everyone we also have our spring and summer tennis lessons through the dept. and fall lessons. She also said our tennis instructor had problems giving lessons with tape on the courts from the pickle ball players he always had to remind them he was giving lessons for the dept. so they would move off the tennis court.

Jane DeBarbieri said that the courts we use for the dept. tennis during the summer do not interfere with the pickle ball courts. Scott LaBombard said if players are on the pickle ball courts they talked about using line paint similar to field paint on a few tennis courts and not the tape someone used that damage the court last year.

Sara Unger said her concern was the public may want to use the tennis courts, we should keep some of them open, and the line paint might be confusing to tennis players and asked does it wash off well. In addition, with the new courts the public may want to use the pickle ball courts. She is suggesting keeping the tennis courts open and possible one pickle ball court open for the public to use.

Monthly Staff Report:

Scott Hathaway (Attached) Brochure spring/summer prices for parks and recreation programs will be raised by \$5.00 he informed Jim Blascak that our prices are extremely low compared to other parks and recreation departments.

Scott Hathaway explained to commissioners he has started a playground/park monthly maintenance inspection program and that he will be working with Steve Wingate per the request of Fran Cain, Assistant Director who was the drive behind this new system and David Billips, Director who encouraged them. This maintenance system will help monitor all areas on a monthly/weekly schedule.

Scott Hathaway went over details on the gate he wanted to install and close off Whitney playground during the winter, however he had a discussion with the police dept. and they would need to have that area open at all times including during the winter months for emergency entrance and exit. He said the police dept.'s concern was if someone was hurt or needed emergency assistance and we had locked gates or barriers in place the police and ambulance could not get into the area, we have to keep the area open for safety reasons. People also walk the area

around the rail trail and homeless people are a big concern, he went into details over their shelters he has seen. He said the police are aware of the homeless people as they patrol the area.

Scott Hathaway mentioned he is looking into keyless entries to doors so when an employee leave or retire they no longer have access to the doors with the key that everyone has.

Dave Billips said his other departments have keyless entries to their building and it is a good idea because you know who is coming in and going out and he supports this system.

Scott Hathaway is looking into cameras for all parks/ playgrounds in the future to help with vandalism.

David Billips said he would also work with Scott Hathaway on this goal as well because cameras are definitely needed in all of the parks/playgrounds.

Sara brought up signs at Sadie Knox that read enter at own risk. David Billips responded Eversource Company is running lines in that area.

David Billips asked Peggy Goralczyk if Jim Blascak submitted a report for this month and she responded there was no report in the commission box and basketball is the only program currently going on due to winter programs are ending soon.

Motion made by Robert Veronesi motion seconded by Scott LaBombard to adjourn.

The meeting ended at 8:42 p.m.

The next meeting is February 10, 2020.

Documents:

Schedule of bills Attached-Robert Veronesi and Vincent Olinski designated board members.

Staff salary charts

Scott Hathaway report

Permits use of areas

David Billips -Resignation letter to board members

Pictures of sign examples

Reviewed and approved by Vincent Olinski, Secretary of Commission

Summary of comments provided by Peggy Goralczyk, Head Clerk

The meetings ended at 7:43 pm

The next meeting is scheduled February 10, 2020