

**TENAFLY RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES – FEBRUARY 9, 2009**

OATH OF OFFICERS: Mr. Roetman officially swears in Mrs. McDermott as she is re-appointed as a member of the Recreation Commission.

ROLL CALL: Chairman Jerry O'Brien, Vice Chairman Naomi McDermott, Tony Favorito, Peter Fidler, Robert Sabatino, Tim Roetman, Tom Swift, Rich Rodriguez, Council Liaison Nadia LaMastra, Alpine Liaison Jim Schwartz

ABSENT: Susan Van Poznak, Board of Education Liaison Mark Aronson

MINUTES: Rich Rodriguez motions to approve the January 12, 2009 minutes. Mr. Fidler seconds the motion, all in favor and the minutes are approved.

AUDIENCE: Jamie Kraft, 301 Knickerbocker Road, Co-President of TJSL. Mr. O'Brien recognizes Mr. Kraft is here to follow up on an incident reported to the Commission by Alpine Liaison Sapna Jain. When the incident was reported, the Commission was informed a coach was encouraging children to hit each other during a soccer match. Mr. Kraft reports he has followed up with the coach and found out that was not the case. Children may have been hitting each other on the sideline, but it was certainly not encouraged by the coach. He has spoken to several parents on the team and none reported any negative experiences with the players or the coach. Mr. Kraft would like to consider this matter closed. The Commissioners agree to close this issue. Mr. Kraft announces he will be stepping down as Co-President of TJSL; Michael Horbacewicz will be taking his place. Mrs. McDermott thanks Mr. Kraft for his service.

Alan Berenbaum, 7 Forest Road, is the coach of the U9 travel soccer team in which one boy from Closter was placed on this past fall. He has tried to place the child on another club team in the area for the spring, but has had no luck. Everyone else's roster was full. Also, the league in which they participate suspends a player for three games if the player changes teams over the winter. Since there are no visible options for this boy to play elsewhere in the spring, Mr. Berenbaum would like the Commission to make an exemption for him to play on the team this spring.

Andrew Fell, 70 Glenwood Road, is the team manager. He states the children have been playing with the boy from Closter since the fall and there is an emotional attachment between the boys and parents. It would be good to maintain their team chemistry through the spring.

Helene Berenbaum, 7 Forest Road, makes note the commitment to a team is for a full year. Tryouts are held each June. The boy from Closter has no other options at this point in time.

Mr. Roetman asks audience member Jeff Toonkel, Co-President of Travel Soccer if the rules for tryouts have changed for June 2009. Mr. Toonkel states the rules have been amended to read tryouts are for Tenafly kids only. Mr. Swift asks Mr. Toonkel if payment for the fall and spring season is made in one payment or in two payments for the two seasons. Mr. Toonkel informs the Commission payment is accepted twice, once for each season.

Mr. Kraft asks if the children were allowed by Mayor and Council to continue through the spring. Councilwoman LaMastra cites the resolution done by the Council in which the boys from Closter were only permitted through the fall 2008 season.

Kathy Selinka, 93 Columbus Drive, states it will be difficult for her to tell her son the other boy is not allowed to play. It will hurt the team's children who are Tenaflly kids.

Tom Giordano, 12 George Street, asks Mr. Toonkel who invited out-of-town kids to the tryouts. Mr. Toonkel reports the tryouts are posted on the TJSL website as well as the website of the league they are affiliated with. Mr. Toonkel reports many towns face this same issue of kids playing out of their respective home towns.

Mr. Pete Betas, Closter resident, his son is part of the U9 team coached by Mr. Berenbaum. He compliments the program in Tenaflly for being one of the best in the area. He found out about the Tenaflly travel teams from Ashley's Soccer who runs a camp both in Tenaflly through TJSL and in Closter. Mr. Betas states his son tried out in Tenaflly because the teams in Closter are not as competitive. His son is not registered for soccer in Closter. He would like his son to be able to continue in the spring with Tenaflly.

Mr. Arturo Maltese, 2 Glenwood Court, is happy Tenaflly has a great program. His son has been playing two years and enjoys the competition. Mr. Maltese would like the human aspect of this decision to be considered.

With no further comments from the audience regarding travel soccer, Mr. O'Brien thanks everyone for their input and attendance. This item will be considered later in the meeting.

Mr. John Preolo Jr., 153 Riveredge Road, is the new President of Tenaflly Little League. He is in attendance for a preseason meeting with the Commission. Councilwoman LaMastra asks how Little League handles spring tryouts. Mr. Frank Bergmann is also present from TLL. Mr. Bergmann states he is the new travel coordinator. In spring, they will recommend to their players baseball comes first, however players will not be disciplined if they miss time for other activities. Mr. Fidler states the Commission is in favor of supporting the in-season sport first. Mr. Preolo acknowledges baseball will lose kids for one day in June to soccer tryouts. One thing that is changing for this season is the way travel teams are chosen. They are now going with an age format as opposed to grade. This is the way their league works, so they are adjusting accordingly. Mr. Bergmann explains there will be teams from 8U through 14U. Mr. Roetman asks Mr. Preolo if Little League would make coaching forms available on paper since some residents may feel hesitant to release their social security number and drivers' license number online. Mr. Preolo suggests the information is eventually put online to conduct background checks and they collect the same information as TJSL and TYB.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Email from Jamie Kraft regarding youth soccer incident, discussed earlier.
2. Letter from Schwanawede/Hals Engineering regarding Municipal Field restroom, discussed later under Old Business.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Alpine Recreation – Mr. O'Brien asks Mr. Schwartz how they are with baseball and soccer. Mr. Schwartz reports most kids in Alpine participate in Tenafly, some in Cresskill with Little League. There is no further business with Alpine.
2. Board of Education – Mr. O'Brien notes Englewood has turf on their high school field, Tenafly should have the same. Also, the High School Basketball League is great, more sports should be added. The Commissioners suggest high school volleyball.
3. Youth Services – No report.
4. Joint Use – Mr. Favorito reports the wrong tape was used on the floor and mats at this past weekend's Jr. Wrestling meet. Ed Craumer will be following up with a letter of some sort.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Portable toilets will be placed at Stillman School for the girls' softball season. Vince Bennenatti will decide where they will be placed.
2. Egg Hunt is scheduled for April 11 with some new activities.
3. Valentine's Dance will be February 12. 123 participants registered to date.
4. Follow up on February 6 meeting. Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Rodriguez both agree the meeting they attended with Mr. Favorito, Mr. Roetman, Councilwoman LaMastra, Councilman Rouse and Mr. DiGiacomo was successful. The duties and powers the Commission is seeking were well received by the Council representatives. Councilwoman LaMastra suggests the next steps are to draft an ordinance outlining the duties at another meeting. The Commission will then have an opportunity to review the draft prior to the Council's final approval.
5. A copy of the 2008 program fees for Jr. Football, Girls Softball, Travel Basketball and Summer Camp is distributed. Mr. Favorito asks the Commission to approve the fees for this year as is. Mr. Swift motions to approve the same fees for 2009. Mr. Rodriguez seconds the motion, all in favor and the motion is carried.
6. Carol Roux is attending a travel softball meeting tonight along with George Prussin and Al and Monica Zaccario to set schedules for this year's teams.
7. Permit requests from Tenafly Junior Soccer and Tenafly Adult Soccer have come in. The Adult Soccer group is requesting 8-10 a.m. on Saturday mornings in February and March. Mr. Sabatino motions to accept the permit. Mr. Swift seconds the motion, all in favor and the motion is carried. The Junior Soccer permit is for a week-long clinic during the April school break. Mr. Rodriguez motions to approve the permit. Mr. Sabatino seconds the motion, all in favor, and the motion is carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Mr. Roetman asks the Commission to review the letter from David Hals regarding initial costs. Mr. Swift suggests the cost estimate for soil borings is unnecessary since borings have most likely been taken recently for the police headquarters project. Mr. Swift will follow up with Mr. DiGiacomo regarding this. Councilwoman LaMastra states the Commission should confirm the location of the site, vote on the engineer's proposal and decide on the type of building,

whether it is pre-fabricated or architecturally built. Mr. Roetman provides the Commission with multiple designs of pre-fabricated structures. Mr. Swift explains the cost difference would be approximately 5%. Mr. O'Brien suggests and Mr. Swift confirms the structural design can be bid both ways and finalized at a later point in time. Mr. Rodriguez motions to approve the proposal from David Hals, authorizing funds to be spent from the Recreation Trust Account toward this project. The location would be at the Municipal Field near Foster Road. Mrs. McDermott seconds the motion, all in favor and the motion is carried.

2. Mr. Rodriguez would like to move on the bleachers project at the Municipal Field as well. Mr. Roetman provides a hand-drawing from David Hals recommending the bleachers be placed along the fence at the Municipal Field. Mr. Roetman suggests the bleachers be moved to the right of the concrete path to avoid running into the Wilson tree. Mr. O'Brien suggests the move would also accommodate a better line of sight to home plate. Mr. Rodriguez motions to move the bleachers to the other side of the path and have the project move along at the same time as the restroom facility. Mrs. McDermott seconds the motion, all in favor and the motion is carried.
3. Mr. Sabatino is following up on lightning detection equipment. He has an upcoming meeting scheduled in Elmwood Park. Mr. O'Brien suggests Mr. Sabatino contact the Knickerbocker Country Club to see if we could work off their technology.
4. Mr. Swift requests old business items to be added to the agenda prior to the meeting.
5. Mr. Favorito requests the Commission hold ten meetings per year as opposed to twelve. Mr. Rodriguez argues in favor of ten meetings, noting a special meeting could be held in July or August if necessary. Mrs. McDermott states other boards and committees meet twelve times per year and she would be in favor of doing the same. She feels Commission members were left out of the loop this past summer. Mrs. McDermott does not want it to happen again. Mr. O'Brien states the Commission will stick to the ten meeting schedule and call another meeting if necessary.
6. Mr. O'Brien would like to discuss plans for a Community Center at the next meeting. Councilwoman LaMastra suggests any prior plans be brought to that meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mr. Favorito begins the discussion regarding Junior Soccer's appeal to the Commission earlier in the evening by stating he believes Mr. Berenbaum's request to be sincere. He questions whether it is better for soccer to hear "no" now or in the fall. Mr. Rodriguez thinks the Commission could make an exemption for the child to play so the matter is resolved. Mrs. McDermott disagrees since an exemption would backtrack from the Commission's prior decision. An exemption would validate soccer as a spring sport and additionally allow a player to violate the Commission's rule that a child is required to play in-town to be eligible for travel play. Mr. Fidler believes the Commission's prior decision was an important one and the correct one to make and shouldn't

change. Mr. O'Brien further explains it was supposed to be a one time exemption for fall only passed by the Mayor and Council. Mr. O'Brien motions to deny an exemption for a player from Closter to participate on Tenafly's spring travel soccer team. Mr. Sabatino seconds the motion, all in favor and the motion is carried.

2. Mr. Sabatino informs the Commission he was contacted by a representative from Cresskill about an indoor summer basketball league for 5th-8th graders.
3. Mr. Roetman presents a budget for two new programs proposed by Abrakadoodle, an arts and crafts program. Mr. Roetman has observed this program and believes it will be a great addition to Tenafly. Mr. O'Brien motions to approve the new program budget. Mrs. McDermott seconds, all in favor and the motion is carried.
4. Mr. Roetman presents plans for Walnut Park's all abilities playground addition for review.
5. Councilwoman LaMastra asks Mr. Roetman if there has been any further communication between the Recreation Department and PASET. Mr. Roetman says the line of communication is open, but nothing new to report. Mr. Sabatino states his take on that meeting was parents seeking inclusiveness for kids with disabilities into recreation's programs. Mr. Roetman reports there has been inclusion with the summer camp program and options are always open.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned, 10:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Roetman
Asst. Recreation Director