

**TENAFLY RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES – JUNE 9, 2008**

ROLL CALL: Chairman Jerry O'Brien, Vice Chairman Naomi McDermott, Tony Favorito, Peter Fidler, Robert Sabatino (9:15 pm), Tim Roetman, Tom Swift, Susan Van Poznak, Council Liaison Nadia LaMastra, Board of Education Liaison Mark Aronson

ABSENT: Rich Rodriguez, Alpine Liaison Jim Schwartz

MINUTES: Mr. Fidler motions to accept the April 14, 2008 minutes. Mrs. McDermott seconds the motion, all in favor and minutes are approved.

AUDIENCE:

1. Site Supervisor Louis Smaragdakis reports he and Recreation Director Tony Favorito have met with Police Officer Roux regarding kids from out of town trespassing at the skate park. Mr. Smaragdakis reports the police will charge kids with trespassing after multiple offenses. Also, litter has been an ongoing concern. Mr. Smaragdakis has removed kids from the park for littering. Mr. O'Brien asks if the park can be closed if kids don't obey the rules. Mrs. LaMastra is not in favor of punishing every child for one or two kids who break the rules. Mr. O'Brien suggests a discipline policy be put in place to discipline kids who break the rules. If helmets aren't worn, kids can be asked to leave, if caught twice they can be suspended for a day or more. The policy should cover all of the rules posted. Mrs. LaMastra suggests a discipline policy be drafted by Mr. Favorito and Mr. Roetman to assist Mr. Smaragdakis. There have also been several groups of people at the tennis courts Mr. Smaragdakis has encountered giving private lessons. Residents have purchased guest badges for the assumed instructors. Mr. O'Brien asks if these lessons have interfered with residents who wish to walk on and use the courts. Mr. Smaragdakis reports it has not, lessons he has witnessed have usually been during non-peak hours. Further, Mr. Smaragdakis reports users have been walking on to the Municipal Field during organized play and starting pickup games in the corners away from the softball games. Mr. O'Brien states only the group with a permit should have access to the field. If there is no scheduled activity it can remain open for play. Mr. Smaragdakis reports there has also been an increase of litter at the Municipal Field coming from the kids who purchase snacks at the Teen Center during after school hours. Mrs. LaMastra will communicate the litter concerns to the Teen Center staff.
2. Dan Brown of Norwood and Joe Spina of Tenaflly are in attendance to discuss the summer basketball league. Mr. Brown used to own the Hoop Zone in Englewood. He would like to join with Tenaflly Recreation in bringing his contacts and basketball league experience to assist in organizing this year's summer league in Tenaflly. Mr. Brown is also proposing to sell drinks during the league. He has partnered with Pepsi Co. in the past to distribute Gatorade and water. Mr. Brown could set up a partnership with the town to split profits or to pay a rental fee. Mr. Brown reports his profits would go toward the AAU Basketball program he works with to help pay costs of their team. The referees in the Tenaflly league would

still be coordinated by Joe Spina. Mr. O'Brien asks how much Tenafly participation there would be. Mrs. LaMastra asks if the Tenafly High School teams would be in the league. Mr. Brown reports the girls basketball team has committed elsewhere and the boys' team he has tried to contact with an invitation. Mr. Brown reports he currently has 27 teams interested in the league. Mr. Roetman asks when the courts would be used. Mr. Brown reports Monday through Thursday 6:00 – 10:00 pm, June 23 through July 30 as tentative dates. Joe Spina reports registration for the league would be handled the same as it always has been, through the Recreation Office. Mr. O'Brien thanks Mr. Brown and Mr. Spina for attending. A decision will be made later in the evening.

3. Tenafly Little League President Steve Ratty has provided an end of season report. Mr. Ratty reports there are 680 kids registered this year and 155 coaches. The fields are generally in good shape. Mr. Ratty states Mr. Smaragdakis has done a great job grooming the fields. However, the field at Smith School is in bad shape. Mr. O'Brien states the Commission has been aware of the field issue at Smith for a while now. Mr. Fidler asks how the Challenger division worked this year. Mr. Ratty reports Ira Fogelgaren has done a great job running that division. The biggest obstacle Little League faced was late registrations. Next season they may attempt a registration deadline and not accept any after a certain point. Mr. Favorito asks if there are any non-residents in the program on the travel teams. Mr. Ratty reports the only non-residents allowed are the children who attend school in Tenafly.
4. Jamie Kraft, Lori Leskin and Jeff Toonkel of Tenafly Junior Soccer are in attendance. Mr. Kraft reports soccer now has Community Pass online registration up and running for the fall 2008 season. Registration is being accepted through July 31 before late fees are incurred. The Challenger program will also be done again this season. Mr. Fidler asks Mr. Kraft and Mrs. Leskin if travel players have been told in the past they do not have to play in-town games to be allowed to play travel. Mrs. Leskin reports their policy has been changed. Players must now register for both the in-town league and the travel program and are encouraged to attend both. Mrs. LaMastra asks if kids from out of town are registered for travel. Mrs. Leskin reports kids from out of town are accepted if roster spots are open. These kids do not displace Tenafly kids on the rosters. There is also a rule where all travel players must play a minimum of ten minutes per half. In the fall or sooner, soccer will request permission from the Commission to place out of town residents on teams. Mr. O'Brien brings up another issue with the lining of the Municipal Field without permission. Mr. Toonkel reports letters were written requesting permission to paint the lines. Mr. O'Brien states the Commission did not receive that request and is not happy with the way the whole situation was handled. Mrs. Leskin states she will put a written request in with the permit next season.
5. Mr. O'Brien recognizes Councilman Michael Lattif. Mr. Lattif questions the process of communication to sports groups in writing. Policies and procedures should be uniform across the board. Mrs. LaMastra states there has been a transition of who is in charge of the co-sponsored groups and their outgoing people need to train their new people. Mr. Lattif suggests the Commission should

be more forceful with their decisions. Mr. O'Brien states many times the Commission is told or pressured to change decisions by the Mayor and Council such as lighting and lines on the field. Mr. Lattif states the Council is in support of the Commission's decisions.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Letter and permit application from Jon Einsidler of Tenafly Junior Soccer. Mr. Favorito reports he will approve their fall permit request.
2. Email from Mike Chermark of Paramus softball regarding the Safe at Home Tournament is acknowledged.
3. Email from Carrie Byrne Putelo thanking Mr. Favorito for help with Jenna's Rainbown is acknowledged.
4. Email from Linda Hess, coach of Mt. Olive softball regarding Safe at Home Tournament is acknowledged.
5. Letter from Borough Administrator Joe DiGiacomo to residents surrounding Sunnyside Park is read. Mr. O'Brien is upset about adults not being able to use the actual softball diamond and having to use the baseball field for softball. Mrs. LaMastra states she was not aware of the agreement with the area residents regarding use of the fields at Sunnyside Park.
6. Email from Monica Zaccario, Tenafly travel softball coach. Mr. Favorito reports the pee wee travel team practiced with the senior team. It worked out well.
7. Email from Kurt Hommen declining the opportunity to run the School's Out Football camp is acknowledged.
8. Letter from Borough Engineer, David Hals regarding bids for additional synthetic turf at the Municipal Field is acknowledged.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Alpine Recreation – No report.
2. Board of Education: Mr. Aronson asks about Smith School field. Mr. O'Brien states both co-sponsored groups would use it. Mr. Fidler reports Tenafly Little League spent about \$20,000 on clay to maintain Smith School's field over the years. Mr. Aronson reports private funds were used to turf the Maugham School field, the same could be done at Smith School. Mr. O'Brien states Geissinger Field should have turf installed before anything else. Mr. Aronson reports the track at the Middle School is going to be locked between 11:00 pm and 5:00 am. It will be locked with a timer. Mrs. LaMastra questions whether or not that was ever approved by the Mayor and Council since the town paid \$100,000 toward the new track. There was no joint use meeting discussing locking the track. Mr. Aronson further reports the 5K Race was a great success. About 1,300 runners were registered. Mr. Sabatino asks Mr. Aronson why there is no bathroom access at Tenafly High School to groups using the fields at night. Mr. Aronson reports they are closed when the schools close. Mr. Sabatino asks why the bathrooms should close if the maintenance staff is still on duty. Mr. Roetman and Mr. Favorito ask what the difference is if the High School uses the town's fields for sports. The town still leaves the bathrooms open at Sunnyside Park. Mr. Aronson will bring these concerns back to the Board of Education.
3. Youth Services – No report.
4. Joint Use – No report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Mr. Favorito has drafted a new co-sponsorship policy. The Commissioners are asked to take a few moments to review. Mrs. LaMastra believes the groups should handle discipline in the same manner. All groups should have the same policies. Mr. Sabatino believes each group should have a preseason meeting with parents. Mrs. McDermott motions to add a clause for co-sponsored groups to provide written notice of any disciplinary action groups may take against parents, players or coaches. The Code of Conduct should also be enforced across the board. Mr. Fidler questions about the time period asked for with permit requests. Mr. Favorito states a two hour block of time will need to be requested with specifics like division and age of group using the field. Mr. Sabatino asks if the Commission should receive notice of ejections. Mr. O'Brien says yes. Mr. Sabatino motions to approve the new co-sponsorship policy with the above mentioned revisions. Mrs. Van Poznak seconds. Mr. Fidler abstains citing he would like more time to review the new policy. All others vote in favor and the policy is approved.
2. Mr. Favorito suggests a second diamond should be made at the Municipal Field. Games have been played there this year back to back. It would have to be budgeted for to add additional fencing and team benches. Mr. Fidler motions to go ahead with this request. Mrs. McDermott seconds, all in favor and the motion is passed.
3. Mr. Favorito and Mr. Smaragdakis met with Officer Roux regarding the skate park. He will follow up with the Chief of Police and get back to Mr. Favorito.
4. Mr. Roetman would like the Commission to prioritize and approve a spending plan of the trust account overbalances. At the last meeting the Commission motioned to approve the spectator area at the Municipal Field. Mr. Roetman suggests making that the number one priority and the bathroom facility at the Municipal Field second. Mrs. McDermott motions to approve to spend the overbalances on the spectator area as the first priority and the bathrooms as the second priority. Mrs. Van Poznak seconds the motion, all in favor and the motion is carried.
5. Football and soccer registration forms are enclosed for review.
6. Men's and Co-ed Softball schedules are enclosed for review.
7. Football coaches meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 11.
8. Commissioner's Cup games and BBQ is scheduled for Friday, June 13 at the Municipal Field.
9. Travel Softball teams end of season event is at Sunnyside Park on Monday, June 23, 6:00 pm.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Mr. O'Brien feels TJSL is out of control with their use of the Municipal Field. The use of the field on Wednesday nights was originally declined by the Commission and was then approved. It didn't work out when softball games ran late. Also, the situation with painting a line on the field was not handled

appropriately. He asks the Commission members to remember next year when the spring permit application is made.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mr. Favorito attended a meeting on benchmarking. Several towns were in attendance. They all agreed it was tough to find common ground when it relates to Recreational needs.
2. Mr. Favorito has a permit request from Andy Escala of Elisabeth Morrow School for use of Sunnyside Park in the fall for soccer practice. They are asking for time from 2:30 – 3:45 pm after school during the week. Mr. Swift motions to approve their use. Mrs. Van Poznak seconds the motion. Mr. Sabatino abstains. All others are in favor and the motion is carried.
3. Mr. Swift suggests sending a letter home to kids' parents if they violate the rules of the skate park which would need to be signed and returned by parents. Also, Mr. Swift reports synthetic turf fields in the Northern Valley have been shut down due to lead found in the turf.
4. Mr. Sabatino suggests facemasks should be added to the players' helmets during girls' softball. Many tournaments and leagues now require them. Mr. O'Brien states he is also in favor of it. Helmets should be purchased with cages from now on.
5. Mr. O'Brien states a vote is necessary on the earlier summer basketball league program which would be coordinated by Dan Brown and Joe Spina. Mr. Swift motions to approve the program as presented earlier. Mr. Fidler seconds the motion. All in favor and the motion is carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned 10:51 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Roetman