

**TENAFLY RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 10, 2008**

ROLL CALL: Chairman Jerry O'Brien, Vice Chairman Naomi McDermott, Tony Favorito, Peter Fidler, Robert Sabatino Tim Roetman, , Rich Rodriguez, Susan Van Poznak, Council Liaison Nadia LaMastra, Board of Education Liaison Mark Aronson.

ABSENT: Tom Swift, Alpine Liaison Sapna Jain

MINUTES: Mr. Rodriguez motions to approve the October 20, 2008 minutes. Mr. Fidler seconds the motion and the minutes are approved.

AUDIENCE: Site Supervisor Louis Smaragdakis.

Mr. Smaragdakis informs the Commission he has been given permission by the DPW to use their leaf blowing equipment to clear the tennis courts and skate park. He will add these duties to his schedule. Mr. Smaragdakis reports the positive at the skate park has been a decrease in non-resident use. An ongoing problem has been kids and parents complaints to him requesting the park be open after it rains. Mr. Smaragdakis tries to explain the park is closed if it is wet due to safety concerns. If residents are not satisfied they often contact the Mayor or Recreation Department seeking a change. Mr. Smaragdakis is seeking the Commission's support to make the decision whether or not to close the park in bad weather conditions. Mrs. LaMastra asks if the rules contain language about the usage. She also states the signage should contain a number to call in bad weather.

Mr. Smaragdakis also reports he has not worked on Borough holidays like this past Election Day and has been questioned why the park was not open. He would like a clarification of whether or not he is supposed to be on duty. His hours are from 3:00 p.m. to dusk on weekdays and on Saturdays. On Sundays he has opened the park, but does not record hours. Mr. Favorito states he can have the park opened by a maintenance worker on Sundays from 12:00 – 4:00 p.m. They will not supervise the facility. Mr. Smaragdakis reports the Sunday hours are not posted at the skate park. He does not want the responsibility for the park on Sundays since he is scheduled six days a week.

Mrs. LaMastra questions how discipline is handled at the park. Mr. Smaragdakis reports kids are often there without helmets, leave and come back, and don't listen to his authority. Mrs. LaMastra suggests if he encounters a problem he report it back to the Recreation Office and then Tony or Tim contact the parents of the individual. Mrs. Van Poznak suggests a suspension be given if offenses are repeated. Mr. O'Brien agrees and believes parents will cooperate and help create a safer site. Mr. Rodriguez suggests Mr. Smaragdakis create a log and keep a record of when he is there and what is going on to further assist.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Letter from Max Lopez to Recreation Commission apologizing for graffiti at the skate park. Mr. Favorito explains he spoke to Chief Bruno and the matter was handled by the police.

2. Email from Joe DiGiacomo regarding restrooms at the high school. Mr. Favorito reports the restrooms will be available during off-school hours if the Recreation Department agrees to open and close them. Mr. Aronson states the Board of Education would like one person only to be responsible for the restrooms. Mr. O'Brien states each co-sponsored group should appoint their own individual to this task. Mr. Aronson states the email is not 100% correct, the Board of Education doesn't want each co-sponsored group having access to the facility. Mr. O'Brien suggests something will have to be worked out with the co-sponsored groups.
3. Memo from Tony Favorito to Joe DiGiacomo requesting Mayor and Council transfer trust account balances. The transferred funds will be used towards bleachers at the Municipal Field and toward the building of a restroom facility also at the Municipal Field.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Alpine Recreation – No report. Mr. Favorito questions the new gym usage fee, asks if it was originally part of the agreement to use the school's facilities when Alpine joined Tenafly's school district. Mrs. McDermott states it was not part of any agreement. It was simply a good will gesture to allow free use of the gym.
2. Board of Education – Mr. Aronson reports the Board of Education is sending a letter to the Mayor and Council informing them the track will be locked from 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. Also, the Thanksgiving football game has been changed back to Thursday morning. Finally, the Board of Education has passed a resolution moving all the high school's sports teams to an independent conference.
3. Youth Services – No Report
4. Joint Use – Mr. Aronson states a meeting was held recently. The bathrooms at the high school were discussed earlier.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Junior Football end of season brunch is scheduled for December 7, 2008.
2. Winter registration has begun for Jr. Wrestling and 7th and 8th grade Travel Basketball. Flyers are distributed.
3. Mr. Favorito reports the Friday night football game on October 24 ended a little after 9:30 p.m. Our opponent was courteous enough to agree to a 5:30 p.m. start time. If the games started at 6:00 p.m. they would have gone past the 10:00 p.m. light curfew. Mr. O'Brien states there has to be a little more control over the field lights by the Commission for the next season. If the lights have to stay on a bit later it would make sense for safety reasons.
4. Mr. Favorito reports the Halloween Celebration was great. He thanks Marty Levitt and Bobby Thompson for volunteering as judges.
5. Mr. Favorito reports he made the difficult decision to suspend one of the Jr. Football coaches for one game after an incident during a game. The coach put his hands on one of the children and he fell down. Mr. Favorito spoke to both the coach and the boys' parents immediately. Any issues between the player, parents and coach seem to have been resolved. The coach did apologize for his actions.

Mr. O'Brien thanks Mr. Favorito for handling this situation well. Mr. Fidler suggests the Recreation Commission should receive all records of incidents from the co-sponsored groups this way they can closely track coaches who may have repeatedly had altercations, as is written in the co-sponsored policy.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Mr. Rodriguez explains several of the Commissioners appeared at the Mayor and Council meeting last week to ask for a clarification of the Commission's status. Mr. O'Brien asks Mrs. LaMastra if their situation has been placed on the Council's agenda. Mrs. LaMastra states it was not on the last work session, she will ask the Borough Clerk to put it on the next agenda. Mr. Rodriguez expresses his frustration with the process and states he will continue to pursue the issue with Mayor and Council.
2. Mr. O'Brien asks Mrs. LaMastra if the updated Code of Conduct has gone to the Mayor and Council for approval. Mrs. LaMastra reports the Borough Administrator has it, but it has not made the agenda yet.
3. Mr. Favorito reports the Municipal Budget is due on December 5. There is a new format, but there aren't any major changes anticipated. Mr. Rodriguez asks if the Commission will be able to review the budget before it's submission. Mrs. LaMastra suggests the Commission should hold an extra meeting to review the current requests and the trust accounts. Mr. O'Brien asks Mr. Favorito if he can ask for a few days extension on the budget submission so it can be turned in after the next Commission meeting. Mr. Favorito does not think this would be a problem and will make the request to the Borough Administrator.
4. Mr. Sabatino thanks Mr. Favorito for handling the football coaching situation the proper way. He tells the Commissioners he has been questioned why names aren't placed on the backs of jerseys. Mr. Favorito reports it would be a bigger cost since the jerseys are returned at the end of the season and the name "Tenafly" appears on the front.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mrs. Van Poznak would like follow up on Commission items to be clearer. Mrs. McDermott suggests it may be a good idea to have one person designated to report on old items.
2. Mr. Fidler recognizes Councilwoman LaMastra's work toward helping the Commission and encourages her to stay on as the liaison in the upcoming year.
3. Mr. Favorito and Mr. Roetman present new programs for the winter. Mr. Roetman opens the discussion by presenting an art program submitted by the company Artistically Alicia. The program is geared toward preschool children in a "mom and me" setting. Mr. Roetman suggests this would be something new that Tenafly Recreation currently doesn't offer. Mr. O'Brien would like Mr. Roetman and Mr. Favorito to discuss it with current instructor Ellen Ratty to make sure she is agreeable to the competition, but otherwise endorses the idea. Mr. Favorito reports he has received a proposal from Jayne Mayhue Yu requesting to run a "mom and me" style exercise class for preschool age children and their caregivers. Mr. Favorito states he is strongly in favor of this. There will

Minutes approved December 8, 2008

not be any additional equipment needs other than what Tenafly Recreation already has. Mr. Roetman reports he would like to start a "Recky's Winter Camp" during the schools' winter recess in February. The camp would be three days long and provide activities from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for children in grades K-5. Mr. Favorito suggests using a school's gymnasium. The budget for this program would sustain it's costs. Mr. Fidler motions to approve the three new programs. Mrs. Van Poznak seconds the motion, all in favor and the motion is carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Roetman
Asst. Recreation Director