

**LEONIA RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF April 18, 2023**

Chairman Jon Abouaf called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM, duly publicized, and in accordance with the Sunshine Law in the Leonia Recreation Meeting Room.

PRESENT

Chairman Jon Abouaf, Commissioner Andrew Choi, Commissioner Vito Mazza, Commissioner Dennyse Hernandez, Commission Alternate Jason Klein, Council Liaison Louis Grandelis, Superintendent Sean Krakower, Program Director Destiney Sampson, and Administrative Assistant Jayjoon Sin.

ABSENT

Commissioner Anthony Vassallo, Commissioner Marilyn Mulato and Commissioner Ken Fernandez.

MINUTES- The minutes of the March 21, 2023 meeting were tabled due to not having a quorum to vote on them.

FINANCIAL REPORTS- Superintendent Krakower spoke about our January-March Financials. He explained that not much has been done yet in terms of expenses since the budget has not been passed yet. He explained that the Activities Trust Account has a big amount of revenue because we have taken in registration fees for programs and summer camp but we still have to pay the instructors and expenses for Summer Camp. Commission Alternate Klein commented on how he's happy with the turnout of the activities and how things are going. Superintendent Krakower mentioned the instructor pay is an 80%/20% split, which has been working out well with the instructors. A motion to approved the financial reports was made by Commissioner Mazza. A second motion was made by Commissioner Hernandez. All of the Commission was in favor to approve the financial reports.

PUBLIC PORTION- NONE

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Chairperson- NONE

Program and Fees- NONE

Program Director - Program Director Sampson informed the Commission that our spring programs have started this week. She also mentioned that Summer Camp

numbers are bigger than last year. We have 180 kids registered for our Wood Park Trips Camp and 12 registered for our Wood Park No Trips Camp. Program Director Sampson informed the Commission that we have received many compliments for tee balls with the new coaching staff, PS2 Athletics. Commission Alternate Klein asked about our numbers. Program Director Sampson said we went from 36 participants and now this year we have 10 participants for tee ball. She has been marketing and sending our flyers to past participants as well. Commission Alternate Klein commented on wanting to have the Leonia Recreation Department work with PPL. Commissioner Mazza asked how much is for PPL for each individual child. Commission Alternate Klein mentioned that it was \$125, but Superintendent Krakower thought it was in the range of \$150-\$175. Commission Alternate Klein said there is tee ball at PPL as well, which makes it competitive with our program. Program Director Sampson moved forward and let the Commission know that we did interviews for Summer Camp counselors and will be sending out the acceptances this upcoming Friday. Commissioner Choi asked about numbers, to which Program Director Sampson mentioned all the numbers compared to last year and said we have another week of registrations left.

Sports Booster Report- NONE

Council Liaison Report- Council Liaison Grandelis talked about how they have made it through the initial operating budget process and are moving onto working on the capital budget. He received two grants of \$750,000 and \$900,000 from a bill passed by Congressman Josh Gottheimer. This grant money will go towards drainage improvements for the Borough of Leonia. This will save the Borough \$1.6 million. The Mayor and Council are trying to get as much money as they can through grants and are asking Department Heads to do the same so we can decrease taxes for residents. We will begin the capital budget process next week.

OLD BUSINESS

Senior Center Name Change- Superintendent Krakower mentioned that Senior Coordinator Maggie Browne had suggestions from the seniors, such as "Silver Foxes Center," "The Beechwood Center," and "Happy, and Next Chapter Center". Commissioner Mazza asked if this was by request? To which both Chairman About and Superintendent Krakower mention yes. Superintendent Krakower further explained that many of the younger seniors do not join the programs because of the word "Senior" in the name of our department. Commissioner Choi further added that on the American Dream trip, some of the younger seniors mentioned that they are not associated with the older seniors. Commission Alternate Klein asked what the minimum age was, Superintendent Krakower answered 55. Commission Alternate Klein suggested giving the seniors a list and having them choose the most voted name.

Park Committee- Superintendent Krakower mentioned how each commissioner should choose a specific park to take on as their own. Superintendent Krakower and the commissioner will do monthly walkthroughs of each park to see if anything needs to be fixed or replaced.

List of Parks Taken by Commissioners:

Commissioner Mazza- Lower Sylvan Park

Chairman Abouf- Wood Park

Commissioner Choi- C.J. Kirkland Park

Commissioner Hernandez- Station Park

Commissioner Klein - Dudley Allen Park

Upper Sylvan Park and Stanley Gallone Park will be decided on by the Commissioners who are absent.

Leonia Recreation Roof- Superintendent Krakower mentioned Roof work is starting. We should be done with most of the work by the end of the week and completely done in 30 days.

NEW BUSINESS

Reallocation of 2021 Open Space Grant - Wood Park Basketball Court

Repavement: Superintendent Krakower requested that we can reallocate the 2021 Open Space Grant money that was awarded to a different project. The original project was to repave, resurface and add concrete seating at Sylvan Park. The new project would be to repave the basketball court at Wood Park because it is one of the most used and it is cracking. This would help us fix a liability issue since there is cracking and risk of injury in the court. With the new grant money we would also be able to add new basketball hoops. Commission Alternate Klein asked how long did this original court last. Superintendent Krakower mentioned that it lasted about 20-25 years which is normal. Commissioner Mazza questioned if this is the best use of the funds? Instead of the parking lot, if we can get something done at Sylvan Park. Superintendent Krakower mentioned that this is a matching grant and received \$90,000 therefore the borough will have to match another \$90,000. The project should cost at least \$180,000 in total. The total price of the Sylvan Park project is \$265,000 but if we reallocate to the basketball court project it will only cost us \$180,000. Council Liaison Grandelis mentioned how we can still potential repave, restripe and re curb the Sylvan Park parking lot with money from the Borough's Parking Trust Fund. Commissioner Mazza questioned how money gets into that account. Councilman Grandelis explained how the finance committee does not understand where the money comes from but it comes into our Parking Trust Fund every year which some of the money can be coming from Tag/Parking Fees. Councilman Grandelis says he is working diligently to figure out how the Parking Trust gets funded. He believes that certain developers had started the fund and put money in the trust for maintenance. Councilman Grandelis explained how we used some of the money to do the parking lot at Borough Hall and the alleyway next to Borough Hall. Councilman also stated that the Mayor and Council allocated some of the Parking Trust money to pay for a DPW employee's salary which came up to \$52000 - \$60000. They were allowed to do this because of necessary work needed by the DPW to upkeep

parking lots in town. Even after all that spent it leaves us at about \$130,000-140,000 in the Parking Trust. Councilman Grandelis explained that we can use that money at will for anything parking wise. This would not include drainage but structural according to Council Liaison Grandelis.

A motion was made by Commissioner Choi to reallocate the 2021 Open Space Grant money to resurfacing the basketball court. A second was made by Commissioner Mazza. All were in favor.

2024 Open Space Grant application project- Superintendent Krakower suggested that for the 2024 Open Space Grant project we build Pickleball Courts at Dudley Park. The dog park stays and the other half with the swing sets can be turned into Pickleball Courts. Commissioner Mazza asked if there would be any revenue from it. Superintendent Krakower mentioned we can do permits, programs, and we can also have a lock with a code. Council Liaison Grandelis asked if we are thinking about revenue regarding a fee for the dog park as well and if someone can enforce it. For example, Councilman Grandelis said in Maryland, it is a community park, but members pay \$20-30 dollars monthly but dogs have to be registered/vaccinated. Superintendent Krakower mentioned if we are charging membership fees, this will go into helping maintenance costs, etc.

The 2024 Open Space Grant is to approve the project to apply for the grant which is a matching grant. The total project cost would be \$200,000 and the amount we would be asking for with the grant is \$100,000. The deadline to apply for the grant is May 15, 2023. Council Liaison Grandelis said we should ask the Borough Engineer to look at it. Superintendent Krakower also mentioned that our Pickleball Instructor gave us the recommendation for noise reducing wind screens so that the noise of pickleball does not disturb the neighbors. A motion was made by Commissioner Mazza to approve the pickleball court project for the 2024 Open Space Grant. A second motion was made by Commissioner Hernandez. All in favor.

Swim Club Salaries- A motion to approve the swim club salaries for the 2023 season was made by Commissioner Klein. A second motion was made by Commissioner Hernandez. All in favor.

Fire Department American Flag Request- The Fire Department has requested to hang an American flag off of the back of the Recreation Center for their 125th Anniversary party on May 6th, 2023. All in favor.

Financial Disclosure Statement- Superintendent Krakower mentioned to all of the Commission that they need to fill out and submit their financial disclosure statement before April 30th, 2023.

Shoprite Donations for Barbeque: Senior Coordinator Maggie applied to Shoprite for food and drink donations for the annual Senior Town BBQ and we got approved.

The LPI Brochures- Superintendent Krakower brought to the attention of the Commission that our ads sales for the program brochures are falling short of what they need to be. If we want to continue with what we have we will have to pay \$4,000 per year to still get them published. Superintendent Krakower explained to the Commission that we have other options. The second option would be publishing four 16 page brochures rather than three 32 page brochures and one 16 page brochure. He explained that this option would be difficult to go with since our programs have increased. The third option would be to go completely paperless and do everything online. Superintendent Krakower told the commissioners that we need to make a decision before August which is when our next brochure will be coming out. The LPI Sales Rep has been cold calling around Leonia Businesses, which has not been making the cut. Commissioner Mazza asked if \$4,000 is the total cost of production. Superintendent Krakower mentioned that total production is \$16,000 which we are falling short \$4,000 therefore we have to make up the difference.

CORRESPONDENTS

RESOLUTIONS

At 8:45 PM, a motion was made by Commissioner Hernandez to adjourn, second by Commissioner Choi. - Approved