

# **LEONIA RECREATION COMMISSION**

## **MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF October 17th, 2023**

Chairman Jon Abouaf called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM, duly publicized, and in accordance with the Sunshine Law in the Leonia Recreation Meeting Room.

### **PRESENT**

Chairman Jon Abouaf, Commissioner Ken Fernandez, Commissioner Dennyse Hernandez, Commissioner Andrew Choi, Council Liaison Louis Grandelis, Senior Coordinator Maggie Browne, Program Director Destiney Sampson, and Administrative Assistant Jayjoon Sin

### **ABSENT**

Commissioner Vito Mazza, Commissioner Anthony Vassallo, Commissioner Marilyn Mulato, Commission Alternate Jason Klein, and Superintendent Sean Krakower

### **MINUTES**

March 21- Tabled

May 16,2023- Tabled

June 20- Tabled

July 18- Tabled

August 15, 2023- Tabled

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Operating, Senior, Recreation Activities and Swim Club quarterly financial reports were reported to the Commissioners. Commissioner Hernandez questioned the Special Events of our Activities Budget and why the amount is negative. Program Director Sampson explained that this number is what we do for our community events such as movie night so we do not take in income.

A motion to approve the financial reports was made by Commissioner Choi and was seconded by Commissioner Fernandez. All were in favor and the financial reports were approved.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

**Sports Boosters Vice President** Leonardo Garzon (309 Beechwood Place, Leonia, 07605, NJ)

**Sports Boosters Secretary** Brigitte Stieglitz (158 Moore Avenue, Leonia, 07605, NJ)

Jaime Sclafane (254 Glenwood, Leonia, 07605, NJ)

The mission of the Sports Boosters Organization is not to run leagues and take in money, but sponsor organizations and help programs. They are not getting involved in management, but only sponsoring the team. Secretary Stieglitz said the mission of the Sports Booster is fostering the development of the sports and mentioned Leonia Recreation's mission statement as a whole is more aligned with the Girls Basketball Travel League with the Sports Booster sponsoring it. Chairman Abouaf mentioned why the girls league is not run like the boys sports teams are. The issue is if there are cuts or if there are no cuts, the Leonia Recreation can get involved because there are no cuts. Ken Fernandez is running a certain way for the Boys' Travel Basketball League, why can't Jamie Sclafene manage the money? Chairman Abouaf asked why she couldn't have a team manager to manage the operations? Brigitte Stieglitz mentioned that there is a lack of sports for girls in Leonia. Jamie Sclafene said she hopes this team would be a huge success for Leonia and wants it to be for every girl in town. She feels that this is something that the Leonia Recreation should take over progressively over the next couple of years. Commissioner Fernandez feels the volume and the infrastructure is in a small window of time since we are down a staff member as well. Commissioner Fernandez does agree that this is something that Leonia Recreation can take over. Chairman Abouaf does support female programs, and agrees that it can fit in the Recreations Model and the Sports Booster model as well. Why would it be more difficult for individuals to help this year and the Leonia Rec can come in for the future? Jamie Sclafene mentioned that the coaches would not want to be financially responsible. She said it would have to be people willing to financially support and take in money. Commissioner Fernandez said his operations are small, there are three teams, and he makes cuts to the teams. Secretary Stieglitz mentioned that Sports Boosters and Jamie Sclafene had an opportunity to play and now she's been talking it up and lots of girls are excited to join the All Girls Basketball League. If Jamie Sclafene doesn't do it, it will go back to zero. Program Director Sampson said even if we take it in, we would need other factors such as part time staff, the timeline is the most concerning as well. Jamie Sclafene mentioned the biggest thing is getting them into Community Pass and as far as everything else, she would volunteer to do it like she did last year. January 2nd- January 9th are when the league fees are due and everything on the budget will be after that which is when the games start. Program Director Sampson mentioned briefly talking about jerseys, staff, and volunteers for the day of. She was here every Sunday all the time including last year and does feel she has a good idea of it. Commissioner Choi had a comment about acknowledging how much Jamie Sclafene cares about the program. No commissioner would disagree that this wouldn't be a program that Leonia Rec would not want to partake in and heart was put into every page of the flier. There is a lot of uplift to include because it is a seasonal event not a one day event. Jamie Sclafene mentioned that the scheduling was done back in May. Commissioner Choi mentioned that it is more integrating in our schedule such as staffing. Jamie Sclafene questioned the staffing and what we would like to see? Program Director Sampson mentioned she likes having three people on staff and an adult being present. Chairman Abouaf said we support each other and will do our best to help Jamie Sclafene and the

Sports Boosters out, and see if there is a parent that is willing to take in the money. Chairman Abouaf asked if Jamie Sclafene knows parents who are in the program that can manage the finances. Chairman Abouaf said Commissioner Fernandez is taking in all his money, there is no reason why out of six teams, there wouldn't be a volunteer support taking in money. Commissioner Choi asked if there is a quantitative difference between taking two different forms, would it make it more complex? Everyone agreed yes. Jamie Sclafene had a final comment and is really worried it is not going to happen this year and coming very late to the Recreation, but did not know the payment situation would be a problem until later on. Overall, Jamie Sclafene does not want to be responsible for the estimated \$15,000.

**CHAIRMAN REPORT-** NONE

**PUBLIC PORTION-** NONE

**CORRESPONDENCE-** NONE

**COMMITTEE REPORTS-** NONE

**CHAIRPERSON-** NONE

**PROGRAM AND FEES-** NONE

**PROGRAM DIRECTOR** - Program Director Sampson reported that our Halloween Treat Street is in two weeks. The Commission and the Mayor & Council have been invited via email. We have our last basketball league evaluation on October 21st. The current number of players are as follows: 23 in the 7-8th grade division, 48 in the 5-6th grade division, and 37 in the 3rd & 4th grade division. Commissioner Fernandez asked the number we are looking for in the 7th-8th Grade to which Program Director Sampson replied 35. Program Director Sampson said Edgewater Recreation does cuts, and there is a chance we get some more of the 7th and 8th graders afterwards. She said there is a harsh deadline of November 3rd because of the jerseys. She mentioned that we officially have fifteen sponsors. Registration for the annual Turkey Trot is underway. We have been marketing through E-blasts in Community Pass. Commissioner Choi asked

how many registrants we have. Program Director Sampson replied with seven. Council Liaison Grandelis asked how many last year to which Program Director Sampson mentioned about 200. She received the approval from tri state and will get bids ahead of time along with receiving the approval donation from Shoprite of bananas and water bottles.

**POOL REPORTS-** NONE

**SPORTS BOOSTER REPORT-** NONE

**COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT-** Council Liaison Grandelis reported that we had the annual audit report to which we did okay. Superintendent Krakower and business leaders will discuss the 2024 capital and operating budget. If there is anything to be spent, as soon as they pull the trigger, spend it. Part of the audit showed a lot of the money that has not been spent through grants. Council Liaison Grandelis will talk about receipts because we do not know if the grants had been spent or not. The Mayor and Council terminated the Borough Administrator, Police Chief Scott Tamagny will be the temporary Borough Administrator, and we will be posting about it next week. Any Borough information should go to him and everything else is good. Elections are coming up as well.

**OLD BUSINESS-** Commissioner Mulato asked if we can do the Tree Lighting in conjunction with the Sports Boosters. The Sports Boosters would like to do a winter wonderland in the Beechwood parking lot and have two tables where they could sell stuff. They would do different fundraiser opportunities and have Wolf It (sandwich shop) offer food and drinks. They also got approval for the Leonia High School chorus to perform at the Tree Lighting. Everything is still vague and people are still trying to support it. Council Liaison Grandelis mentioned lots of interest in Halloween and Christmas events and they do not appreciate all the planning involved. We should support these groups and educate them on the process.

**Senior Internship-** Senior Coordinator Maggie Browne stated we understand that Leonia is in conjunction with Leonia High School, but Chairman Abouaf was asking if Ramapo College has an internship program. Sr. Coordinator Browne needs someone who has education in Social Work. Superintendent Krakower and her spoke about the responsibilities of the intern such as filing paperwork, tracking unique people participating in programs, and tracking the Senior housing building trip rides. Chairman Abouaf asked if this was a paid internship? Program Director Browne said this is for internship credits. Chairman Abouaf asked if they are helping the Recreation as well, to which Sr. Coordinator Browne mentioned a lot of Senior Centers have a social worker.

**NEW BUSINESS-** NONE

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