

**LEONIA RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 20, 2024**

1. Chairman Jon Abouaf called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM, duly publicized, and in accordance with the Sunshine Law in the Leonia Recreation Meeting Room.

PRESENT

Chairman Jon Abouaf, Commissioner Andrew Choi, Commissioner Jason Klein, Commissioner Dennyse Hernandez, Commissioner Judah Zeigler, Council Liaison Louis Grandelis, Commission Alternate Christine Muir, Superintendent Sean Krakower, Program Director Destiney Sampson, Administrative Assistant Jay Joon Sin, and Commissioner Ken Fernandez at 7:32 pm.

Commissioner Choi left at 8:40 pm

ABSENT

Commissioner Anthony Vassallo

2. **MINUTES**

The minutes for the January 16, 2024, Recreation Commission Meeting were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Judah Zeigler and second by Commission Choi. All present were in favor.

3. **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

NONE

4. **PUBLIC PORTION**

NONE

5. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Chairman Report - NONE

Programs and Fees - NONE

Program Director Report- Program Director Destiney Sampson updated the Recreation Commission on Summer Camp for this upcoming year. She informed the Commission that the camp rates will not be changing. We will be adding morning extended day hours for an extra \$50. The Recreation Commission was also shown the 2024 Summer Camp Budget. We are looking to do four out of the five trips from last year. The new trip would be to the American Dream Nickelodeon Amusement Park. We are implementing a community day event at the Wood Park Summer Camp where we will have the Fire

Department, Police Department, and EMS. Each Department will teach the campers about what they do and show off some equipment. We are looking for the Wood Park Mini Camp to be involved with Wood Park on Tuesdays. Council Liaison Grandelis brought a suggestion about adding the Department of Public Works to community day so they can educate the campers about recycling. In addition, our Winter Basketball League has three weeks remaining before the championship game. We just finalized the Spring Brochure and registration will start in March.

Senior Center Report- Superintendent Krakower and Senior Coordinator Maggie Browne have been looking into a program called Age-Friendly. The age-friendly community has meetings every quarter and Commission Alternate Muir went on a zoom call with Maggie sponsored by Rutgers. Commissioner Muir summarized what she had learned at the meeting. To be an Age-Friendly community, it has to be a collaborative effort by different segments of the community. Superintendent Krakower mentioned that there is only grant money available to implement the program. It does not cost anything to apply or become an Age-Friendly program. Grants can have the opportunity to pay for part-time staff or have a Senior Advisory Committee. Commissioner Zeigler asked how it would benefit the municipality. Superintendent Krakower mentioned that it is similar to the Stigma Free. Commissioner Zeigler said it would boomerang back and go back to Maggie's plate. Commissioner Klein asked if there was an outline to become Age-Friendly. Superintendent Krakower responded yes, there are booklets with outlines of each Age-Friendly town's program.

ICEF Internship Program- Superintendent Krakower explained to the Commission that ICEF is an internship program for students from South Korea. You must apply to become part of the program. Once you apply ICEF will search for interested candidates. If a candidate is found ICEF will pay all expenses to intern here. Chairman Abouaf asked if they provide housing. Superintendent Krakower said yes and visa as well. Superintendent Krakower mentioned that there is an optional lunch cost that would run us anywhere between \$600 and \$900. There is no guarantee we will get an intern. Commissioner Choi asked what are the chances of getting the intern if put on the list. Superintendent Krakower responded that he would have to ask the representative of the program for that information. A motion to approve to move forward with applying to be a part of the ICEF internship program was made by Commissioner Jason Klein. A second motion was made by Commissioner Judah Zeigler. All present were in favor.

Personnel and Finance Committee Report- Commissioner Zeigler was appointed Chairperson of the Personnel and Finance Committee. He reported that the Committee had a meeting in January to discuss the activities trust account and have a recommendation to the Mayor and Council to offset the operating expenses. The Committee discussed multiple options but ultimately recommended to the Recreation Commission that \$75,000 should be the amount the Commission offers to the Mayor and Council to offset the operating budget. It was stated clearly that this type of money offset should only be for one year as the money total amount in the Activities Trust Account was accumulated over a long period of time.

Swim Club Committee- Commissioner Choi was appointed Chairperson of the Swim Club Committee. He mentioned at their January meeting they discussed rate increases. It was decided that we would be raising rates by 10% for residents, 25% for non-residents, \$20 for resident guest passes, and \$25 for non-resident guest passes. They have organized a letter that will go out to the public with a transparent explanation of why the costs are increasing. In addition, staff expectations and evaluations were reviewed. It was discussed that we will have a contest and the winner of that contest will be able to have their drawing painted as a mural on the baby pool wall. This will add a much-needed fun paint job to that area of the building.

Sports Booster Report-
NONE

Council Liaison Report- Council Liaison Grandelis mentioned that everything is focused on solidifying the budget. Superintendent Krakower and Council Liaison Grandelis met with the Borough Administrator, which resulted in offering budget cuts.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

2023 Open Space Grant- Superintendent Krakower handed out a packet to the commissioners that included cost analysis and location pictures of where pickleball courts would be erected in Lower Sylvan, upper Sylvan, Dudley Allen, and Station parks. Superintendent Krakower's recommendation is to move this project from Dudley Allen Park to either Lower Sylvan Park or Station Park. Lower Sylvan Park is cheaper because there is already lighting. Superintendent Krakower's recommendation for the best location would be Station Park. There is enough space for three or four courts. This would mean that Station Park would get rid of the softball/baseball field. Commissioner Fernandez is against removing any softball fields because the program is growing. Commissioner Fernandez said that we should focus on improving the space instead of removing it. Commissioner Zeigler asked how long and often it's been used for permits in Station Park. Program Director Sampson said it has been used by PPL once or twice a week throughout the season, mostly in Spring and Summer. Commissioner Zeigler asked about the mosquitos at Sylvan Park. Superintendent Krakower said we have bat cages and a company that treats the grass about ten times a year. Lower Sylvan Park is the least disruptive and there are bathrooms as well. Commissioner Fernandez mentioned that we are not eliminating a field or adding to any problems if we have a pickleball court at Lower Sylvan Park. Commissioner Zeigler asks if the pickleball court will be raised off the grass, to which Superintendent Krakower has to speak with the Borough Engineer. Commissioner Klein asked if the sprinklers have been in consideration as well such as dug up and rerouting. Superintendent Krakower has to continue speaking with the Borough Engineer. A motion was made to move the pickleball court project from Dudley Allen to Lower Sylvan Park by Commissioner Andrew Choi. A second motion was made by Commissioner Ken Fernandez. All present were in favor. This project has to be proposed to the Mayor and Council and the project approved to get the capital project going.

Portable Lighting- Superintendent Krakower is still searching for portable lighting. All he found was gas-powered lighting. Instead of gas-powered ones, we should get battery-powered ones. The grant is a matching grant and the minimum award is \$50,000.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Budget Cuts- Superintendent Krakower had a meeting about budget cuts with Council Liaison Grandelis and the Borough Administrator. Superintendent Krakower reviewed the cuts he went through with them. The cuts included line items temporary personnel, office/printed supplies, special events, miscellaneous, and Conferences and Seminars. The total asked to be cut was 5 to 10 percent, and the final percent was around 7.5%. A motion was made to approve these budget cuts by Commissioner Zeigler. A second motion was made by Commissioner Klein. All present were in favor.

Pickleball Attendant- A motion to go into a closed session to discuss the Pickleball Attendant was made by Commissioner Hernandez. A second motion was made by Commissioner Fernandez.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hernandez to hire Administrative Assitant Jay Joon Sin as the weekend pickleball attendant for ages 18-54 at \$18 per hour. A second motion was made by Commissioner Klein. All present were in favor.

8. CORRESPONDENCES

9. RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #24-02- Authorize funding transfer from Leonia Recreation Commission Activities Trust Account to the Borough of Leonia General Fund.

A motion was made by Commissioner Zeigler. A second motion was made by Commissioner Klein. Resolution #24-02 was voted on and carried by the members of the Recreation Commission.

Resolution #24-03- Authorize a 30% transfer from the Leonia Recreation Commission Activities Trust Account to reduce the 2023 Open Space Grant match.

A motion was made by Commissioner Zeigler. A second motion was made by Commissioner Fernandez. Resolution #24-03 was voted on and carried by the members of the Recreation Commission.

10. PUBLIC PORTION

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the Recreation Commission meeting was made at 8:51 pm by Commissioner Zeigler. A second motion was made by Commissioner Fernandez. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.