

BRECKSVILLE RECREATION COMMISSION

August 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The Recreation Commission Meeting was called to order by Councilwoman Redinger at 7:30pm. Please note this meeting was held in person for members of the Commission, and the Recreation Department, and was live streamed for on Facebook live for the public to hear.

Roll Call was taken.

Members present: Boulware, Firestone, Hanna, Kern, Moleski, Redinger

Via Phone: Lazardis

Also present: Mayor Hruba, Bob Pliske, Luis Pena-Oucha, Joe Radloff, Jim Kolesar, Jamie Mewhinney, Padmini Patnaik, Rhonda Miko, Meg English, and Carolyn Jatsek

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Redinger, seconded by Kern to dispense with the reading of the April 26, 2021 minutes and to approve them as written.

Oath of Office

Mayor Hruba administered the Oath of Office to Nick Hanna. Andie Lazardis had been sworn in at City Council on August 3, 2021. They fill the vacancies opened by the resignation of Pat Barth and Joe Zenir.

Mayor/Director Report:

Since the resignation of Recreation Director Tupa in May, the Mayor has pretty much let the department run itself, and they have done a marvelous job, especially with the opening of the new Aquatic Center and Concession Stand this summer. The search for the new director has been a long one, but a new director has been selected and will begin around November 21st, and an announcement will be made shortly before then. The City is pleased this person has agreed to join the team. The employees at the meeting tonight are the nucleus the make the department work. That being said as the new director comes in, there is sure to be some re-organization.

As far as the opening of the pool, it was far better than our expectations as far as the number of people who signed up for full membership, and pool guest passes. The concession stand has also been far greater volume then we thought it would be and has become a very important part of what we do up there are the Community Center and will become an attraction for all seasons, not just the summer, and especially during the holiday seasons when the kids are off from school.

There are many challenges coming up as well including the development of Stadium Drive property. The county has finished all its work down there. In addition we will be getting the Field House at Blossom turned over to use around May 1st. Between now and then there will be many discussions about how it is going to be used and by whom. For example, some people feel like it should be open in the mornings for people to walk, but the schools have exclusive use of it during the day. After school hours, the mutual areas, Cafetorium,

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restrooms, and locker areas, will be available for the City to use. How it will be open and to whom is yet to be finalized. The plan is for that facility to serve our programs, and assist with school programs and for us to have tournaments as a revenue source. All the planning still to be finalized. The school has been very cooperative in working with the City. It is a beautiful facility, and soon the Commission will have an opportunity to tour the facility. It has four basketball courts with a track around it. There are lines in the courts for tennis, pickle ball, volleyball and basketball. There is an area for a pitching machine to be used in the facility. We are looking forward to the facility opening and we thank all the staff that have been involved in the building design.

The department members are here tonight to talk about what's been going so far this year.

Commission member Moleski asked the Mayor to speak about the qualification of the new director without giving too much away. The new director is a female, and she comes with a sports background, is heavy into fitness, basketball and volleyball. She runs a variety of programs, and tournaments with up to 90 teams at a variety of cities throughout the Country. This is one of the items that attracted her to the City with her background as we get ready to open up the new Field House. She is a former European Professional Basketball Player. She is also a manager, she organizes and sets up all these events through leases and financials. She has her master degree and is manager and organizer, and through her role has helped manage this national organization. The City felt her strengths in organization and management will help the department now as it reorganizes, and get ready to organize and manage the new Field House. The City sees the City as a future tournament site for both our own programs, which will be helpful for our residents who have to travel to different locations. We have had different tournaments contact the City already for information for hosting.

- **Aquatic and Concession Update**

Bob Pliske, Facility and Aquatic Coordinator, and Luis Pena Oucha, Assistant Aquatic Coordinator spoke regarding the Aquatic Center. The new pools started quick and fast, going full tilt since day one. Everyone worked together to get staff trained and continued to build staff over the summer for fall and future. This summer over 30 of the 67 lifeguards that went off to college in August. The department is continuously training and hiring lifeguard to continue to build the staff. The American Red Cross now has a shallow water Lifeguard Certification, and the department is hoping to recruit some more adults with this certification. This would cover the Therapy and Activity pool. The department is also looking into working with high schools to offer Lifeguard Training classes are part of a physical education credit. In order to be certified, you must be 15 by the last day of the class, and 16 to be hired. During the peak season it takes 22-26 lifeguards for the 4 bodies of water. The outdoor pool and activity pool require additional training due to the features. This summer only a handful of the lifeguards have ever guarded an outdoor pool, let alone on with all these features. There are 4 lifeguard training classes scheduled for the fall, and we will continue to train small groups as needed as well.

Lessons started back with a small session in spring with social distancing, and parent participation in the lower levels, and then kicked off into full swim for summer. Summer

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programs wrapped up in July and we had a total of 393 participants. The next session will run twice a week beginning in October and will offer all levels from Kids N Company through the competitive swim clinic.

- **Membership Update**

Padmini Patnaik, Financial and Customer Service Clerk, gave updates regarding membership and concessions. Since the June 1st prorated for memberships, 2341 new members have joined, bringing in \$161,315 in revenue. In addition there was \$34,015 brought in this summer in guest passes, plus an additional \$1,107 visit guest passes sold. There were 15,872 member swipe-ins at the ticket booth this summer, which was a well-received addition to the facility.

The new concession stand was a great addition, with lines throughout the lobby most days during break times. Sales at the concession stand this summer were \$36,474. Dina Lawton, the Human Services Kitchen Manager made daily fresh food items for Concessions including a variety of salads, wraps, and desserts throughout the summer as a nice addition to the pizzas, pretzel, hot dogs, chips, candy, snacks, ice creams, slushies, and beverages.

- **Fitness Update**

The Mayor has asked Rhonda Miko, Fitness Coordinator, about the equipment in the fitness area. Historically the Corporate Membership funds have been put toward the fitness area. A lot of the equipment is out dated, and older but still functional. Rhonda has contacted a vendor for pricing on a list of 10-12 pieces of equipment to replace over a 3 year period, most of which is cardio equipment. There is currently about \$191,000 in that account, \$40,000 to \$50,000 of which is earmarked for the field house wall repair. The City is encouraging residents, members, and Commission members to give input on what types of equipment they would like to see.

After Labor there will be five new fitness classes added to the schedule, it has been a slow build since COVID, participants and instructors are feeling more confident coming back. We have hired some new instructors to teach as some former instructors found other things to do. More members are starting to come back hopefully some new equipment will help draw others in as well. Some equipment has just recently had repairs done, and some have been re-upholstered. The greatest class draw continues to be yoga, some spinning classes and Jazzercise. Classes average 3-12 people. Some of the most popular pieces of equipment are the elliptical are by far the most popular, treadmills, and recumbent bikes. Some of the new pieces of equipment came appear intimidating to some, but the recumbent elliptical is also popular. There have been no COVID outbreaks reported to the Community Center, we are still continuing to sanitize and clean the facility regularly. Senior fitness classes have started back that appears to be the largest population returning, this fall there will be 3 classes on the schedule each week.

- **Athletic Program Update**

There is also a shortage of umpires this summer nationally, and the Athletic Department has been thinking about trying to get a program going with the High School to get some

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umpire training offered as part of a Physical Education class. The State of Ohio that has a class 2 certification that covers middle school through JV, and then Class 1 for Varsity. Columbus is experimenting with a Class 3 that would cover youth through High School. This summer there was a full go on programs after some COVID restrictions were lifted and programs could operate at full numbers. There were a few bumps with camp counselor scheduling, but grounds crew and athletic staff were able to fill in the gaps. There were a few budget overages with camp since it had been planned for smaller groups, and one of the free field trips had to get changed, but overall it was a success. The City will be looking for a new Camp Director for next summer, as Corrine will not be back next summer.

The City partnered again with Center Court this year for summer tennis, and had great participation numbers and positive feedback. This summer we were able to offer 8 weeks of youth camps, and also added evening adult lessons at a discounted rate.

Run 4Your Life offered their Cross Training session this summer and had similar numbers to the past.

Baseball and Softball went well this summer. Numbers were slightly down compared to 2019, but travel numbers are up some. The younger kids' numbers are good, and we are looking to make a few improvements to the machine pitch program. Commission member Moleski offered the idea of changing the machine pitch format to be one practice and 3 games in a 2 week period so that the teams could continue to practice and grow throughout the season. Meg also mentioned adopting an academy style program using travel kids to assist, coaches have been talking about requiring travel kids to give back. Dave Mansbury also offered his staff to assist as well, but they don't want to step on toes. Commission Member Firestone chimed in about how well the academy format has worked out for soccer. The format of having older kids give back is a benefit for both the younger kids as well as the older athletes who learn coaching and leadership skills.

Although the Indians did not back for the tee ball program this year as they were focusing more on the inner City areas, we kept the same model. TC Caterna ran little hitters on the fields this spring and Juan Sanchez helped out as well. In the post season meeting with the other Cities in our leagues we decided to move away from playoffs and instead offer a longer season of regular play instead.

This summer the City utilized the Rainouted App to notify teams of the field status, and it has been complimented by the parents and participants.

Adult summer programming is all wrapped up. There were ten teams for the Sunday summer coed softball, and 21 teams of all ages for the summer Bocce League held up at Kids Quarters. Fall Adult Co-ed Volleyball will begin in September. The fall Sunday Co-ed Softball League will not be happening this year. The teams do not want to play during the Browns games this year. Next year the department is looking to possible offer an early summer and late summer league instead of summer and fall to be able to wrap up both seasons before football season.

Youth soccer numbers are thriving, each season the numbers keep growing. Justin Thacker does a great job, and utilizes the High School player to help teach the youth.

The Boys and Girls Lacrosse Clinic will be held again on Wednesday evenings in September in September, followed by an abbreviated fall session, and then the full season

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will be in spring. Bees Youth Football has come under CVYO, with a huge draw for them being the ability to use Stadium Drive Fields for practice and games.

The City will be offering a youth volleyball league this fall in conjunction with other Cities. We are offering 3/4 grade, 5/6 grade and 7/8 grade teams with volunteer coaches.

A question was raised regarding the use of school gyms for travel basketball this years. Jim and Jamie have a call into Maslona to find out where the school currently stands on outside groups using their facilities this year.

This summer there was a ground crew staff of eight kids that rotated with a max of 4 kids each day. The Grounds Crew is responsible for the upkeep, and prep of all the Athletic Fields including Blossom, City Hall, Highland Elementary Baseball Field, Chippewa Elementary Field for Lacrosse Season, Stadium Drive and the High School Baseball and Softball Fields during the summer when the schools are not in season.

Council Representative Report:

The City if looking to have work done on the east wall of the Community Center Field house. They are in the process of putting together the scope of work that needs to be done and then it will be going out to bid. The City if in the process of repaving parts of the drive at the Blossom facility. We are still waiting to hear news on the Nature Work Grant application the City submitted for work at the Stadium Facility.

Home Days was a great success. The Home Run race had a huge number of day of walk-up registration. Dog Jog also was a great success! The Recreation Department is planning to hold BooVille again this year, and it would be nice is some of the members of the Recreation Commission could be on hand to volunteer at the event this year.

CVYO Report:

All of the program leaders, along with Jim and Jamie, met with Meg and planned out the full year of field usage to know how everyone will be using the fields and facilities. All sports are happy with the support they are getting from the City. Baseball field assignments will be done in the spring. There is a lot of fall softball going on. Some of it is team development and there are some fall leagues. The Lacrosse clinic is scheduled for Wednesdays in September for both girls and boys, and the Soccer Academy is under way on Saturdays.

Thanks to Jim, Jamie and their staff for all their help this year! We know it was a limited staff and a wet season, but they did a great job! This summer the City hosted two girls' tournaments, and one baseball tournament through the Emerald Necklace, and the BOC Classic through the Batting Cages of Brecksville. The overwhelming theme of comments is how great our facilities are and how helpful our staff is to everyone.

Old Business:

A copy of the regularly scheduled meeting for 2021 have been handed out as a reminder. We may look at restructure the meeting schedule for next year.

New Business:

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Roundtable:

No new items, other than Welcome to Andie and Nick.

There being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Redinger and seconded by Moleski to adjourn the meeting at 9:20pm.

The next Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday, October 25, 2021 at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Carolyn Jatsek