MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 28, 2011 MEETING OF THE BRECKSVILLE RECREATION COMMISSION

Chairperson Nanci Schlabig called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Roll Call was taken. Members present: Pat Barth, Candice Beaver, Charles Cassaro, Don Lastoria, Recreation Commission Council Representative Rex Mack, and Nanci Schlabig. Also present: Recreation Director Tom Tupa and Clerk of Recreation Commission Kelly McNeill, and Athletic Director Pete Kormos. Brecksville resident also present: Meg English and Heather Barber. Absent: Brian Stucky.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 24, 2011

A motion was made by Councilman Rex Mack and seconded by Don Lastoria to dispense reading of the minutes and to approve as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Nanci Schlabig asked permission to go "out of order" on the meeting agenda since there was a resident present to address the Commission. Commission agreed to move to New Business.

New Business:

Brecksville resident Heather Barber, who resides at 9941 Spearhead Drive, was present to discuss a letter she had sent to Council Representative Rex Mack regarding concerns about the *cost* of Recreation Programs vs. *services* received. Barber feels some of the cost increases of the recreation programs are warranted, however, she feels many of them are not. She feels many residents are pulling their children out of our programs because of the price increase. In particular, Barber does not believe the cost increase for soccer is warranted. She likes the concept of the Academy for her younger kids, but she feels paying $60 for six sessions (less than an hour each) is a lot.

Director Tom Tupa explained the main reason for raising program prices was increasing cost, salaries and material increases. We did try to align them with other communities but did not raise the prices just for that reason.

Council Representative Rex Mack thanked Mrs. Barber for writing her letter and sharing her feelings. This is the type of feedback the Recreation Commission wants to hear. It helps the Commission see what needs to be done to help make the recreation programs better. Mack is hopeful that the Commission, along with the Recreation Department, will focus on "how do we make our programs better." Mack stated there was an in depth analysis and discussion with regards to the fee. Mack went on to explain the Recreation Department is not self-

sustaining. Historically, fifty percent of the Recreation Department funding is from the City's General Fund and the other half is from membership and participant fees. The costs for running the programs have risen in the last nine years, but the fees have not. The decision to raise fees was an effort to remain fiscally responsible with the City's overall budget. Barber stated she feels the fees should be incremented by the age of the kids as well as the qualifications of the instructors. For example, T-Ball should be less than baseball.

Athletic Director Pete Kormos stated he has not seen a decrease in number of participants in the Recreational Soccer Program. Kormos said at the younger age it may seem like chaos on the field, but he sees excitement from the young kids. Kormos feels it is just as important to teach kids the fundamentals, as it is to make it fun for them so they want to keep participating and coming back. Kormos is trying to provide a good service for the community.

Meg English, of the BTBA, stated when you look at all the dynamics going on within the soccer and baseball programs, for instance, there really is a great value.

Commission Chair Nanci Schlabig asked if Barber's main concern was more about cost." Barber said, "The cost is a concern. As a consumer, I have to look at how much the program costs versus what I am getting in return. There are some of those programs that do not warrant the cost for what you get." For example, at the Level 1 Learn-to-Swim lesson, the kids swim for 50 minutes with a high school student (who is certified) but who doesn't really pay attention to them."

Barber stated another example of getting your monies worth would be with the basketball program in Broadview Heights. She stated you definitely get more gym/court time to play basketball with the recreation program in Broadview Heights versus the basketball program in Brecksville.

Mack reported having available "gym/court time" is a challenge for the City. Based on the current reductions in virtually every other city department, it would be difficult to justify increasing more funding for recreation. Mack feels the Commission needs to focus on "How we can improve on our programs? How can we create *more value* in our programs for the same amount of money?"

Commission member Candice Beaver asked Barber, "If the soccer academy had a better ratio of high school student coaches vs. kids, would this make it more acceptable?" Barber stated no, she feels $60 for six sessions is just too much to pay for four and five year old kids. Barber feels twelve sessions for $60 would be more in line for the value of the program and for the age of the kids.

Commission member Don Lastoria stated maybe the Commission needs to look at some of the fees for certain programs since it was stated some programs may be too cheap while others are too expensive.

Beaver assured Barber her comments were heard and will be taken under consideration. Schlabig remarked she is interested in seeing where the numbers are for soccer registration since the increase has been put into affect. If numbers are dropping off, the commission may need to look at ways the City can improve on the programs as well as the fees.

Mack said the Commission will also speak to Tony Niccoli in regards to the Soccer Academy, the value of program vs. what is being paid.

Schlabig stated the city walks a very fine line when trying to allocate time to its residents for "open" pool and gym use as well as for recreation use.

Heather Barber thanked the Commission for their time and consideration.

<u>Mayor's Report:</u>
No Report

<u>COUNCIL REPORT:</u>
Councilman Rex Mack reported the Bicentennial Ball was on February 5, 2011. It was an awesome, historical event. On Saturday, the City of Brecksville hosted the first of a series of presentations on the history of Brecksville. Mack stated it was a very interesting event.

Mack announced the Telecommunications Commission has been working over the last year or so with AT&T on going live with a Community Channel. This will enable those residents who didn't have access with Time Warner to access the Community Channel through AT & T.

Mack reported there were major flood warnings this morning. The money spent on the infrastructure improvements seem to have been worth it. If the City not done the things they did with the infrastructure, there would have been a big mess.

Mack spoke to the Mayor's State of the City Address. The mayor reported the City continues to operate with considerably less resources without compromising too much in terms of service. There are eleven less Service employees, as well as five less policemen which shaved $1.2 million off of payroll. The City will be spending $1.3 million less in 2011. The City is doing everything it can to prepare for the loss of the V.A. in August at which time the City will lose 953 jobs as well as $2.1 million of income tax revenue. There are only four pieces of property zoned residential, which will add roughly 200 more homes. The city will be maxed out at 16,000 in residents. However, the City has only utilized 60% of our commercial zoning with another 40% to develop which will help with income tax revenue.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Tupa announced Kelly McNeill is currently working on scheduling the summer concert dates which will again be on Sunday evenings. The Community Center will be hosting a visit with the Easter Bunny and Outback Ray on Thursday, April 21st at 4pm. McNeill is also working on a Kalahari Day for Brecksville residents with further detailed information to follow. Tupa reported the rescreening of the gym floors will begin the first of May. (No cost to the City)

The Father/Daughter, Grandfather/Granddaughter dance was once again a sell out! Kelly McNeill and Pete Kormos did a great job and everyone who attended seemed to have a great time!

Registration for Summer Camp and Summer Baseball, Softball and Tee Ball begins tomorrow.

Athletic Director Pete Kormos announced the Recreation Department is starting an official Bocce League this summer. There will be two sessions: 1st Session beginning at the end of April and the second session will be beginning in July. The cost is $40 per team.

Kormos reported the fee structure for Tennis is as follows:

- **Camps for Tennis for Tots & Beginner 6-7 year olds**
- **$30 for BCC members**
- **$40 for residents**
- **$50 for non-residents**
- ***classes for 6-7 year olds has been changed to ½ hour each day**

Camps for Intermediate 6-14 year olds & Beginner 8-14 year olds
$40 for BCC members
$50 for residents
$60 for non-residents

Camps for 15-18 year olds and Adults
$45 for BCC members
$55 for residents
$65 for non-residents

BTBA

Meg English reported the BTBA held its Texas Hold'em Tournament. Everyone seemed to have a good time. The BTBA made approximately $10,000. Fields have been allocated for the summer. As always, more fields are definitely needed.

Round Table

Schlabig reported someone contacted her regarding the leaking ceiling in the Passive Lounge area that looks really bad. Their concern is why hasn't it been repaired correctly. Tupa stated it appears to be an outside problem and Service Director Ron Weidig said the City may have to look at the roofing issue this year.

Schlabig also reported a member asked what happens with the suggestions that are left in the box. The suggestions are documented and given to the appropriate manager to review. Mack believes there should be a written procedure on how to document and respond to those suggestions and he thinks the Commission should report on the improvements that are made from those suggestions. People need to be responded to.

Schlabig reported she emailed Tony Niccoli to see if he was going to be offering a soccer program for kids with "special needs" as stated when he first presented his Academy to the commission. Niccoli said the TOPS program is still going to happen but it has been tabled due to funding and put in a holding pattern at this time.

There being no further business to discuss, it was moved by Candice Beaver and seconded by Don Lastoria to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Kelly McNeill
Clerk of Commission