

WYCKOFF DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
October 19, 2020

Doug Arone opened the Zoom Remote Recreation Board Meeting at 7:30 p.m. with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act. “This Regular meeting of the Wyckoff Department of Parks and Recreation Board is now in session. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting has been posted on the bulletin board in the Memorial Town Hall and the Recreation Office; a copy has been filed with the Township Clerk, *The Ridgewood News*, *The Record*, and *The North Jersey Herald and News*, all papers with general circulation throughout the Township of Wyckoff.” At least 48 hours prior to this meeting the agenda was similarly posted, filed and mailed to said newspapers.

Members Present: Moe Ismael, Jeff Eischen, John Giovacco, Sue Buchanan, Chris Perneti, Doug Arone, Chris Beane, Tom Valente, Mike Ferrara, Jennifer Saxton

Members Absent: Rich Sica

Staff Present: Andy Wingfield, Recreation Director

Tom Madigan, Township Committee Liaison to the Recreation Board

The minutes of the September 14, 2020 meeting were discussed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Chris Perneti and seconded by Tom Valente. The motion was carried.

Recreation Director’s Report:

Travel Baseball & Softball Tryouts Complete:

The Director reported that the Travel Baseball Tryouts for 9u-12u were completed last month and that all participants have been notified of their results. Once again, the Township will have two teams at the 9u, 10u, 11u, and 12u levels, along with at least one team at the 13u level representing Wyckoff Baseball. 8u tryouts, for which we have 40 registrants for the tryouts, will be held in February. Baseball tryouts were once again run by an outside organization that specializes in baseball training and the Recreation Department and its coaches had no say at the tryouts and no influence on the results. Feedback on the current process from those that tried out, even those that were not selected, continues to be very positive.

The Travel Softball tryouts also took place last month with an independent evaluating company running the tryouts and the softball program will once again be strong with a 3/4th grade team, a u10 team, two u12 teams (A & B), and a u14 team. Those results are pending due to some girls being injured or sick during the tryout date and needing to make up the tryout.

Travel Baseball Head Coach Recommendations:

The Director presented a list of Travel Baseball Head Coaches for 9u-13u for the 2020 season. After a brief review of the names, John Giovacco motioned to approve all of the recommended coaches and Jeff Eischen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Winter Sports Discussion – Pandemic Concerns

The Director reported that he has been staying on top of the State’s protocols, guidelines, permissible activities, etc. and has been in contact with the Wyckoff Board of Education regarding the possibilities of having some form of recreational activity during the winter for the children of Wyckoff. The Director hopes that the Board of Education will allow time inside of the gyms now that the Governor has permitted indoor competitions to resume as of 10/12/2020.

In preliminary discussions with the Board of Education, a few things were made clear so that we could prepare for the eventuality that this winter's sports will look much different from previous years. First, no out of town children, parents, coaches, etc. will be allowed in the Wyckoff gyms this winter. Second, gym space will be extremely limited during the week due to the YMCA After-Care program having to spread out into the gyms this year. The possibility exists that get no gym space at all during the week except for possibly Eisenhower Middle School where there is no after care. The Director is also told that the volunteer coaches would have to move desks and chairs around in the gyms and then put them back if we were to get gym space during the week. In phone conversations with Ramapo High School and Eastern Christian Middle School, two schools that allow us to utilize their gyms in the winter for travel basketball, the Director has already been told that we would not be permitted to use those gyms this winter for either basketball or wrestling. Considering the Recreation Department typically has approximately 160+ hours of gym time in the winter for its recreation & travel basketball for boys and girls, and its wrestling program, and now we will be done to 50 hours if we are fortunate, the Director explained that it was likely that we are going to have to cancel the travel basketball and wrestling seasons this year. The Board discussed at length but given that both travel basketball players and wrestlers have opportunities outside of the Recreation Department to participate in their sports, the Board unanimously agreed that if we could at least get a Recreation Basketball program going for as many age groups as possible this winter, it would be considered a successful winter. That, along with our outdoor Roller Hockey program, should provide enough programming for those feeling comfortable enough to participate in sports this winter. The Board was in full agreement on our plan going forward to potentially cancel the travel basketball and wrestling seasons if the Board of Education could not provide us with more gym time due to limited time and space available in the gyms. The Director will move forward based on this agreement and on further conversations with the Board of Education.

While discussing which age groups might be able to participate in our Recreation Basketball program, the question was brought about the high school league on Monday nights in Lincoln. When the Director advised that we would not have access to Lincoln School on Monday nights, Sue Buchanan suggested the possibility of having the high school teams play outdoors during the winter. There are several days in the winter that are warm enough to be outside and play basketball and this could be a great escape for the high school aged participants who may otherwise not have another sport to play in the winter. With unanimous support of this idea, the Director will run a registration for the high school league and hope to get good participation.

Roller Hockey Registration Has Begun:

The Director reported that Roller Hockey registrations have begun for boys and girls in Grades K-8. The Director feels this could be a good year for Roller Hockey considering that this sport takes place outdoors and parents may feel more comfortable with this type of activity this winter instead of being inside playing basketball or wrestling. The league that we participate in had previously reported that they were not sure if they would move forward with a season but after considerable thought, has decided to hold the league this year with games starting in January. The Director will update the Board next month on registration numbers.

Girls Volleyball:

The Director updated the Board on the girls volleyball season. As documented previously, the girls season was moved outdoors this fall to abide by the state's rule of no indoor competitions being allowed. So far, the season has been going extremely well. The weather has cooperated and the coaches report that the teams are performing very well, even on the grass. The parents

are very happy with the decision to run the program outdoors this year, given that we couldn't play indoors.

Camp/Clinic Bid Extension Recommendations:

The Director requested that the Board consider approving a 2-year extension on the camp & clinic bids for our Chess Classes, Arts and Crafts program, and the Multi-Sports Camp run by US Sports Institute. The Resolution awarding these 3 bids two years ago allows for a 2 year extension provided the service was positive and that the vendor agrees to extend the relationship under the same terms. After a brief discussion, the Board unanimously approved the 2 year extension for the 3 programs after a motion from Sue Buchanan and a second from Moe Ismael.

Football/Cheer Update:

The Director reported that football and cheer are 3 weeks in to the regular season and that things are going relatively smooth, considering the current environment. We have had no suspension of play to this point due to a positive case but some have been forced to sit out after being asked to self quarantine by the Board of Ed after positive cases developed in the schools. Protocols are being followed at every practice and game, including attendance, temperature checks, and health questionnaire forms. The Director has observed some of the games and has noted that all of the coaches are wearing their masks at all times on the field and that the spectators are also being very cooperative in terms of wearing masks and staying off of the playing surface during the games and practices.

Open Comment Period:

No comments

Report from Board Members:

None

New or Old Business:

None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Wingfield
Director, Wyckoff Recreation & Parks