

MINUTES OF THE RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

Tuesday, April 7, 2009

Rec&Ed Offices

1530 Eisenhower Place

Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Members Present: Tim Berla, Sheila Calhoun, Tom George, Paula Greeno, Joanne Kimata, Sequoyah King, Shannon Kos, Betty Wier

Excused: Colleen Greene, Dave Korman, Nate Nemon, Jon Strite

Ex-Officio Members Present: Sara Aeschbach, Larry Dishman, Glenn Nelson

Visitors: none

Call to Order: Chairperson Paula Greeno called the meeting to order at 7:10pm

Approval of Minutes: Joanne Kimata moved to accept the minutes of the March 3, 2009 meeting. Tom George seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Public Commentary: none

Old Business

A. Adding new playing fields – no report

B. City/School Agreements – Sara Aeschbach reported that the City confirmed the proposed field fees on March 8 as presented at the March 7th RAC meeting. The major third party groups have found other fields to rent outside the City for their upcoming baseball/softball season. Larry Dishman reported that one Kensington Valley team has requested practice time on the City fields and will pay the new rates. Larry also reported that the Ann Arbor Public Schools Buildings and Grounds department will provide the field preps for the Slauson Middle School and Huron High School teams, with permission from the City. Sara believes the field agreement is ready to be signed; however it is only a 1-year agreement and she would like to not wait until mid-year to begin discussions. There should be an opportunity for public discussion when these negotiations begin. Glenn Nelson voiced his concern that more changes in the agreement may be forthcoming from the City, or the agreement would have covered a longer period of time. Glenn would like to see negotiations begin as soon as possible. This will allow for appropriate public input for all parties involved. Sara reported that there was concern expressed by various City officials that the public was made aware of possible field fee increases before the decision was finalized by the City via the City/Schools Field Agreement. Commissioners discussed various options to increase the transparency of City/School discussions, when there is a public impact resulting from decisions about mutual agreements between the two organizations. It was decided that future RAC meetings should have a defined agenda to invite public comment on specific issues. Paula Greeno will draft a RAC resolution to inform Council and the Board of Ed about the need for including RAC and the public in decisions about recreation matters.

New Business

A. Youth Team Sports Assignments - Sara Aeschbach requested RAC input involving the process for team assignment for youth sports teams. The process currently followed gives first priority to those who register before the deadline. Among those registrations, returning players from that team are placed before newcomers to the team. There is a long list of special requests that are granted whenever feasible, ranging from requests for a coach or school, to be placed with another player, to avoid placement with another player, etc. Coaches are not involved in the team assignment process, other than to stipulate a cap on the size of the team. There was support from RAC members in favor of maintaining the current priority process, and for making the process public information. Team

placement information should be posted on the website as unanimously agreed upon by RAC . Shannon Kos suggested that a link be attached at the online registration site which will take the registrant to the team placement guidelines. RAC members also suggested that it be noted at the bottom of the placement guidelines that all decisions made by Rec&Ed are final and there is not an appeal process. It was also suggested that “special requests” be specified, so parents know what the options are.

Briefing Agenda

A. Items from RAC

1. Report from PAC – Tim Berla reported that the City budget meeting for the public is April 14. The West Park plan meeting is also on April 14. On May 7 there will be a joint PAC/PRIMP meeting regarding Argo Pond and the issue of removing Argo Dam and the impact on the community.

B. Items from Parks and Recreation – no report

C. Items from Community Education and Recreation –Sara Aeschbach reported the Pickleball response to the free clinic was greater than expected. Rec&Ed is participating in an event May 16 called “Touch the Truck” in conjunction with Great Start/Success by Six. The purpose is to draw families in order to share community resources that support young children and families. The event will be held at Briarwood Mall. The Civic Chorus concert is April 26, is free to the public and will be held at Slauson.

Transmittals - none

Adjournment: Tom George moved to adjourn the meeting and Betty Wier seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Chairperson Paula Greeno adjourned the meeting at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Drago, Recording Secretary to RAC