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Bexley Recreation Board Minutes
November 1, 2023.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to open the meeting.

Ann Brennan - So moved

Clare Ceballos - Second

All in favor - The motion was approved.

Roll Call

Eric Acton present

Ann Brennan - present

Roger Carroll -present

Clare Ceballos - present

Aly DeAngelo - present

Tyler Stanley - present

Joanne Pickrell - School Board - present

Jessica Saad - City Council

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to approve the October 2023 board minutes

Aly DeAngelo - So moved

Ann Brennan - Second

All in favor - The motion was approved.

Jeffrey Summer Camp-Year End Report

Katie Sarvas - We were able to get back to a "normal year". We had Junior Counselors again.

Many are excited to someday come back as counselors.

Starting salary was \$12.15 as opposed to \$12.00 last year.

The overall budget for this year was \$472,270. The expenditures were \$450,029.

Overall revenue was \$578,000.

In 2023 we had 2,951 campers for the 10 week period, 295 campers per week.

The net this year was \$127,971.

Mike Price - It's the net as we budget for the direct costs for the program. The overall recreation fund is not in the positive.

There are many costs not directly related to running the program, for example my costs and Natalie costs or the maintenance are not in this. This net is the direct budget for this program related to its revenue.

Katie Sarvas- We are so thankful for the Ryan Solomon scholarship fund.

This year we needed \$20,666.00 needed for scholarship. The fund is only to cover up to \$15,000 and they went over that amount to cover the full \$20,666 needed this year.

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Katie Sarvas - The total staff for camp this year was 100. Even with that staff we still have subbing issues. We will address this for next year.

This year we had 523 registered and 43 were non residents.

Katie Sarvas - For the 2024 Camp Program we recommend a 7% increase

Half Day will go from \$121.0 to \$129.47

Full Day will go from \$192.00 to \$205.44

Half Day non-resident \$140.00 to \$149.80

Full Day non-resident \$220.00 to \$235.40

Joanne Pickrell-Katie what is your sense on staffing for next year and having to increase starting pay.

Katie Sarvas - I don't think it will be an issue. That is what I love about the Junior Counselor program because it gets kids invested and want to come back. I don't see having to raise the starting pay again next year.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to approve the rate increase to 7% for Jeffrey Summer Camp

Joanne Pickrell - So moved

Clare Ceballos - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved.

BACPack/SOCO - Year End Report

Katie Sarvas - BACPack is our before and after school program and SOCO is the school's day off program. Both fall under the same budget. We had two payments of grant money that was given to us to the total of \$372,800.00

The expenditures were \$365,561.00. Revenue was \$523,474.80. Not included in that total was the grant money we received through COVID relief. The net for the program was \$157,914.00

The number of students registered for BACPack was 288 and SOCO it was 146.

Katie Sarvas - Some key points regarding the program starting pay went for \$12.00 to \$14.00 to be competitive. Maryland and Cossingham registration keep rising whereas Montrose seems to stay about the same.

There were 9 individuals in need of a scholarships for BACPack which came to \$17,647.50 and for SOCO \$2,271.00 With another source of scholarship help for summer camp we use the Youth Scholarship fund to help offset the cost of scholarships in the 2023 - 2024 school year.

Katie Sarvas - Total staff is 43 of which 28 are new with some of them being camp staff. This gives consistency to the program. Parents and kids know the staff.

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We were able to work with the school to find a solution in providing us with a school bus to transport Cassingham students to Montrose.

We have a new Recreation Coordinator, Isaiah Drewry who oversees the Montrose After Care Site. He is doing a fantastic job.

We continue to work with the schools on all fronts, which has proven to be a great source of support. This support reaches further than just our two entities, it mainly is for the kids and the parents in the program.

We are recommending a 7% increase for the BACPack and SOCO program fees.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to increase BACPack and SOCO fees 7%.

Ann Brennan - So moved

Tyler Stanley - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved.

Jeffrey Mansion Preschool - Year End Report

Katie Sarvas - We had 57 students enrolled. The max is 59. The revenue last year was \$282,177.22 The expenses were \$320,407. We had a negative net of \$38,229.78 We received a federal grant for \$139,226.19 which is not included in the revenue total.

Roger Carroll - were the expenses anything more than the salaries?

Katie Sarvas - Yes to the best of my knowledge mostly salaries and wages. Some of the grant money was used for purchases.

Clare Ceballos - Are these grants ongoing ?

Katie Sarvas - No . And we do not expect anymore.

Mike Price - I want to remind the board we are talking about the 2021 - 2022 school year. We passed a significant increase in tuition of 21% which will affect 2023 - 2024.

Katie Sarvas - We had a change in leadership for the preschool. Cate Swendal resigned and Angela Buddendeck is the interim director for this school year. We wanted to keep some consistency for this school year. We will open up this full time position in early Spring. Hopefully this person will come in the Spring to learn the system.

Roger Carroll - Did you get any complaints about tuition increase last year?

Katie Sarvas - we did not get complaints but we had 3 students that requested scholarships.

Roger Carroll - I was just wondering how our rates compare to JCC and St Catharine's

Katie Sarvas - we are still lower.

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Katie Sarvas - In addition to raising the rates by 7% we would also like to establish a non-resident rate as we do with summer camp. There would be a 15% increase for non-residents and it would only be for new families. Current non-residents would be grandfathered in.

Mike Price - The increase is 15% on top of the 7% increase.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to increase the tuition for next school year 2024 - 2025 by 7%.

Joanne Pickre II - So moved

Clare Ceballos - Second

All in favor - The motion is approved

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to increase tuition for non-residents new to the program by 15% for the 2024 - 2025 school year.

Aly DeAngelo - So moved

Joanne Pickrell - Second

All in favor - The motion was approved.

Mike Price - I want to publicly thank Katie Sarvas for stepping in and doing an amazing job in her leadership role with the Jeffrey Mansion Pre-school.

Joanne Pickrell - I want to compliment and add my support to the new programming you have provided for Middle School age children. The Recreation Department has helped to fill an incredible void for that age group.

Director's Report

2024 Budget Update

Mike Price - I am hoping to meet with the Mayor tomorrow Thursday, November 2, 2023. We will have a discussion regarding the Bexley Pool rates so the Recreation Board will have a discussion at our December meeting.

We will continue to have a philosophical discussion about what the Recreation Fund should be. Because the financial position the City is in I do not believe the transfer will be a big hardship, but the Mayor has a better overall sense of the budget than I do.

Roger Carroll - When you said the balance was \$900,000 was that because of COVID money?

Mike Price - Yes that is what got us through the last three years. Without that money we will be in a much different situation for the Recreation Department's standpoint and the City perspective.

Year of the Parks Update

Mike Price - There will be a ground breaking on the Commonwealth Follies on November 14 at 5:00 p.m.

Those are the Follies on the south side of Columbia Ave. They will house a permanent restroom and the mechanicals for the irrigation system. That is part of the overall Commonwealth

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masterplan. There will be more public discussion about the Commonwealth master plan regarding Columbia.

Mike Price - Some additional information regarding the Year of the Parks. We just received results for the Skate Park survey and we still need to digest. The design team is working on the first draft of the skate park. We are hoping to see the first draft of Skate Park by the end of November. Hope to have a public meeting in early December on the first draft.

The pond still has no water in it. They are putting the last set of stones on the top then the island is supposed to have concrete. I am hoping they can pour that. The last discussion I had with the builders was October 20th.

We continue to work on our sign package presentation. The signs are expensive so we are identifying our priorities as far as installation. We hope to have step one on installation in 2024.

Roger Carroll - how are the Schnider Park fields holding up?

Mike Price - They are holding up well. We put a decent amount of money into field maintenance for Schneider and Commonwealth fields. The only big impact at Commonwealth fields are the spots directly in front of the goals.

Preservation and Enhancement Committee Update

Mike Price - The next meeting is next Tuesday, November 7 at 3:00 p.m. at Jeffrey Mansion. I ran into Anne in the park and she was with park maintenance and forest management experts so that was nice.

We had two people from ODNR who are in forest management, Charlie Flowers, U.S. Forestry Department and we did a walk through the woodlands. And we can now have a detailed management plan which will be a big part of the Preservation and Enhancement plan. A person from ODNR, Mr. Alster and Charlie Flower's, who is a committee member, will give a report at the meeting on some of the discussion and some of the things we are seeing.

Mike Price - My overall takeaway is that we need to manage the negatives within the woodlands, the things that are impacting the health of the woodlands. That is the invasive species and deer. Those are two things that have an impact on the overall health of the woodlands. One thing they pointed out that was obvious was there were no saplings, or new tree growth. If we do not address those things we are going to have woodlands that have 100 year old mature trees with nothing there to replace them. There will be tuff discussion and decisions around some of those topics.

There is an importance we will need to have of a woodland management plan and how we communicate this to the public, why it is important. Get buy-in from everyone. There will be tuff discussions on the front end for the betterment of the long term. We will need to help people know why this is important to get their buy in and support.

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Ann Brennan - The bottom line is if we do not address the too large deer population or the area. We need to invest in a diversity of trees for the future that will attract diverse wildlife.

Mike Price - We were told 8 to 10 deer per square mile is manageable. Bexley is 2 square miles as a whole. We are talking about an area that is a fraction of a square mile and we have seen upwards to 14 deer in just that area.

Qudos to Anne who has been pushing for this for a long time because I will say that it is really important we go through this process because the longer we wait the further behind the woodlands gets to have replacement trees of significant size and diversity. And I think in the future, because we really don't spend money on the woodlands, other than a maintenance staff, we spend money on woodland upkeep.

Fall Events - Recap

Into The Woods Festival - Saturday, October 7

Mike Price - It was not a great day weather wise for the event. This is not a City event but it is an event the Recreation Board approved with alcohol permit for an outside organization. The organizers felt good about the turnout.

From our perspective we did not receive negative feedback from the community. There was not a noticeable impact on the park. I will say we kept a really close eye on how much rain we were having leading up to the event. How wet the ground was getting then having a great number of people walking around on it for 6 hours.

I will say the take away is it did add additional operational on our maintenance . As much as they say it is their event it's our parks and we have to have to be involved in the set up and tear down.

We have to have staff there , who are going to clean the restrooms, keep things stocked or find something for them or fix the breaker when one of the bands blows it from drawing so much power. So we had staff there at the event (they were paying for staff at the event). There is clean up, there are a lot of things they have to do for these kinds of events and the following week was harvest Festival which is very labor intensive on the maintenance side. That is a take away I need to be aware of that you need to be aware of. I am not saying it wasn't manageable but it is a reality.

When we look at these dates in the future try to keep at least 2 weeks away from each other.

Clare Ceballos - how many attended.

Mike Price - They do not know either. Since this is a free event for those not buying alcohol there is not a way to track.

That would be a change I would make to encourage that everyone have a ticket to attend a free ticket if you are not drinking. Just for a traffic perspective.

Roger Carroll - If we have time on the agenda next month can they come in and just talk about it.

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I had asked them to come to the December meeting. I think they also want to discuss the expectation of getting booked two years out so it can be a standing event. Or get a two year approval from the board and also give an update.

Harvest Festival Friday October 13

Mike Price - What an amazing event and night for Harvest Festival. It was one of the biggest turnouts we have seen. It was a great overall event. The staff did an amazing job. Thank You to Natalie for all her leadership on the event and to all the staff.

Halloween Bash

Middle School Event - Friday, October 27

Mike Price - There were 232 registered middle schoolers. We were very happy about the way the event went. The kids seemed to have a great time and behaved themselves.

Jo Ann Pickrell - Did you let kids in at the door?

Mike Price - we did let a few in but we do not want to make that policy.

Adult Bash - Saturday October 28

Mike Price - It was another big success with 163 registered plus staff.

We had similar numbers last year. There are a few changes we will probably make for 2024.

All in all the event is so well received and the feedback has been so positive. A huge thank you to Emily Perfect and Lauren Miller for taking the lead on this event and to all the staff that worked so hard to pull this off.

Halloween Patrol

Mike Price - Thank yo yo all the amazing volunteers. We are going to regroup on this and work to improve volunteer turnout which has not bounced back from COVID years. We had roughly 153 volunteers and in the past on a good year we had roughly 300 volunteers. The biggest change is the amount of capital students we have volunteer, we just are not seeing the numbers we had in the past. We want to look and see how we can increase those numbers.

Winter Event Schedule

Mike Price - The Tree Lighting is Sunday, December 3rd at 5:00 p.m. The Pancake Breakfast is Saturday, December 9th for 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. And Storytime with Santa is Sunday, December 10th.

Mike Price - The Recreation office will be closed December 26 and 27. December 26 offices are closed City wide and December 27 the Recreation Department is closed because we do not close on Bexley Day when the rest of the City is closed.

Roger Carroll - May I have a motion to adjourn the meeting?

Ann Brennan - So moved

Clare Ceballos - Second

All in favor - The motion was approved.