

Recreation Board Meeting Minutes
October 10, 2024

Nn Brennan - May I have a motion to open the meeting.

So moved -Tyler Stanley

Second - Joanne Pickrell

All in favor the motion is approved

Roll Call

Eric Acton Present

Ann Brennan - Present

Roger Carroll - Absent

Aly DeAngelo - Present

Joanne Pickrell - Present

School Board Rep

Tyler Stanley - Present

Lori Ann Feibel

City Council Rep.

Ann Brennan - May I have a motion to approve the September minutes

So moved -Al DeAngelo

Second - Tyler Stanley

Mike Price - I want to give a brief recap of what Katie does for the department. She oversees 1.34 million dollars of the department's budget. She oversees the Jeffrey Summer Camp Jeffrey Mansion Preschool and the BACKPack programs. The programs she oversees generate 1.6 million into the budget; this is a huge driving revenue source. She oversees four full time staff and over one hundred seasonal employees. And provide services for over 870 young people. Katie, thank you for all your amazing work on so many levels.

Angela Buddendeck is our Preschool Director she has been with the preschool for four years. Angela was interim director for part of the year and did an amazing job. We had gone through a lot of changes the past year. She was a huge part of the transition we had the past year. She was a steady rock for the program. She had new ideas and brought positive energy to the preschool.

With that I will pass it over to Katie.

Jeffrey Mansion 2023 - 2024 School Year Report

Katie Sarvas - I want to thank Angela and she truly put some fresh breath into the program. It's so nice, it's organized and it is exciting to be in the preschool. Everyone is excited to be there kids and parents and teachers. The staff knows they are supported and it is important to have someone like that in the lead.

Last year for JMP 2023 -2024 school year we had a total of 58 students. Out of the 58 students we had 3 on scholarship which totaled \$12,114.00

The total revenue for that school year was \$367,800.00 The total expenses were \$330,696.00 The total net was \$39,143 as opposed to a negative \$38,229.00. That was the result of rate increases to catch up with expenses. It was somewhat Covid related and prices going up and trying to catch up with that.

Angela as interim director with just two weeks to go had to get the preschool up and running. Hiring staff, filling in spots we had available for students. Not only was she the Director she was teaching a five day full day class. Angela is now the full time Preschool Director. She does not have a classroom this year so she can facilitate student and staff assessments. And work one-on-one with students that may need additional assistance in addition to working on strategic planning for the program.

We have several new lead teachers and assistant teachers.

We have eliminated the three day option and moved into a five day option only. This increases revenue and the children are more productive .

We introduced a non-resident rate also this year.

Our HR person, Emily Bickley , now helps with the hires and this is a great help.

There was a 21% cost increase for 2022-2023 and also 2023-2024. This school year of 2024 the rates went up 7% . We continue to ask for an increase to get back to pre Covid levels. Our net in the 2018-2019 school was around \$68,000 or \$69,000 and we are trying to get back to that positive place.

Currently our families are being charged, resident, non-resident, half day, full day. And then what the 6,7,8,9 or 10 percent increase can look like. And as Mike was saying we are still asking for an increase since we are still trying to get back to pre covid.

We are asking for an increase so we can continue to get back to our pre covid finances. In 2025 our admin costs will increase. Mindy Walsh full time staff who helps out with our admin duties with preschool. Emily Sweet helps me and Angela out with different assignments within preschool and then myself. We also want to keep competitive with teacher pay.

Mike Price - As just a reminder we had this conversion and then covid that had an impact on our revenue. In all, I think almost all of our staff costs teachers pay went up roughly 30 to 40 % almost immediately in order to stay competitive . I think we are in a good spot right now. We saw a huge increase in our costs basically overnight. As you remember there was a bit of relief

money that helped offset those losses for a period of time so that we didn't have to come back and be like next year we are going to charge 40% more to our users so we had that money from covid to really allow us to sort of gather that increase over multiple year. We did one large increase and then we are 70% of what we talked the last year and then the next year which is coming out of this coming up school year . We want to stay on that path. We feel the expense side is becoming more stable. Instead of seeing a huge increase we will see a sorta of cost of living at 3 to 4 % . So if we increase about 70% we will start to get back to where we were. When we talk to the board that there are a lot of expenses that are not obviously part of that we need. The maintenance on the building, nothing associated with the building gets assessed to the preschool obviously able to quantify school we have to have space. My time is not included. We try to keep to the direct operating costs.

Ann Brennan - Was everything considered in the way exactly at the former net versus what you are calculating in this net ? Is the criteria the same.

Mike Price - One of the things Katie highlighted was the fact that we now have some administrative costs. Katie before covid, if you will, was not overseeing the preschool, and her staff was not involved, they are now involved as some of their duties. So we took 20% of their salary and assessed it towards the preschool. So that the only sort of new associated with otherwise succession it's teachers' costs , its snacks ,it is inflationary costs are impacting.

Katie Sarvas - Most of our expenditures, as with all the programs, is staffing.

Ann Brennan - You mentioned you want to keep salaries competitive. Will the 7% increase do that?

Katie Sarvas - Yes so right now I think we are at one of the higher rates for teachers. If they keep coming back or if they are coming from other programs we just want to stay competitive by being able to have the flexibility to say yes we obviously value you.

Mike Price - Right now we are in a good place and that the increases will be 3 to 4% salary and wages as opposed to what we have seen , double digit percent increases. Yes we feel 7% will be enough.

Mayor Kessler - Like comps. The JCC \$1500 full day . BUMP isn't even full day.

Katie Sarvas - No they have more limited hours and if you need more care there is an additional fee. JCC is all day but they get lunch and go to the pool.

Mike Price - To your point we are competitive.

Mayor Kessler - Covid did a lot of things. Mike and I were just talking about the budget. We had a revenue surplus over the past several years as working from home became the thing to do.

As that is waning, income tax is not going to make the same amount this year and so we are projecting next year we probably not going to make target either. Another thing that happened during covid, you guys have been kind of consistent with, is the value of the community and also the business model. Of this there wasn't a huge subsidy happening from the general fund, that was sort of reversed a little bit after covid, through covid, and especially after covid as things were recovering the business model turned upside down. Just long story short we are looking pretty closely at just all the different cost centers we have. First off the decision making that you do is amazing Mike and Katie and the leadership Angela you guys are really good information. The thing to think through, that we are all considering, which is we need to be good stewards of the finances we have. Obviously you already know, I am just reinforcing it, as we look to the future. We are trying, we are starting to make internal decisions that are kind of hard. Like where are we cutting back expenses in order to make these work. So it's an ethos, that is going to be kind of carried through all the different segments of our financial decision making. I think that is helpful information to have. If it was too vague and I spoke in code I am happy to answer any questions.

Ann Brennan - May I have a motion to approve a 7% increase for the 2025 - 2026 school year for Jeffrey Mansion Preschool.

Aly DeAngelo - So moved

Joanne Pickrell - Second

All in favor say aye

Ann Brennan - The motion is approved

Ann Brennan - What is the capacity for 5 day full day in the Preschool?

Katie Sarvas - 44

BACpack and SOCO School Year Report 2023 - 2024

Katie Sarvas - I am excited about the program and the direction it is going.

The program started in 2016.

For the 2023 - 2024 school year the expenditures were \$417,861.49 and revenue was \$540,162.39. The net was \$122,300.90.

The total number of students registered for After Care for 2023-2024 were 322. To look at where we are right now is 281. The total number of students registered for SOCO for 2023 -2024 is 153. To look at where we are now is 118. That is where we were last year.

The daily average for 2023 - 2024 is 64. We are currently at 65 registered.

The starting pay for counselors is \$14.00 an hour. Currently this rate is competitive but we always need to see that we are competitive enough.

For 2024-2025 we see a slight decrease in registration.

For 2023-2024 we awarded scholarships for 16 individuals, that was an increase from last year.

For BACpack the total was \$23,740.50 and for SOCO the total was \$5,175.00

The total staff was 44 with 11 new staff. Some of the staff were camp staff who continued to work camp.

Some of the highlights of 2023 - 2024 was to work with the school to provide a school bus to transport Cassingham students to Montrose. We were able to bring back field trips to SOCO during the long winter breaks.

We are looking forward to 2024-2025. We have a new Recreation Coordinator, Luke Holcomb who oversees Montrose After Care. We also moved SOCO to Montrose and this enables us to increase our registration for the days off care. We can now increase registration from 94 to 154.

We want to recommend, keeping with the same thought process, a 7% raise in the cost for the 2024-2025 school year.

Ann Brennan - I know you need a motion and acceptance and approval to do that. Is the intention to revisit we need to continue to get eight percent, nine percent, ten percent. I couldn't remember what our discussion was when we talked about it last time.

Katie Sarvas - The 20% increase needed to be figured out in 2022. And then kind of keep doing that bump until we level out. And then I know we talked about it several times. People like to go back to the good old days of one or two percent or even no increase, as it was for several years.

Mike Price - We will always evaluate it and see where we are. The Mayor's conversation is just a flashback. Before covid we actually covered our costs for two or three years leading up to covid, where actually we were earning more money than we were spending. Fast forward to covid we went to losing \$370,000. We almost immediately went to losing almost \$400,000 difference in terms of how many people were interested. The City had a break from a transfer then you know they increased that \$270,000 and we had covid money that was in there that helped the fund balance. It sets finances on its head. These three programs we are talking about may be the driving force of the department. We run a lot of classes but none of them are the driving finances of the department but these three do. We saw huge increases in costs because these budgets are 80 to 90 % salaries. So when you have a 40 to 50% increase in your salary and wages costs your program doesn't go up by 40 to 50 % between your expenses. So this concept is you don't want to raise costs all at once. We had a fund balance and we will do that. Over money will be a big part of that, and again this is a big part of us getting back to where there is no need for a transfer.

Ann Brennan - So over the years you will reassess?

Mike Price - Yes

Ann Brennan - May I have a motion to approve a 7% increase for the BACKpack and SOCO programs for 2025 - 2026.

Clare Ceballos - So moved.

Tyler Stanley - Second

Ann Brennan - All in favor say aye.
Ann Brennan - The motion is approved.

End of JSC Season Report 2024

Katie Sarvas - This was a successful year. We had an overall budget of \$502,381. The expenditures were \$453,605 We anticipate ongoing staff expenses that are still on going from the end of the camp until December will be about \$42,000. Which means our expenses will be \$495,605.00 Then our revenue is \$646,874. And that number does include our scholarship.

The total number of campers registered this year was 3,061 over the 10 week period. That averages out to be 306 campers per week.

The net total for Jeffrey Summer Camp is anticipated to be \$151,269.

The weekly expenses were \$49,560.00 and the weekly revenue was \$64,687.00

The the total for Scholarships was \$21,687.00 This the fourth summer for this Scholarship Program funded by the Ryan Solomon Memorial Fund at the Bexley Foundation. This was established by the Solomon family in honor of their son. Ryan passed away in January of 2021. The Jeffrey Camp Program was selected by the family as the recipient of this gift because of the profound impact the Jeffrey Summer Camp had on Ryan as a camper. The fund is for \$15,000.00 per summer but the family covered the full \$21,630.00 cost of scholarships this summer.

The total staff for camp this year was 102. We had 76 returning staff and 26 new staff. We had 535 campers registered and 44 were non-residents.

Angela Buddendeck oversaw the Playcamp this year. To support her from the transition of Preschool to Playcamp we had two seasoned Assistant Directors. This seemed to help the overall function of the camp. Since Angela is a full time employee we now have leadership consistency in the Playcamp program.

This is the third summer that we had the financial resource form the Solomon Fund to provide a Bexley High School student or college student some financial assistance provided by this scholarship opportunity. We ask all the staff who they think my deserve this, great leaders always on time going over and beyond. This opportunity keeps some staff on hand because they look forward to this.

Registration

Is something we are constantly looking at. We try to do everything on our end to make it user friendly.

Looking forward to 2025 we will offer a 10 week summer camp again. We want to improve how we do registration. We want to find more ways to make staffing easier, that is more of a subbing situation, we need to find a better way to utilize our subs.

We will no longer have a half day option for camp Woods and Park. We are going back to the way things were in 2016. ODJFS has changed the ruling of how many hours in the day is considered to be a summer camp and now they have gone back to the original so we don't have to have the differences of two a and b camps . So we won't have the option of having a half day camp.

Mike Price - Having that opinion also makes it very difficult to staff.

Ann Brennan - Do many sign up for the half day?

Mike Price - No but, we had to offer it. And then it will also help us on the registration side since it is more straightforward.

Mike Price - I do want to speak about registration. It is all fair in terms of their concerns. Their one concern is how long it will be to find out if they got in camp. So we have a program with 140 kids. We did get a lot of feedback and I think all were fair in terms of concerns, without understanding the sort of things we have to figure out in order to work through the registration process in this field .

We open registration to returning families first. So they register for all weeks, not knowing their exact schedule yet. We hear the feedback and the frustrations. That is part of the reason we will make a change to the registration policy. We have a user-friendly get what you want in a registration timeline line. The problem is the longer a person takes to confirm the weeks they want the longer the people on the waitlist can register. What we know for sure the average person uses about five weeks. We don't find out until April what weeks are needed.

What we are going to do, and the reason our registration policy is so user friendly is that we want to provide service to the community and we don't want to gauge the public. But what it has done is cause a problem for the rest of the public. We don't want to cause stress on those on the waitlist. We want all to have access in a timely way.

We are going to institute a cancellation policy. Basically almost immediately after you register. Registration will open in late January early February for returning families where they can sign up for the weeks they want. There will be a two day period to cancel any of their weeks. If they cancel outside the cancellation date they will be charged \$65.00

We are going to send out a notice regarding the registration policy.

Ann Brennan - So you will give them a deadline to cancel?

Mike Price - when they register they are committing \$65.00 for every week. So if they cancel there will be a cancellation fee.

Ann Brennan - It's untenable for those on the waitlist because they can't plan for child care

Aly DeAngelo - No other camp does that. If you have registered for a camp you are in. Or for instance, have to pay half.

We had to cancel a week at the JCC and I think we got \$50.00 back.

So you know it is what it is.

Ann Brennan - It only seems fair to me.

Mike Price - It's gotten to the point, the way I view it this is truly about a service to the community. The \$75 has little impact on the budget. But it prevents overbooking and allows people to get in then it will be worth it .

Al DeAngelo - It is a lovely thing for those families who book all ten weeks and just figure it out later. I don't think it is too much to figure out your schedule and you are helping your neighbor.

Aly DeAngelo - Do other camps offer returning families? I register for camps and they don't care. You get online. But some do give you the first right of refusal.

Katie Sarvas - The other thing you have to think about too is we want to make as few big changes as possible. Even when I was a kid when you were returning that was always there. To take that back that would be very difficult. Because many do use all of our child care the whole entire school year so they feel like they have a location to go to.

Katie Sarvas - We do collect a camp fee at registration that will go towards the last week of your camp. We will have that immediately and not wait until April 1.

Aly DeAngelo - I am appreciative of high quality and spirit.

Tyler Stanley - What were the talking points for the \$65.00

Mike Price - We went back and forth . We started at \$25.00 Our goal is to incentivize people from over booking but not so punitively. \$65.00 is what we charge in the past if you canceled less than 3 weeks before the week you are canceling.

Ann Brennan - Do you need a motion ?

Mike Price - No

Mike Price - We do need a motion for the 7% increase.

Ann Brennan - May I have a motion for a 7% increase for Jeffrey Summer Camp for the year 2025.

Aly Deangelo - So moved

Tyler Stanley - Second

All in favor say aye

The motion is approved.

Ann Brennan - Thank you for all you do , you are an asset to this community.

Director's Report

Harvest Festival

Mike Price - Harvest Fest is around the corner. We have been planning and setting it down below in the back meadow. It is next Friday. We are starting a half hour earlier than normal at 5:30. We have so many people and such a tight amount of time so we are starting at 5:30 to give a little more time in the daylight because it gives up a little more light since it gets dark at 7:30. We are having hay rides but not a bonfire since it is not permitted in Franklin County.

Halloween Bash

Mike Price - We have the Middle School event on Friday, October 25 and have 206 registered as of now which is awesome. It's another effort to connect with that age group.

Adult Halloween Bash

Mike Price - It takes place the next day for 7:30 - 11:30. We are still getting registration for that. There will be drinks, food, entertainment and music. Great decorations. It's a lot of fun.

Halloween Patrol

Mike Price - We will be providing Halloween Patrol for Trick or Treat October 31 from 5:30 - 7:00. We are looking for volunteers. In the past the majority have been Capital Students but the numbers have been lower since covid. We are talking to all the schools, including St Charles, CSG, Bexley.

As part of just volunteer management we have purchased a volunteer software package. We are running the Halloween Patrol through that

There were concerns about how quickly they are ready to find out everything for their business in the beginning. For example we have a program that holds 140 kids. But we have a returning camper policy. We open our reservation to returning families first. We have in that program maybe 300 people that did get at least one week this year. So when you open that up say hey returning families should reverse and what is very difficult for everyone. The new recreation different federal as most members do they go I don't really know what it is so I sign up all and so what end up happening is when you have people trying sign up for all two weeks and you know it becomes an issue pretty quickly if you want to wait list this and get to it with your status for more things and those that take longer the longer it takes for people to get back with people at what weeks they actually want and so it is a process that I've become pretty confident and right now we hear the feedback and understand the frustrations it is caused which is part of the reason we are going to make a change to our registration policy into our more specific transportation policy we have a very user friendly do what you want on your registration timeline the problem is that the longer the individual wait actually in general the least they want the longer people on the waitlist And what we know for sure is that the average person uses about 5 weeks a year But what happens at registration most people are expecting

