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Recreation Board Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2015

Ann Brennan - May I have a motion to call the meeting to order?

Clare Ceballos - So moved

Joanne Pickrell - Second

All those in favor say aye - The motion is approved

Roll Call

Eric Action - Present

Ann Brennan - Present

Roger Carroll - Absent

Clare Ceballos - Present

Aly DeAngelo - Present

Joanne Pickrell - Present

School Board Rep.

Tyler Stanley - Absent

Lori Ann Feibel - City Council Rep.

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

Clare Ceballos - So moved

Joanne Pickrell - Second

Ann Brennan - All those in favor say aye

Ann Brennan - The motion is approved.

Director's Report

Poker Fundraiser

Mike Price - We had 65 registered. Mark Trinoskey won the tournament. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. We have not received the numbers from the Community Foundation as to the amount of money raised. Oftentimes we are the beneficiary of funds including the Youth and Rec Fund which we receive funds for the Youth Triathlon. This year we received funds from them for the Mojo App for Baseball and Flag Football season.

Skate Park Up Date

Mike Price - We received a construction schedule. Construction should be over in October with it ready to be used in November. We asked them to see if we could get moved up. If anything opens up they will try to expedite, but this is the schedule for now.

They are working through Construction Drawings(CD) for the project. There will be some additional meetings associated with the construction. We will have letters going out later this week to adjacent property owners to update them on the status and to provide a chance for any feedback. We are also in the early stages of developing a landscape plan around the skate park.

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So obviously the skatepark company is developing a skate park; they are not as heavily involved in any landscape. We are doing it in house with our landscape consultant, Elena Andrews, which will likely include some fencing and obviously screening with landscaping material given the proximity to the residential areas. This project continues to move forward. It's been many years of effort and it is great to see it starting to come to fruition.

Lori Ann Feibel - How aware are the neighbors about this?

Mike Price - The design process had a number of public meetings in which neighbors were notified. Generally speaking representation was a lot more about those who were into skating and had more interest in the outcome of the actual project as it relates to what type of skate park it was.

There have been a number of public meetings and a number of public notices. There will be another public meeting as part of the landscape plan which will go through the Tree Commission.

The letter going out this week is to the property owners, not to the residents. Otherwise it has been going to the addresses in terms of communication to the property owners.

There may be some communication between the connectivity between the property owners and the space. We want to make sure they are notified and encourage them to reach out to me if they have questions.

Ann Brennan - Did you say there was going to be a public meeting for people to look at the landscape plan

Mike Price - I believe the landscape plan will go before the Tree and Public Garden Committee and that will be a public meeting. I do not think it has to go in front of ARB or BZAP. There is some conversation as to if we want to have another public opportunity.

Ann Brennan - Can you contact the residents by letter surrounding it like you did in the past with those kinds of projects.

Mike Price - If something goes through a board especially like BZAP anything within two or five hundred feet of the project automatically gets notified if it goes through that process. The City has a process for notification requirements.

We are getting to the point where we are talking about construction and this has been a very public process for multiple years now.

Ann Brennan - You will remind residents it is happening . You know your timetable so I think it will be a welcomed reminder. It would probably be in the Bexley Blast

Mike Price - Yes. We will make sure it is out there.

Ice Rink Up Date

Mike Price - We had 12 days of good skating and 550 skaters. There is still ice there but not very usable right now but we are not taking it down, we are going to wait to see if we get a cold snap. It was a difficult season in a lot of ways. We had a lot of cold weather, but if you remember we got a cold snap in early January on that weekend and we were hoping to get started the next week and then we got a lot of snow and that snow wreaked havoc on the ice that had started to form. It put us back about a week from where we were hoping to open. The staff worked hard and we learn something every year about how to care for a large ice rink. We learned how to get the snow off versus how much weight the ice will hold. It is a lot of work but I think the staff enjoy getting out and doing this type of work. It's a change and we do it together as full time staff and obviously we have part-time staff there. I appreciate their dedication. They come in early and stay late to close.

Camp Registration

Mike Price - Camp registration opened on January 28 for returning families. Playcamp had 55 registered kids averaging 42 campers per week. Last year end of year average was 55 campers per week. We feel good since it has not opened up to residents who did not participate last year. Jeffrey Woods program had 144 kids registered averaging 95 campers per week. Last year we averaged 117 per week. We feel good about the case there. Jeffrey Park Camp had 229 kids registered averaging 126 campers per week. Last year we had 130 per week in 2024 end of year average. We have only registered returning families. We have not yet opened registration to residents who did not participate before and we have not opened registration to non-residents.

We made significant changes to the registration process. We have always had a user-friendly cancellation policy. Residents will register in January for basically all weeks. Even though they only used 3 or 4 weeks. They could cancel weeks all the way until April without any fees. We love to operate that way but the downside is when we have a camp in this demand we end up having a lot of people on a waitlist for an extended period of time. People won't cancel those weeks until the deadline comes around in April so we would have 132 on the waitlist for Park last year. So those 132 sat in limbo all we could tell them as soon as people could cancel we would let them know and get them in. That might not happen until and they are waiting there saying we have to get into the program or we have to find another option.

We decided to make our policy more stringent. Encouraged people to register only for weeks that they knew they were going to use because we moved our cancellation policy to 48 hours after they registered. Once they register they have 48 hours to cancel any weeks they do not want. Once they have done that if they cancel any of those weeks there is a \$65.00 cancellation fee. Historically we know, although we end up with a large waitlist, by the time the season comes around we have significant drops and end up getting almost everyone off the waitlist. They are in limbo for a long time and by that time they may have gone somewhere else because they were not sure if they would be able to get in or not.

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To give some context in Playcamp we had 55 registered participants and we have nobody on a waitlist for Playcamp. Last year at this time we had 65 registered with 12 people who had at least 1 week to 10 weeks on a waitlist. Camp Woods we have 144 registered and no waitlist. Last year we had 150 registered and 42 on the waitlist. Camp Park we have 229 with only 5 on the waitlist for week 10. Last year we had 245 registered with 132 on the waitlist.

Early indication is this new process worked in terms of what we are trying to address. The drawback is we don't want to take money for a service not rendered when people cancel but we also recognize it is a finite availability for this program and there a lot of people that want to get into it. The adjustment was made not to generate revenue but to try to make it more accessible to more people and not have people sitting in limbo for an extended period of time.

Kudos to Katie Sarvas and her team that worked on this and Mindy Walsh who manages the registration they did a great job communicating with people because it was a significant change

The new family registration opens February 18 at 5:00 p.m. and non-resident opens on March 4 at 8:00 a.m.

Joanne Pickrell - When will you start hiring for camp?

Natalie Mullin - We already started accepting applications

Mike Price - We will have a Hiring Party at the Senior Center on February 22 from 11:00 - 1:00 p.m.

OPRA Conference

Mike Price - The staff attended the OPRA conference this week. The conference is a great opportunity for team building , continuing education, networking and reenergizing. We appreciate the support from City Council and the Mayor allowing us to attend the conference. We took more staff than we have before. We are trying to add a couple more staff but there are some logistics with programming that is going on while we are there. It is a great value to staff and the department and ultimately how we serve the community.

New Business

Ann Brennan - Any new business?

Mike Price - The Jeffrey Wood Festival is coming up on March 1. We are combining for the first time with Arbor Day and Earth Day so there will be Arbor Day and Earth Day going on during the Jeffrey Woods Festival. We are expanding the scope of what that day is.

Ann Brennan - Are they tapping the trees?

Mike Price - We are tapping the trees later this week. The festival is March 1 and we will tap the trees on February 22. We will tap trees in advance but we will save 30 to 40 and do a formal tap for our program on February 22.

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Lori Ann Feibel - At the last City Council meeting I gave the Recreation Department great kudos but every single Council member shared their thoughts I have always said that I think the Rec. Department is the true spirit of our community. It creates that and you hear Mike always talking about services and a better way we can serve our community , this is a better way we can do , always, they are looking for better ways. I was excited that Natalie was there to hear the praises of not just the Rec. Department but her and Mike's leadership. And if you notice our City Council in every report Mike gives there is always a thank you to his staff. The two of them created the culture. As long as I am on Council I'm going to keep pounding them on the back and say kudos to them. I want you to know as a board that all of Council and the Mayor and the Auditor knows that as well

Ann Brennan - That is a great positive note to end this very short meeting .

May I have a motion to adjourn,

Aly DeAngelo - So moved.

Clare Cebellos - Second

Ann Brennan - All in favor say aye.

The meeting is adjourned.