RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION
June 19, 2022 MEETING 5:30 PM
MINUTES

RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION –
In attendance: Philip Pessina, Jeanette Blackwell, Matt Fraulino, Kristen Jensen (left at 6:32), Dan Deconti, Lincoln Everest (arrived at 5:42)
Absent: Sal Uccello, Anthony Jaskot
Staff: Cathy Lechowicz, Director

AGENDA:

Call Meeting to Order:
Meeting called to order at 5:33 pm

Public Hearing:
No members of public in attendance

Approval of the Minutes:
Motion to approve May Meeting Minutes by Councilwoman Blackwell seconded by Dan Deconti. Approved unanimously.

Department Reports:
Senior Center - Uptick in new memberships. 61 new members in recent weeks. The challenge is to help them get into programs, they fill up quickly. Bus trips are well received, had been suspended during COVID-19 crisis. Now back on using coach busses. Hope to hire a new bus driver in the fall.
Recreation is gearing up for summer camps. Orientation for camps are online and in person. State grant received for each of our school based sites for summer meals and scholarships. Back to qualifying households for summer meals, as we did prior to COVID for federal funding. Will pay for meals for children who don’t qualify. The grant also supports enrichment opportunities: field trips, swimming and extra enhancements. Recreation was present at local outreach events like PRIDE and upcoming 4th of July celebration. In good shape with lifeguards this summer since we only have one waterfront this summer, we have sufficient staffing. Aquatic Supervisor had great strategy to allow 15 year olds to lifeguard and get their certificate while shadowing existing lifeguards and receiving a stipend – opportunity for probationary period before hiring. Regarding algae at Crystal Lake: working with Parks and Public Works to address algae issues. Weeds have been cleared out. Health Dept. came out to check bacteria levels. One bubbler is working, one is being fixed and a third had been approved by Public Works.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Replacements - Director Lechowicz proposed Mahrang Danish as a new commissioner. She just moved here, works at Russell Library and has an elderly father. Would be a good addition to the Commission. We need minority party or independent representation.
Recreation Center Updates – Large portion of work has started. Things are moving along well.
Riverfront Redevelopment – Councilwoman Blackwell shared that the vision documents will be released the day of the 4th of July festival (July 2nd). There will be two trolleys that bring people to the harbor for the presentation.
NEW BUSINESS:

Sports Grant: Director Lechowicz shared a document with the breakdown of what each group would receive in different scenarios if the Basketball league becomes part of the department or create its own 501c3. If they become part of the department, they would not receive the sports grant which would free up some of that money for other leagues. Director Lechowicz requested that the Commission approve the dual scenarios since they do not yet know what scenario will play out. Motion to approve – Lincoln Everest. Seconded by Kristen Jensen. Motion approved.

Rec Center Rental Rates: Rec Staff researched and created rates for new Rec Center and went up $5 on Senior Center rentals. Rentals will be allowed quarterly to groups, rather than weekly. Need to give more groups access to the center. Priority will be given to City of Middletown Departments and organizations with shared services, such as Xavier, Mercy, and Vinal. Other agencies that rent similar spaces require four hour block reservations, we will not. However, discussion ensued regarding a half hour before and after an event to be blocked of or reserved by the group requesting the rental. Also, may need to enhance language regarding the pool rental, may need to be required to staff a lifeguard and that would add additional cost to the rental. Middletown nonprofits can use spaces for free during operating hours. Request to approve rates with the contingent that the pool rental will most likely be updated. Motion to approve by Dan Deconti. Seconded by Lincoln Everest. Motion Approved.

Sports Grant Application Committee: Director Lechowicz would like a small working group to look at the applications to improve the questions. Three committee members would be desired that can meet during the summer to finish application by the fall. It would be released to the public in December. Any committee member interested should let Director Lechowicz know by June 30th.

Hiatus of Meetings for summer: Committee will reconvene on the 3rd Thursday of September. In the case that there needs to be a special meeting in the meantime, Director Lechowicz will reach out to the Committee members.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Blackwell made a motion, Dan Deconti seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.