

**SEYMOUR RECREATION COMMISSION
RESCHEDULED MEETING FROM JUNE 24, 2009**

REGULAR MEETING

JULY 14, 2009

COMMUNITY CENTER

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by Chairman, Joe Falcha.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joe LaRovera – Christine Battis – Joe Falcha –Jennifer Harkey – Missy Orosz, PT Associate Director -Jack Ahearn, Director.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gary Bruce – Jim Geffert
Lisa Andrzejewski (on speaker phone but unable to vote during the meeting).

PUBLIC COMMENT: John Coughlin of CT Speed School made a presentation of programs he could offer for youth . The programs would offer motivational training for children in areas such as running, volleyball, cheerleading, basketball. His crew could set up programs to meet the needs and interest of sports in Seymour. Joe L. suggested a possibility of a football program for boys. Programs would be available for both boys and girls. All manpower would come from Speed School. Field space would be necessary. Programs could start in the fall before official basketball season starts. Speed training is a year round activity. Competition goes by age groups.

Caitlin Cass, Head Counselor (HC) and Christine Fernandez,(AH), Assistant Head Counselor at Gary Park shared concerns regarding an incident that occurred at the camp requiring three violation notices to be written up regarding a grandparent of one of the campers. On July 6, the first day of the camp, the first violation warning was given regarding a grandparent who dropped a child off and refused to show identification when asked to show it. The child was left at the park. The adult also threatened the HC and used inappropriate language directed at HC. At this time a violation was written up concerning the grandparent. The grandparent again violated the camp guidelines the following day (July 7) for not showing ID and making a scene at the park. On July 13, 2009 the grandparent made a scene while telling counselors to clean the portable restrooms and claimed that First Selectman, Bob Koskelowski was contacted regarding the entire issue at this point. The grandparent also complained to other parents about camp procedures and the HC, while continuing to complain about the porta jons. Many parents have shared their concerns over this grandparent making them feel uncomfortable. July 14, 2009, a third violation written concerning the same person who was standing in the parking lot giving parents false information about pick up procedures for the day. Again, other parents shared their feelings of being ill at ease with this person's behavior. Jack said he had spoken with the person in question

explaining the new policy and procedures. Behavior guidelines need to be adhered to by children, as well as the parent/guardian/grandparent or whoever is responsible for transporting the child to and from the camps.

At this point Jennifer suggested that Jack show up tomorrow (7/15) at Gary Park and return the fee charged for the child to attend camp and remove the child from the program. The parent did sign the behavior guidelines when the child was registered. Jack agreed to be present but would not be able to generate the feed back to the parent on such short notice.

The HC said that some procedures (e.g. collecting money at camps) aren't being followed by parents. This makes it difficult on the HC's who are doing their jobs with many various responsibilities. The new program is running well with a few minor changes in schedules. She was advised if this issue continues with this same person who already has received three written violation warnings regarding discipline, the police will be contacted. Warning letters regarding discipline concerns for any child in the program will be documented and the child will be sent home if warranted.

The Commission members thanked Caitlin and Christine for coming forward with legitimate concerns for the safety of all the children as well as staff at the summer camp.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the May 27, 2009 meeting could not be approved because Joe L. and Christine were not at that meeting. They will be approved at the July 22, 2009 meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT: No report given. This too will be discussed at the next meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS:

A June 8, 2009 letter from First Selectman, Robert Koskelowski regarding the use of bikes at the Skate Park. He requested the Recreation Commission allow bikes as in the past.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT /PROGRAM UPDATES:

-Summer camp registrations - 229 at Gary Park and 138 at Chatfield Park. Missy explained the swim lesson concerns (see Old Business). A schedule is being worked on allowing Missy to spend some time in the parks while still conducting her tennis lessons in the evening.

-Karate – a few additional signups due to the media coverage.

-Tennis – over 100 kids taking lessons. Missy will have 3 assistants to help. This is a larger enrollment than last year so Missy has switched time slots to three nights to accommodate the increase in participation.

-Christine has access to a slate pool table for the Youth Center. She will make the contacts to get the table to the Cougar's Den.

-Travel/Trips –Slide show 7/15 of trip to Ireland for spring 2010
Lake George/Saratoga trip 8/19 – full

Boston Pops/James Taylor Concert at Tanglewood – 8/30 – sold out
Broadway “9 to 5” on 9/27 – advertising now
Broadway “South Pacific” on 10/25 – advertising now
Radio City Christmas Show – 11/22 – advertising soon

- Jim Caprio , ice cream man at the summer camp parks has agreed to change hours on Wednesday and Thursdays from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM.
- Seymour Cultural & Arts Commission will sponsor a “Caribbean” band theme program for the summer camps on July 16. All children will combine and be dropped off at Gary Park that day.

OLD BUSINESS:

-Summer camp/Swim Lessons – Due to a large enrollment and only one lifeguard at present, Missy suggested that the Tuesday and Thursday swim program be divided into two groups. Parents would be asked to drop children off at the assigned time holding two sessions rather than one. She also explained the pool was overcrowded and not safe with the large amount of children at one time. She also suggested for next year, that no swimmies or floatation devices be allowed in the pool and on camp flyers next year should state only children who can swim will be allowed to be part of the summer swim program.. Missy will speak with the parents at the pool regarding their feelings on having two swim times as opposed to one which is what is currently taking place.

Missy also expressed her concern about camp staff being paid extra hours for their training, as approved at the May 27, 2009 meeting. She also asked if there would be enough money left in the budget by the time fall programs are ready to start. Missy also asked if she is entitled to mileage with all the time and miles she takes for programs, especially summer camps.

Another concern is that camp is open Monday through Friday but the Recreation Department is closed on Fridays because the Community Center is closed. Missy explained that some things need to be done on Fridays to prepare for the next week and she has limited hours allowed. This needs some clarification.

Joe F. will look into getting an answer regarding these concerns.

Joe F. asked Missy and Jack if the Saturday morning adult basketball can still take place. Joe F. will have the interested parties contact Jack directly.

Jack was asked to be at Gary Park on July 15, 2009 to meet with the grandparent or parent that has received three violation warnings. He will inform the adult that the child is not allowed at the camps as part of the program. A full refund will be given.

A motion was made by Jennifer and seconded by Joe L. to terminate a child from participating at Gary Park summer camp program due to the negative actions and three violation warnings from the grandparent and parent of the child. All in favor, motion carried. (Lisa could not vote on this motion as she was not physically present at the meeting).

MORE OLD BUSINESS: Skate Park is still not being self supporting. If it continues to stay open under the management of the Recreation Department, the Commission agreed they cannot afford to pay employees.

A motion was made by Christine and seconded by Jennifer stating the board recommends not having paid attendants due to the lack of participation at the Skate Park. All in favor, motion carried.

Joe F. will speak with First Selectman, Bob Koseklowski regarding this concern.

NEW BUSINESS: All other business will be tabled to the July 22, 2009 meeting.

A motion was made by Christine and seconded by Joe L. to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

The next regular meeting scheduled to be held on Wednesday, **July 22, 2009 at 7:00 PM at the Community Center. Members are reminded to contact Joe F. if they cannot attend.**

Respectfully submitted minutes but not yet approved

Jean Banks, Recording Secretary

