

**WYCKOFF DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
December 14, 2015**

Tom Valente opened the Recreation Board Meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Courtroom of Town Hall at 340 Franklin Avenue with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act. “This Regular meeting of the Wyckoff Department of Parks and Recreation Board is now in session. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting has been posted on the bulletin board in the Memorial Town Hall and the Recreation Office; a copy has been filed with the Township Clerk, *The Ridgewood News*, *The Record*, and *The North Jersey Herald and News*, all papers with general circulation throughout the Township of Wyckoff.” At least 48 hours prior to this meeting the agenda was similarly posted, filed and mailed to said newspapers.

Members Present: Tom Valente, Heather Alnor, Rob Lahue, Moe Ismael, Rich Sica, Doug Arone, Chris Beane

Members Absent: Ed Pettit, Sue Buchanan, Jeff Eischen

Staff Present: Recreation Director Andy Wingfield

Guests Present: None

The minutes of the November 16, 2015 meeting were discussed. A motion to approve the minutes of that meeting was made by Chris Beane and seconded by Doug Arone. The motion was carried.

Recreation Director’s Report:

Soccer “Heading:”

The Director reported to the Board that he followed up on the new rule being introduced into youth soccer by the US Soccer Federation regarding ‘heading’ the soccer ball that will hopefully reduce the amount of concussions being reported in the sport. He advised that the new policy prohibits children at the under 10 division and lower from ever heading the ball and children between 11 and 13 only being allowed to head the ball during games. The Board questioned how children would ever learn to head the ball properly if never permitted to practice the common skill and the Director advised that this is a common question being asked right now by people across the country. The new rule is currently in its infancy so many questions like this one will be answered in the coming months. The Director advised that the Northwest Bergen Soccer Association, the league in which the township participates, will be discussing the rule at its next meeting in January and the Board agreed that the Recreation Department would follow the rule the league decides in the new year.

Winter Sports Head Coach Recommendations:

The Director presented a list of Head Coach recommendations for the 2015-16 Recreation Basketball, Roller Hockey, and Wrestling seasons. After reviewing the list, Tom Valente made a motion to accept the list of head coaches for the winter season and was seconded by Rich Sica. All in attendance were in favor.

Recreation Volleyball:

The Director reported that the Department's inaugural season of Recreation Volleyball concluded on Friday, November 13th with a round robin tournament among our 4 teams of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade girls in the Indian Hills High School Gymnasium. The tournament itself was reported to be a success but the feedback on the entire season has been resoundingly positive. Several emails and phone calls have been received reporting that the girls enjoyed the volleyball season tremendously and that James Parks, the Volleyball Director, along with his assistants and our volunteer coaches, did a tremendous job of teaching the sport to the girls. Everyone is excited that the Department started this program and for the girls in 8th grade, they were very appreciative to have an opportunity to play prior to entering high school where they feel more comfortable trying out for the high school team, and for the younger girls, they can't wait until next fall when continue the program. The Board was pleased that our first year of Girls Recreation Volleyball was so well received and successful.

Skate Park Question:

The Director reported to the Board that a resident had questioned the Mayor recently via email about the potential to construct a Skate Park in town for skateboarders. The Director presented the Board with an article from the Bergen County website entitled "Where to Skateboard in Bergen County." The article indicates that several towns have skate parks in Bergen County and that several other towns have constructed skate parks only to have them dismantled after noise complaints, skaters refusing to wear helmets, after hour use, and foul language. The Board expressed concern about not only these issues but also about the cost of construction and a space large enough to hold a park and in an area far enough away from residents where these issues would be less of a problem. The Board also noted that since towns immediately adjacent to Wyckoff, including Mahwah, Midland Park, and Ridgewood, have skate parks that are free to both residents and non-residents, the need for another park in the immediate area didn't seem evident. The Board expressed an additional concern regarding the cost simply to insure the facility knowing that injuries are prevalent in skateboarding and trying to police the park to ensure that users are all wearing the correct protective equipment would also not be feasible. The Board unanimously agreed that a skate park in town would not be viable at this time considering the above reasons.

Football Update:

Chairman Valente reported to the Board that the Board's Code of Conduct Committee had met with the Head of Football but not yet with the football coach(es) involved in the allegation by parents in last month's meeting that a drill that was run during a fall football practice was run as retaliation against parents who complained about their sons' positions or playing time in games. Chairman Valente advised that the Committee would look to meet with the coach(es) involved in the new year. The Board will continue to be updated on this situation as the parties come together to discuss the allegation.

The Director presented the Board with an email from the parent of the only girl in our football program, a 4th grader, in which the parent attached pictures of the player's Thanksgiving project that showed what she was thankful for. In her project, the player indicated that she was thankful for her football coaches. The parent also visited the Recreation Office last week where she indicated to the Director what a positive experience her daughter had playing football, the

positive effect the coaches had on her, and that she was looking forward to playing again next year. The Board was pleased that the football experience was a positive one for this player.

Open Comment Period:

No audience present.

Report from Board Members:

None.

New or Old Business:

The Director informed the Board that two members' terms expire at the end of the month and that the Township Committee would determine if the members would be appointed to new terms or if new members would join in 2016. One alternate position is still open and may be filled in 2016 as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Wingfield
Director, Wyckoff Parks & Recreation