

WYCKOFF DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
October 18, 2021

Doug Arone opened Recreation Board Meeting at 7:30 p.m. 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: Moe Ismael, Jeff Eischen, John Giovacco, Chris Perneti, Doug Arone, Chris Beane, Tom Valente, Mike Ferrara, Jennifer Saxton, Rich Sica

Members Absent: Sue Buchanan

Staff Present: Andy Wingfield, Recreation Director

Tim Shanley, Township Committee Liaison to the Recreation Board

Public Present: No

The minutes of the September 13, 2021 meeting were discussed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Rich Sica and seconded by Jeff Eischen. The motion was carried.

Recreation Director’s Report:

Travel Baseball & Softball Tryouts Status:

The Director reported that the Travel Baseball Tryouts for 9u-13u were completed over the past 2 weeks and that all participants have been notified of their results. Once again, the Township will have two teams at the 9u, 10u, 11u, and 12u levels, along with one team at the 13u level representing Wyckoff Baseball. 8u tryouts, for which we have 44 registrants for the tryouts, plus 14 more on the wait list, will be held in February. Baseball tryouts were once again run by an outside organization that specializes in baseball training and the Recreation Department and its coaches had no say at the tryouts and no influence on the results. Feedback on the current process from those that tried out, even those that were not selected, continues to be very positive.

The Travel Softball tryouts are taking place this week and next with an independent evaluating company running the tryouts and the softball program will once again be strong with a 3/4th grade team, two u10 teams, two u12 teams (A & B), and a u14 team. Those results are pending.

In regard to the overwhelmingly positive registration numbers for 8u baseball tryouts, Rich Sica recommended having three 8u teams next year, after which Mike Ferrara suggested maybe a 7u team and two 8u teams. After constructive conversation on this topic, the Board and Director agreed that the independent evaluator would be asked if they could handle up to 60 players over 2 days and, if so, a 7u and two 8u teams would be formed for next season, provided all of the players on the wait list officially register after being released.

Update from the meeting: the Director did reach out to the evaluator and they said they could handle up to 60 participants over the two days (30 each day). Therefore, we will move forward with the plan of having one 7u team and two 8u teams next spring and summer.

Travel Baseball Head Coach Recommendations:

The Director presented a list of Travel Baseball Head Coaches for 9u-13u for the 2022 season. After a brief review of the names, Rich Sica motioned to approve all of the recommended coaches and Chris Beane seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Travel Baseball Coach Discussion:

The Director asked the Board to consider implementing a policy for travel baseball whereby the amount of coaches in the dugouts during games is limited. The Director explained that he had been to several games over the summer where he saw up to 7 coaches in the dugout at one time. In addition, parents have expressed concern that some of our teams have way too many coaches during games. The Board agreed that since most/all of our travel baseball coaches are volunteer dads, it made sense to implement a limit to the number of dads in the dugout during games. John Giovacco commented that the league we belong to has an actual rule in their rulebook, that is never enforced by umpires, which limits the amount of coaches per team to one head coach, two assistant coaches, and one scorekeeper. The Board agreed that this is more than sufficient and agreed, after a motion by John Giovacco and a second by Mike Ferrara, that Wyckoff Travel Baseball coaching staffs would now consist of one head coach, two assistants, and a scorekeeper at the absolute maximum. The Director will communicate this to our head coaches going forward.

Spring Lacrosse Registration for Boys & Girls in Grades 3-8 Has Begun:

The Director reported that Spring Lacrosse registrations have begun for boys and girls in Grades 3-8. He also advised the Board that Franklin Lakes has asked, if necessary, for their girls to join Wyckoff again this season. Their girls' numbers have been low as of late to the point where they don't have enough for teams at the younger levels. The concern is that they won't have enough at the older levels this year either. After the Director explained that he did discuss this with our girls program director, gave approximate numbers at each age level, and advised that we could easily absorb them in Wyckoff, the Board agreed that our girls lacrosse program could take anyone from Franklin Lakes in grades 3-8 so they have a place to play. The Director will follow up with Franklin Lakes to advise that we can host their girls in Wyckoff in 2022.

Winter Sports Discussion – Pandemic Related:

The Director asked the Board what their thoughts on spectators for this winter would be. Specifically, our recreation basketball program takes place in small gyms where there is very limited seating for spectators, especially at the elementary schools. After discussion, the Board agreed that spectators would be allowed provided the Board of Education allowed them, and that they follow the Board of Education rules which will include wearing masks during the entire time they are in the building. Should it play out that the spectators/parents could not follow mask wearing rules at the games, the Board reserved the right to not allow them in the buildings since our main priority is to have the participants be able to play without risk of spectators putting that ability in jeopardy. So provided the Board of Education agrees to allow spectators, the Recreation Department will also allow it as long as everyone can follow the Board of Education's rules.

Names on the Backs of Jerseys Discussion:

The Director advised that the question of putting individual last names on the backs of jerseys has been a question that has come up more often lately and that the latest request comes from travel baseball. After a very good discussion on the pros and cons of having children's last names on the backs of their jerseys, the Board voted and by a margin of 6-4, it was decided that names will remain off of our game jerseys in travel sports, football, lacrosse, etc.

Football/Cheer Update:

The Director reported that football and cheer are 6 weeks in to the regular season and that things are going very well. Our Junior and Senior teams remain undefeated at this time and the atmosphere at our home games continues to be second to none due to the hard work by our Football Boosters. The Director also reported that the Wyckoff DPW is working on a bleacher area at the turf field and it is coming out amazing and at a significantly lower cost than standard bleachers. The natural look of the stone that the DPW is installing will be one of the most unique spectator areas in the state.

Township Administrator, Bob Shannon, Retiring:

The Director advised the Board that our Township Administrator, Bob Shannon, is retiring at the end of the year. He has been a stronghold in Wyckoff for over 30 years and is one of, if not the, most well respected administrators in the state of New Jersey. Bob will be missed and the Board wishes him the best of luck as he enjoys his retirement with his growing family.

Open Comment Period:

No comments

Report from Board Members:

None

New or Old Business:

None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Wingfield
Director, Wyckoff Recreation & Parks