

**THE CITY OF WHITE PLAINS  
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS  
RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
November 17, 2022**

**Attendance**

**Present**

Honorable Jennifer Puja, Chairwoman  
Beth Bricker, Deputy Commissioner  
Leonard Gruenfeld  
Jonathan Schere

Commissioner Wayne Bass  
Caroline Furry  
Michele Schoenfeld  
Kevin Scully

**Absent**

Christopher Kent  
Evelyn Santiago  
Rose Lovitch

Charles Morgan  
Frank Williams

**Guests**

Darren Valdes, Recreation Administrator

Chairwoman Puja called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

**Minutes from May 2022 and October 2022**

Motion to accept minutes made by Michele Schoenfeld. Seconded by Leonard Gruenfeld.

**Program Reports**

Darren Valdes discussed Gillie Park Tennis. Overall season pass sales were down 7%, we sold 15 less passes this year. Most season pass buyers are Seniors. In addition to season pass sales being slightly down, daily fees were down as well. It was a very hot dry summer and a rainy Fall. July and August are our most active months at the courts. Mr. Schere commented that it was a very successful season. The courts were dry due to lack of rain. We put down extra calcium this year to help. The reservation system is working well. Discussion about having reservations starting later in the morning.

Ebersole Ice Rink opened on Oct. 11. Going well! We survived a 75 degree weekend. Darren taking over Hockey duties from Ariel, who has resigned, to take a job at another municipality. Friday Night Teen skates are going very well, good attendance. Over 200 participants each week. Election Day we offered a Free Skate to the public, it was not well attended. Upcoming events at the rink include the Guy Matthews Hockey Tournament on Thanksgiving weekend and Skate with Frosty in December.

## **Old Business**

### **Capital Project – Gillie Basketball Court**

The Basketball Court at Gillie will be repaved. There will also be new baskets and stanchions. We are using the same foot print as the existing court to provide one regulation half court. Also we will be replacing the retaining wall that surrounds the court and renovating the Tennis court spectator area. Work to begin in the near future. Councilwoman Puja stated that many residents are excited about having this renovation done. Leonard Gruenfeld asked for follow-up on the Renaissance Plaza Park renovation and the Delfino Park Pavilion and Basketball Park project. Commissioner Bass stated that the work at Renaissance Plaza was completed this summer. The work done there was the replacement of the pavers with a decorative concrete. The Delfino Park project numbers have come back more than we anticipated and we are working on ways to modify the project and/or seek additional grant funding. Councilwoman Puja suggested that she would be able to help seek funding if necessary and to keep her posted.

### **Recreation Leader Interviews**

We have six candidates who have applied for the positions that we have open. Interviews will begin in the next few days. Program Supervision to change depending on the ability of the candidate we select. We will be upgrading the Recreation Leader position to Senior Recreation Leader.

### **Halloween Follow-up**

**Movie on Court St** – 500 attendees, went very well

**Halloween Storywalk** is up. We are making plans to keep a Storywalk book posted through the Winter months.

**The Great Pumpkin Patch** at Gillie Park – 390 participants, went very well

**Halloween Costume Party at the Bark Park** – 45 dogs came in costume. Vincent Celetti oversaw the activity and did a great job MCing and leading the event.

**Halloween Parade/ Trunk or Treat** went very well, over 1000 paraders, 12 community organizations decorated their cars and gave out treats. Kevin Scully commented that there were many more people than anticipated and that White Plains was well represented.

## **New Business**

### **Program Statistics**

Information will be prepared and presented at a later meeting

### **Recreation Leader – Ariel Hernandez**

Ariel has resigned effective December 9. He will be taking a Recreation Supervisor position in the City of New Rochelle. All wish Ariel good luck in the new position. Darren Valdes with the assistance of part-timer, Lisa Bernstein, will run the hockey program through the end of this season.

### **Ebersole Ice Rink – TI Fitness Room**

We will be entering into a License Agreement with Tennis Innovators for them to rent a room from us at the cost of \$1500 a month to use as a fitness room. The space, formerly our Party Room, is currently not being used and would make good use of the space as well as provide revenue for the city. We created a new Party Room next to the Zamboni Room. The room looks better and is adjacent to the warming room which gives everyone better access to food and skating.

### **Senior Nutrition Program – Hubbard’s Cupboard**

We are entering into an agreement with Hubbard’s Cupboard to provide lunch-time meals for our Seniors at the CommunityCenter. Hubbard’s Cupboard has been our provider of meals for several years and the Senior are happy with his food.

### **Partnering with Youth Bureau – Teen Events**

#### **Upcoming Events**

Holiday Market – Dec. 9 -22, Court St

Holiday Tree Lighting – Sunday, Dec. 11, 5:30pm, Renaissance Plaza

Seniors Holiday Luncheon, Wednesday, Dec. 14, 11:30am, Community Center

Santa Drive-by – Saturday, Dec. 17, 10am

Skate with Frosty – Sunday, Dec. 18, 1-3pm, Ebersole Ice Rink

New Year’s Eve – Saturday, Dec. 31, 10:30pm – 12:30am, Downtown WP – Brief discussion about finding a space near the ball-drop that could serve as a hospitality space for our staff and performers. Leonard Gruenfeld made several suggestions which will be followed up on.

The committee agreed to Zoom through the winter months and we would look to have an in-person meeting in May. Councilwoman Puja thanked everyone for volunteering their time and wished everyone Happy Holidays.

The next RAC meeting will be held on Thursday, January 19, 2023, 6:30pm via zoom.

Motion to adjourn by Jonathan Schere, second by Michele Schoenfeld and approved by all.  
Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.