

Town of Newtown, CT

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION.

The Parks and Recreation Commission held a special meeting on Tuesday, April 24, 2019 in The Explorers Room, 3 Main Street in Newtown, CT

The meeting was called to order by Patrick Barczak the Vice Chairman at 6:05pm

Present: Edward marks (6:40pm), Clinton DePaolo, Vincent Yanni, Jr. , Patrick Barczak and Warren Spencer

Absent: Linda Hess, Rance Thompson

Staff Present: Amy Mangold, Carl Samuelson and RoseAnn Reggiano

Public: Steph O'Leary Vice President of Finance, Newtown Soccer Club 76 Jeremiah Road, Sandy Hook

Jen DelPozo, Secretary, Newtown Soccer Club, 28 Taunton Lake Drive, Newtown, CT

Jon DelPozo, President, Newtown Soccer Club, 28 Taunton Lake Drive, Newtown, CT

Rebecca Hall, Vice President of Travel, NSC, 37 The Boulevard, Newtown, CT

Emily Snayd, Vice President of Travel, NSC, 46 Flat Swamp Road, Newtown, CT

David Troy, Vice President of Development, 42 Farm Field Ridge Road, Newtown, CT

Public Participation: None

New Business: Commissioner Barczak gave his history of the Newtown Soccer club and his involvement and for many years as a parent and board member with the club. He shared his recent perspective of information learned at the April 9th, 2019 regular Parks and Recreation meeting on the operations and functions of the Newtown Soccer Club from others that attended the meeting. He had a sense that some of the operations were dysfunctional and was concerned that some of the rules and regulations required by the commission were not being followed. He asked the board of the Newtown Soccer Club to please share their perspective, history and information on these issues to get the other side of it and to find out what if anything needs to be worked out or changed and how the commission can help.

Rebecca Hall gave background that she has been on the board for 8 years. They have been through 4 presidents in the past 4 years and they were unaware of bylaws until recently. They have had a lot of turnover but Rebecca is now working on a draft for new bylaws and trying to catch it all up. She wanted to know what they need to do to become more compliant as a club, that they are wanting to meet deadlines and are trying really hard to keep it all together. They have gone through 3 treasurers in 4 years and board members go in and out. They are really trying to pick up the pieces and what to know what they can do to do better? There is very bad participation at meetings they have open meetings and are six people with jobs and trying to do their best and want to know what they need to do. They feel they are being accused of not doing things that past members never did and that they did not know they had to do but want to fix that as soon as possible.

Commissioner Spencer also gave his knowledge on being a member of the Newtown Youth Baseball Association.

Commissioner Barczak mentioned the NSC should have a general membership process with a form for interested members, separate from registration. He also suggested that each acting president or assigned board member should hold onto all information to pass onto the new board presidents and board members. A container or file box with all information about the club and for the club should move along to keep everything in order as people move in and out of the board. Commissioner Barczak also recommended doing periodic audits for accountability of all funds. He also mentioned developing a requirement for attendance to board meetings for the membership policy. He also told about Scholarships and awards that were offered through the organization in the past, Talbert and Davidson.

Stephanie O'leary stated that from a 501c3 and tax perspective they are fine, up to date and compliant. That they always file the taxes on time and have a CPA do the filing and audits.

Carl Samuelson advised that the Soccer board review the field use agreement to see the defined requirements of groups and organizations to have approval for field use and facilities. They should additionally follow the guidelines of national organizations.

Commissioner Spencer said he sensed apathy for new members and that members need to come forward if they need to evoke change or participants at their monthly meetings. The board mentioned how they lack volunteers and helpers for the organization. People need to volunteer and get involved especially if they want to complain. Commissioner Spencer said there seems to be a lack of understanding how to be a member, when meetings are held and he only saw four months worth of meeting minutes posted. The board explained that they do have a meeting the second Tuesday of every month. Meetings are advertised by Facebook, master calendar, e-mails to the entire club and on the website.

John DelPozo commented that he has attended meetings for five years and they have such small attendance and they are hopeful that if they establish a clear membership process that actual members will attend. He stated that there is no monopolization of the organization, he also stated that he wanted on the record that the level of coaching and the details of care of the NSC are superior to all sports, the program is pure quality and he does not feel he needs to defend the quality of the program.

Dave Troy explained the connections of the positions that are very involved such as the managers, who plan schedules, manage referees and even have assistant managers. There are many ways to get involved and that is how Dave got involved, coaches helped him to get involved to keep continuity. Dave has seen four presidents go through the NSC and he and John were the people who came to board meetings to help make changes and make improvements. He is now on the board since July to get more involved and that opportunity exists to all or any who want to get involved. David Troy in the past 10 years had not heard any complaints come forward until the last six months and this is new to the board on how to manage this situation and move forward. Director Mangold commented that the positive side from these new complaints is that it will help this board get the NSC more organized and compliant as an origination and to see what is required as a 501c3. Dave Troy asked if there have been any other complaints since the recent ones and the commission said no. He wanted to know if there has been a

mass of complaints or only complaints from one individual and a coach. The Commission again stated that there have been no other complaints and they do not see lots of kids dropping out of the program.

Dave Troy explained that they develop a program that meets the needs of all participants that are involved no matter what the level. Needs are balanced and carefully worked out with coaches and staff that they provide the best soccer experience for the kids that they can give

Chairman Marks asked if there is a way to ramp up volunteers and there was a discussion involved with that and he gave suggestions. Assistant Director Reggiano asked if they had links on the website to get involved and it is hard to find on the web. The organization is also looking for a webmaster and a director of volunteers, suggestions were given on how to try to obtain those positions. Asst. Director Reggiano suggested and explained how to go through the process through the high school for volunteers. Also Asst. Director Samuelson suggested showing vacancies on the website for any needed positions. Dave Troy said they are also developing a small job description with the volunteer opportunities and positions needed.

Commissioner DePaola asked about some of the election of officer procedures and clarified how they should move forward and what by-laws they should work from at this time.

There was a lot of help and guidance offered from the commissioners and great questions from the NSC Board. Commissioner Yanni suggested that the club continue to use the 2015 by laws and how to implement the new bylaws in three separate meetings to read changes, make changes and then review the bylaws with a quorum to vote them in and filed with the secretary of state, check with the current ones on file and work from there. He also suggested getting a book on Roberts Rules of order.

Ed Marks said from his perspective he is not focused with the bylaws right away but to get the membership process organized first then to form subcommittees to work on items such as the bylaws but to continue to work from the current byways. He also suggested player representatives would help and be considered as members to jumpstart participation to make the league responsive. He suggested to make notice of meetings very clear and to put an agenda out a month in advance and at some point down the road a template for meetings, what should be discussed and how members are formed and how to vote on issues etc.

Chairman Marks stated that legally the commission can't prevent an organization from getting access to fields because other organizations can rent fields at a very high price and they also have to take what is available after the other organizations that have priority are scheduled. There is a process to access fields as a new organization. Any new organization has to follow that process. He hopes that the NSC understands that the commission is not trying to tell the NSC how to run their program. That the commission is there to help out and be a resource to figure things out and bounce things off of them. Ed would be happy to participate and looks forward to an update and to extend any needed support.

A small discussion and education session took place on the lightning detection system and Carl Samuelson explained how it works and that he would send the information on the system to all the sports groups again.

Motion:

Commissioner Yanni made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35pm. This motion was seconded by Commissioner DePaolo, which was carried unanimously.