

Egg Harbor Township Recreation Commission Meeting  
EHT Community Center 5045 English Creek Avenue  
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234

REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, January 11, 2017

7:00 pm

Minutes

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 p.m.

III. Opening Statement Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act

IV. Roll Call: Robert Fairfield, Chair - Excused Charles Gallagher - Present  
Carmen Messina, Vice Chair - Present Justin Riggs - Excused  
Toni Rispoli - Present Paul Weldon – Present @ 7:17 p.m.  
Kathy Fiedor - Present Kevin Stetser - Present  
William Warrell - Excused

Rick Audet – Director of Recreation- Present  
Laura Pfofmer- Township Committee Member- Present  
Frank Finerty- Township Committee Member-Present

V. Reading/Acceptance of Minutes

a. Minutes – December 21, 2016

Commissioner Gallagher made the motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Stetser seconded the motion. By a vote of 4-0-1 (Fiedor abstained) the minutes were passed.

VI. EHT Recognized Youth Sports Groups Comment

Jr. Wrestling-

Vice President Kara Driscoll, 7 Shadow Drive, EHT, inquired whether a building to house Jr. Wrestling has been discussed. Kara is willing to meet with Township Administrator to discuss locating a building. Jr. Wrestling’s season runs November through April. Jr. Wrestling has the Auxiliary gym on Tuesday, Thursday and alternating Friday nights for practice. They use the Multi-purpose room on Wednesdays, which does not afford them adequate time to practice. The floor must be mopped and the mats need to be moved from the Auxiliary gym and returned. The movement of the mats reduces their practice time to 75 minutes instead of two hours.

Kara asked whether the Recreation Commission would give a waiver to an EHT resident to wrestle for Galloway? The child’s father is the Head Wrestling Coach at Galloway and wants his child to wrestle under his tutelage. The South Jersey Youth Wrestling League rules indicate that Varsity Wrestlers must

have a waiver to participate in another town's program. Vice-Chair Messina asked whether the child was a Varsity Wrestler. Kara explained at the present time he was not. Vice-Chair Messina indicated that the Commission would look into it and render a decision. The League President will be asked to clarify the ruling.

**EHT Soccer-**

President Christine Gras, 19 Jefferson Ave., EHT, asked when the bathrooms at Canale Park would be fully functional, who would have keys/access and responsibility. Recreation Director Audet stated that they are fully functional now and expected to be opened right after March 1, he can look into an automated system for the locks. For access to the building at this time keys will be provided to EHT Soccer Club and the club coordinating internally the building get locked up each night.

Christine indicated that Opening day for Soccer is March 11. Director Audet stated that on an annual basis there is no guarantee that fields will be opened March 1. The regulation is that the fields will open as of March 1 or as soon thereafter as conditions permit. They will only open if they are playable and safe.

Vice-Chair Messina asked why the league doesn't push back the opening dates. Christine said it is because of tournaments, wherein dates are pre-set.

**VII. Public Comment**

**VIII. Old Business**

**a. Policy & Procedures – Non-resident players.**

Vice-Chair Messina advised that the sub-committee voted 2-1 against non-residents participating in EHT Youth Sports. Commissioner Rispoli was the yes vote. Vice-Chair Messina asked the Commission whether to allow non-residents to participate. He asked who would pick up the fees for the field maintenance and insurance. Would the by-laws be amended concerning non-resident participants? He stated that once a non-resident is permitted to coach, the team should now be independent.

Frank Finerty, Township Committee Member, 318 Dogwood Ave., EHT, gave his personal opinion. Frank felt that EHT children were being penalized when not having enough players to roster a team. As a temporary measure, allowing a few non-residents to fill out a team is a creative way for the sports to continue. We need solutions. We can't fall back on "that's the way it's always been." EHT children may miss out on the competition aspect. The Youth Groups are a stepping stone to High School Sports.

Commissioner Weldon stated that EHT children must come first and have preference.

Commissioner Fiedor added that non-resident participation would be limited to Travel programs only.

Soccer President Christine Gras advised that the Soccer Club cannot go independent. They are part of a club that plays in the South Jersey Soccer League. Christine stated that EHT children will not be

cut. She just wants to field a team at levels that are struggling. EHT Soccer wants to keep EHT children playing. If that means a little help from a non-resident player to keep the team together then the children will be able to continue to compete. Christine indicated that a full roster would be 22 participants. Commissioner Fiedor stated that Boards of every Travel program who has non-resident participation will be held accountable.

Director Audet advised that Youth Groups able to have non-resident participants will be limited due to league rules governing boundaries. Rosters will be scrutinized and the Board will be held accountable. In reality non-resident participation is suited for specific sports.

Ed Keil, 315 Blossom Circle, EHT, said that Babe Ruth does not allow towns to take from another.

Laura Pfrommer, Township Committee Member, indicated that non-resident participation is a pilot program. A trial period of one year will ensue for a specific sport. At the conclusion of the registration period, the President will come before the Recreation Commission with documentation identifying the need for non-resident participation. Registration forms and rosters will be presented. The Commission will make the determination. Additional requirements will be documented and provided to the specific sport.

Committee Member Finerty indicated that this program is sport specific. It will be handled on a case by case basis. Groups requesting non-resident participation are to follow proper channels. The goal of the pilot program is to build up the teams. He added that the philosophy of the Soccer program is to entice participation by EHT youth. Better coaches, higher skill level and a quality program will bring EHT children back to the program.

Commissioner Weldon added that EHT residents must be made aware to the program through advertisement. Proof of advertisement should be submitted when requesting non-resident players.

Vice-Chair Messina called for a motion to vote on non-resident participation for Travel Soccer. Commissioner Rispoli made the motion to approve a Pilot Program, for a period of one year, for Travel Soccer. Commissioner Weldon seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-1 (Messina).

## **IX. Use of Facility Requests**

### **a. EHT Sponsored Youth Groups**

#### **EHT Lacrosse-**

All lacrosse fields at Veteran's Park every day from March 1 through June 30, 2017.

Commissioner Fiedor made the motion and Commissioner Stetser seconded the motion.

A vote of 6-0 approved the use. EHT Lacrosse listed the date of February 27 on their application, the Commission denies any use prior to March 1 or when the Director and Public Works declare the fields open.

**EHTBA-**

Bargaintown Park 60-90 Baseball field on Wednesdays and Thursdays from March 1-June 30, 2017.  
Motion made by Commissioner Rispoli and seconded by Commissioner Gallagher.  
A Vote of 6-0 approved the use.

**EHTBA-**

All of Veteran's Park Baseball fields every day from March 6 through August 31, 2017.  
Motion made by Commissioner Rispoli and seconded by Commissioner Weldon.  
A vote of 6-0 approved the use.

**EHTBA-**

Bargaintown Park 60-90 baseball field on Tuesdays from March 15 through August 31, 2017 and on Thursdays from June 30 through August 31, 2017.  
Motion made by Commissioner Gallagher and seconded by Commissioner Fiedor.  
A vote of 6-0 approved the use.

**EHT Soccer Club-**

Bargaintown Soccer fields every day from March 1 through December , 2017.  
Motion was made by Commissioner Fiedor and seconded by Commissioner Weldon.  
A vote of 6-0 approved the use.

**EHT Soccer Club-**

Canale Park Soccer fields every day from March 1 through December, 2017.  
Motion was made by Commissioner Gallagher and seconded by commissioner Fiedor.  
A vote of 6-0 approved the use.

**EHTYS-**

Childs-KirkPark Softball fields everyday from March 1 through August 30, 2017.  
Motion was made by Commissioner Fiedor and seconded by Commissioner Rispoli.  
A vote of 6-0 approved the use.

**X. Director's Report**

**XI. New Business**

**a. Bob "Elmo" Wright Appeal of EHTYO Coaching Decision**

Bob Wright, 121 Ruby Drive, EHT spoke before the Commission to appeal the EHTYO decision to remove him as a coach. He explained that he has been with EHTYO for 24 years, as a coach, board member and a past president. Bob stepped down as president to give others a voice. Prior to requesting an audit, Bob stepped down from the EHTYO board. EHTPD was notified of the possibility of missing money. In essence it was blamed on "bad bookkeeping". Bob received a certified

letter to appear before the EHTYO Board three days before the meeting. Three days' notice was not enough time to rebut the accusations lodged against him. The Letter was sent on December 7, 2016 to appear before the board on 12/14/16. Not all of the EHTYO board members were present when the board voted to oust him. His character has been attacked by individuals claiming that he is not a role model. That he "bullied" and name called players. Bob maintains that he is a role model for the children he has coached. He puts safety first. He treats people fair and equally. Bob does not condone bad language or bullying. He is a professional and maintains that status. The decision to disallow me to coach affects the people who have coached with me. I want to continue coaching in the town that I live. Bob feels that there is an ulterior motive behind his removal as a coach. He indicated that the board is out of control. There is alcohol consumption during games and at other times, within the park. Bob asked what can be done concerning the board's decision. Vice-Chair Messina stated that each organization runs autonomously. They select the coaches, good bad or indifferent. Carmen asked whether a by-law was broken. If not, nothing can be done. A recent scenario was shared as an example of youth groups choosing their own coaches. EHTBA made a decision to install one coach in place of another that the Commission and Director disagreed with their doing so. The Commission and Director went to an EHTBA meeting and stated their disagreement and asked them to change course on it but did not mandate a change to their decision recognizing that it is their decision. They went against the recommendation of the Recreation Commission. There was nothing the Recreation Commission could do since their by-laws were not violated. Each group chooses the coaching staffs. An appeal may proceed if EHTYO broke their by-laws.

Mike Bordonaro, 13 Winner's Circle, EHT, stated that by-laws need to be fair and an impartial hearing should have been held. Prior to the meeting, the board had already made their decision. That was not fair. EHTYO by-law Article V, section 6 speaks of a role model. The board gave credence to a few letters, not the people who spoke on behalf of Bob. The board did not prove that he violated this by-law. Article V, paragraph 5 speaks of the coach dealing effectively with players and their parents. A letter written by an irate parent was used against him. The parent used bad language at a Hammonton game. Bob tried to talk to him, but he refused.

Brian Wright, 121 Ruby Drive, EHT indicated that he was approached by a board member at the banquet. He pulled me aside and said "We have voted your Dad out". I asked if my Dad knew. He said "No, he can't coach next year. Don't tell him." Two days later the certified letter was received. The decision was made prior to the meeting. It was a done deal.

During the voting process, Bob Wright sat outside. Brian Fox was involved in the voting process. Bob felt that this was inappropriate as he submitted a letter of intent to coach the team. The vote to oust him was 8-4-1 (Fox abstained). By-law Article V, paragraph 5 speaks about dealing effectively with parents and players. Bob reported an incident concerning a parent wherein police were called. The EHTYO president knew that he followed proper procedures.

Commissioner Stetser stated that the board voted Bob out. They need to prove that he is a detriment. Bob is a good man and coach. Brian Fox asked him for his play book prior to the meeting. Kevin was present at the game at Hammonton when a parent came onto the field. Kevin confirmed that there is alcohol consumption and smoking at the fields and nothing is done about it.

Vice-Chair Messina asked whether EHTYO did their due diligence. Denise and Tony Savastano, EHTYO Vice-President, asked the board to hold off the meeting, as they were out of town. The board denied their request to table it.

Director Audet indicated that EHTYO had concerns from the previous year regarding Bob Wright's coaching style. On November 4, 2015, a certified letter was sent to Coach Wright listing 3 bylaw violations including an issue that occurred with regard to the film room given to another coach.

Harry Webb, 2 Linda Lane EHT, stated that he has been with Bob Wright as a player and a coach. Bob is consistent. The board did not listen to any of the people who spoke on Bob's behalf. The board voted against him. Brian Fox put his letter of intent in prior to the meeting.

Ron Sansom, 4 Forrest Tree Court, EHT, the night of the meeting, Brian and Nikki Fox and Dominick Branca, President, should not have voted. Ron vouched for Bob. He said he was fair, competitive, intense and treated the players fairly. Bob's job was to get the players ready for high school and he did his job. He is a good coach. The board questioned Bob's integrity and character. They need to take a good look at their selves.

Director Audet stated that this is not a black and white issue, it is gray. An appeal process would commence if the by-laws were broken.

Bob Wright asked if he could submit summary detailing descriptions where by-laws were violated. He asked if the matter could be reconvened next month. Vice-Chair Messina agreed to table it until the February meeting.

Director Audet reiterated that the Youth Groups choose their coaches. Bob Wright added that the proper time to determine who can coach is in April. Carmen and Rick reiterated again that the boards can remove a coach at any time.

**b. Park Use & Fee Schedule Policy**

Revisions will be addressed at the February 2017 meeting.

Changes to language throughout the policy were discussed and are to be included.

Page 6. H. Restrictions, 3.

The number of hours was changed from 5 to 6. And an exception of tournament play was added.

Page 6. I Permit Fees .

The Commission felt the fee structure for categories IV, V and VI were too low and a minimum number of hours should be included. A fee schedule will be re-worked.

Page 7. Parks.

Bargaintown- Tennis and Basketball Courts were added.

Shires- Field Hockey field and Basketball Court was added.

Delilah- Pickle ball Courts were added.

M. Inclement Weather Policy

Outside groups must be advised that the fields are closed. Notification may come from Recreation Commission, Recreation Department or Public Works. Forfeiture of their deposit will incur if the violate the closed field directive.

All requests will be time stamped and dated upon receipt.

## **XII. Correspondence**

### **EHT Youth Group Minutes**

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|----------------------------------|--|
| A. Baseball Association -11/3/16 | F. Soccer Club – 11/14/16                          |
| B. BMX –last received 10/25/16   | G. Street Hockey Association –11/7/ 11/21, 12/5/16 |
| C. Diamond Cheer                 | H. Travel Basketball – last received 12/13/16      |
| D. Jr. Wrestling –11/29/16       | I. Youth Softball – last received 3/28/16          |
| E. Lacrosse – all 2016 minutes   | J. Youth Organization – last received 11/2/16      |

### **Handouts**

- a. EHT Soccer Club 2016 Financials
- b. B. EHT Jr Wrestling Coach List
- c. C. EHTYO bank account statement
- d. D. EHT Lacrosse 1/3/17 agenda
- e. E. Street Hockey board of director and coach list

### **Soccer Financials - Balance Sheet 12/31/16**

Vice-Chair Messina questioned the Travel Professional Fees. He asked about the deficit of -\$22,189.70. Soccer President Gras explained that the training fee deficit is covered by Micro & Intramural. Vice-Chair Messina inquired whether the parents of the children involved in the Micro and Intramural programs were aware that they were supporting the Travel teams. President Gras stated that this is the way the programs were set up.

**XIII. Tabled Matters**

**XIV. Public Comment**

**XV. Adjournment 10:50 p.m.**

<b>Motion was made by Commissioner Fiedor</b>	<b>Seconded by Commissioner Weldon</b>
<b>Vote</b>	<b>6-0</b>

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Robert Fairfield, Chairman

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Toni-Lynn Rispoli, Secretary

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These minutes were approved at the  
February 8, 2017 Recreation Commission Meeting

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