

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

REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, March 8, 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 - Present Charles Gallagher - Present  
Carmen Messina, Vice Chair - Present Justin Riggs - Present  
Toni Rispoli - Present Paul Weldon – Present  
Kathy Fiedor - Present Kevin Stetser - Present  
William Warrell - Present

Rick Audet – Director of Recreation- Present

V. Reading/Acceptance of Minutes

a. Minutes – February 8, 2017 and closed session December 21, 2016.

Commissioner Riggs made the motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Warrell seconded the motion. By a vote of 8-0-1 (Messina abstained) the minutes were passed.

VI. 2016 Volunteer Coach of the Year Award Presentation

Craig Dannelly was recognized as the 2016 Coach of the Year. Craig coached the 16U Fall Ball Softball Team. He is dedicated and loves the game. His professionalism and positive attitude are assets to the players and other coaches at all levels. Craig’s goal for his players is to have a positive experience and love the game.

VII. EHT Recognized Youth Sports Groups Comment

*EHT Soccer-*

President Christine Gras, 19 Jefferson Ave., EHT, asked when she would receive the bathroom keys. She would like to distribute them to the coaches prior to the season opening. Director Audet stated that he received the keys and would hand them over to her. Christine asked where she could put the AED that the club purchased. She asked if it could be placed in the shed. Director Audet stated that he would speak with Public Works Supervisor Gianconda.

*EHTYS-*

President Kathleen Glick, 1029 Ocean Heights Ave., EHT, added that Softball would like an AED. She asked whether the Township would pay for it. Director Audet explained that Soccer paid for the AED. Commissioner Weldon stated that Street Hockey has an AED and to check with them to see what it could cost.

Kathleen asked whether there has been any progress on lighting the far parking lot. Director Audet stated that there is no plan, at this time, to put lights in the parking lot. However, he is looking into placing a light on the top of the field house that will shine in that lot.

Craig Dannelly, 29 Daisy Drive, EHT, said that the profile for the pole in the parking lot could withstand a 1000 watt light. Commissioner Weldon advised that he has the number of the pole. The Township pays \$75 for every street light in the township. Commissioner Weldon reiterated what Director Audet said concerning no plans to put a light on that pole.

Kathleen asked whether the township would put signs up advising driver’s that they were parking at their own risk near the fields. Director Audet indicated that he would follow up with Public Works.

Kathleen inquired about an updated list of fingerprinted coaches. Director Audet advised that it is on the website and will be updated. She asked whether he had a list of all of the coaches that went through the Rutgers program for coaching through the township, as some coaches have lost their cards. Director Audet indicated that he did not have a list denoting who took the classes in the past. However, he would keep records going forward. The next coaching clinic is Monday, March 13, 2017. Commissioner Rispoli spoke about the coaching certification offered by EHT Recreation. The Rutgers program covers all the sports. It is not sport specific. It is beneficial to go through this program as you do it once and you are covered. Director Audet added that each coach should take the on-line concussion class and receive certification.

**EHTYO-**

President Domenic Branca had nothing to report as they are not in season.

**EHTBA-**

President Bob Webber, 38 LaCosta Drive, EHT, advised that baseball opens on April 1. Tryouts are scheduled for March 12. Bob asked whether a safety net can be placed on the third base line on field 7. Smaller children are on fields 8 & 9 and he would like to keep them safe.

President Webber introduced Nelson Gaskill, a non-resident, and requested permission for him to coach. Bob stated that having Nelson as a coach would not preclude any EHT resident from coaching. Nelson has been coaching for twenty years. He is the rock that balances the coaching staff. The players adore him. Nelson volunteers his time and helped baseball set up last night for three and a half hours. He has roots in EHT and is good for the children. Director Audet reiterated that no EHT resident may be precluded from coaching. The Recreation Commission gave approval for Nelson to assist the EHT coaching staff.

**EHT Jr. Wrestling-**

President Kara Driscoll, 7 Shadow Drive, EHT, indicated that they need an additional wrestling mat. After their last meet at Fernwood School, Shonda Anaya, Business Administrator for the BOE, advised her that since Jr. Wrestling used the schools mat they would have to pay a rental fee for using the schools mat. Kara explained that they have never paid a rental fee for use of a school mat in the 11 years she has been on the Jr. Wrestling board.

Kara asked whether a meeting had been set to speak with Township Administrator Miller concerning a building for wrestling. Director Audet said that a building was a tall order and not an easy solution. Kara indicated that she would provide specs on the size of the building and it would need electricity, heat air conditioning and bathrooms. The wrestlers really need more time to practice in order to be able to compete with the communities that have their own facility and can practice more than three times a week. Commissioner Warrell suggested a temporary fix. There are numerous stores that are vacant in EHT. The township could rent one of the vacant stores for wrestling to use. As a temporary solution maybe Township Administrator Miller would consider looking into the cost of such project. It would be much cheaper than building a facility. Chairman Fairfield said the best thing would be to get movement on the BOE to stop charging EHT youth groups. Committee members Finnerty and Pfrommer plan to reach out to Superintendent Nickles to restart the talks between Recreation and the BOE. Commissioner Riggs said the ad hoc committee was never formed.

**Travel Basketball-**

Tammy Mahana, 253 Pine Ave., EHT, said that the Travel Basketball season is coming to a close. There are two weeks left. The teams did well, but they need more gym time. However, the cost to rent school gyms is exurbanite.

**VIII. Public Comment- opened at 7:22 p.m.**

**Bob Wright Appeal of YO Removal from Program**

Bob Wright, 121 Ruby Drive, EHT, thanked the Recreation Commission for listening to his plea regarding EHTYO's decision to remove him as a coach. His passion is coaching and he is trying to right a wrong that was done to him. Bob was disappointed when the board members disregarded his years of coaching and listened to three parents complain. He stated that there is double standard in play, as a JV coach had complaints against him and was not removed. Bob feels that his removal was a witch hunt. He asked the Recreation Commission to listen to the people present tonight. He asked why YO made the decision to remove him from coaching in December when their by-laws indicate coaches are selected in April? Bob asked that the Recreation not loose site of the issues concerning his removal as a coach.

Lynette Buckley, 164 Alder Ave., EHT said that Elmo taught her child the meaning of volunteering. She witnessed Elmo going the extra mile for the kids. He's feed them and taken them home when they needed a ride. He does not deserve to be attacked by the YO board.

Kim Rubba, 5005 Fernwood Ave., EHT spoke of an issue on the JV level. The coach kicked a chair over and screamed at the players. Nothing happened to him. He is still coaching. Elmo is in it for the kids.

Jesse Adamson, 1 Brian Ave., EHT concurred that there was a problem with a JV coach. That instance was not handled the same as what they are doing to Elmo. They spoke to the JV coach. Elmo spoke to all of the parents about the players. Mr. Adamson's son looks up to Elmo and respects him.

Kim Rubba, 5005 Fernwood Ave., EHT said if language is a problem then the parents are more offensive than Coach Wright.

Stephanie Segal, 107 Locast Ave., EHT indicated that Bob was her son's baseball coach. He puts the kids before winning. He teaches skills and fun. He has had disagreements with his assistant coaches over their desire to win at all costs.

Max Pacentrilli, 107 Locast Ave., EHT spoke about Coach Wright. He said he was there for the kids and only wants them to have fun. He gives everyone the opportunity to play and never makes it unfair.

Kathleen Glick, 1059 Ocean Heights Ave., EHT served on the YO Board with Elmo. He coaches for the right reason; he is there for the kids. Kathleen commends someone who coaches who does not have a child in the program. The fact that he has coached for so long says something about him.

Tammy Mahana, 253 Pine Ave., EHT spoke against Coach Wright. Tammy teaches in Pleasantville. She saw him bully her sons. He doesn't talk respectfully to the players; he puts them down. It's not okay to belittle children. He curses at them and even told them that they sucked.

Kim Rubba, 5005 Fernwood Ave., EHT witnessed the Mahana boys tell their teammates that they sucked.

Bob Williams, 6 Wind Chime Road, EHT stated that Coach Wright has dedicated 25 years to serving the EHT community. He feels that YO should come to an agreement and allow Elmo to coach.

Bob Federico, 581 North Street, Hammonton praised Coach Wright. As an outsider he has coached against him. He maintained a professional attitude and acted like a gentleman. Bob has class, integrity and is an asset to the community.

Brian Wright, 121 Ruby Drive, EHT spoke about his father. He feels that his father has made him a better person through his coaching. He takes pride in what he does. He learned that it's not always about winning. Removing him as a coach was ripping the life out of his Dad. Yes, he's a yeller, but he is the best coach. He made me a better person. The kids get that he yells. This is beyond a football game, he is the best for the community.

Dan Baker, 2018 Ocean Heights Ave., EHT has known Bob since he was 13 years old. He can't believe there are any character issues with him. EHT High School needs a coach in the feeder programs like Bob. He teaches the players the game.

Mike Bordonaro, 13 Winners Circle, EHT has coached for 9 years. Elmo asked him to coach. He is proud of YO and Elmo. He described Elmo as an old school coach. He has a vested interest in the kids. Did he yell at the kids? Get frustrated and say that they sucked? The answer is yes but he never used the F bomb. He wouldn't allow that kind of language. Mike is proud to stand next to him.

Annette Williams, 6 Wind Chime Road, EHT asked why Elmo was voted out? What happens with the appeal process? She asked the Commission to think about whether Elmo should continue coaching.

Christine Gras, 19 Jefferson Ave., EHT feels that when husbands and wives serve on the boards together, they should not have two votes. They are from one house hold and should share a vote.

Craig Dannelly, 29 Daisy Ave., EHT said that if Elmo is anything like Coach Wayne Wright he is a great coach. One day the players will look up to him as a role model.

Public portion was closed at 8:04 p.m.

**IX. Old Business**

**a. Bob Wright Appeal of YO Removal from Program**

Director Audet indicated that a grievance can be filed on any matter as the person sees fit. All of the Recreation Commissioners received the emails, by-laws, and Roberts Rules noted for presumed violations. The Commission is to review the documents; we are not in a position to take sides. The decision may be overturned if the by-laws were violated.

Chairman Fairfield stated that we are not here to vote on the character of Bob Wright. The appeal is whether YO violated their by-laws.

Commissioner Fiedor inquired about the three person committee that was to look into the accusations.

Commissioner Stetser stated that if the allegations are true, where is the burden of proof? Commissioner Stetser concurred with Commissioner Fiedor and asked what happened to the three person committee.

He said it's clear that there are issues, but we must strive to proceed properly.

Commissioner Rispoli asked why the decision was made in December and not in April as the YO by-laws state.

EHTYO President Domenic Branca, 23 Evergreen Ave., EHT, replied to the question. Domenic stated that the YO was in the midst of accepting letters of intent for coaching. December was the end of the year and they wanted to deal with the issue at hand. He said that the by-laws had been re-written. They were read at two consecutive meetings. Commissioner Rispoli asked whether the new by-laws were reviewed by the Recreation Commission. She indicated that the Commission must review the amendments prior to any changes going into effect.

Commissioner Fiedor felt that three complaints against Coach Wright may not have warranted his removal. There should have been a more in-depth investigation.

Commissioner Fiedor made a motion to revisit the allegations after re-reading the by-laws. Commissioner Stetser seconded the motion.

Commissioner Riggs made a motion to table the commission vote after the by-laws are again reviewed.

Commissioner Weldon seconded the motion. The decision to table the commission vote until March 22, 2017 was passed by a vote of 8-1 (Warrell).

Vice-Chair Messina added that all parties need to come to an agreement. If there is a violation, the decision is in the hands of the Recreation commission otherwise it is in YO's hand.

**b. Athletic Field Use & Fee Schedule Policy/Draft Ordinance**

Vice-Chair Messina inquired as to who would be monitoring field use? Director Audet explained that groups that receive permits to use the fields must carry the paperwork. Should an organized group utilize a field without a use of facility permit, the non-emergency police number should be contacted. Vice-Chair Messina stated that a Park Ranger would be needed to spot check the fields.

Commissioner Warrell made a motion to accept the Egg Harbor Township Ordinance, Chapter 165 entitled Parks. Chairman Fairfield seconded the motion. Motion was passed by a vote of 8-1 (Gallagher).

**X. Use of Facility Requests**

**a. Prestige Soccer Training Tue/Thu June 6-July 20 Bargaintown/Canale Parks**

Director Audet advised that under the Fee structure for the Parks, Prestige falls under category 7.

Chairman Fairfield made the motion to approve the request. Commissioner Weldon seconded the motion. The use of facility request was approved by a vote of 7-2 (Messina and Gallagher).

**b. Bargaintown Fire Aux. Egg Hunt 4/1/17 Canale Park**

Commissioner Riggs made the motion to approve the request. Commissioner Fiedor seconded the motion. It was approved by a vote of 9-0.

**XI. Director's Report**

**a. Tony Canale Park Amphitheater**

Director Audet presented a review of the proposed structure. Commissioner Warrell made a motion to approve the design. Commissioner Fiedor seconded the motion. The design was approved by a vote of 9-0.

**XII. New Business**

### **XIII. Correspondence**

#### **EHT Youth Group Minutes**

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| A. Baseball Association -2/2/17     | F. Soccer Club – last received 1/10/17              |
| B. BMX –last received 10/25/16      | G. Street Hockey Association –last received 12/5/16 |
| C. Diamond Cheer                    | H. Travel Basketball – 2/9/17                       |
| D. Jr. Wrestling –12/27/16, 2/14/17 | I. Youth Softball – 2/7/17                          |
| E. Lacrosse – 1/3/17, 2/7/17        | J. Youth Organization –2/1/17                       |

#### **Handouts**

- a. EHT Jr. Wrestling Executive Bboard list
- b. EHT Baseball Association 2/2/17 & 3/2/17 financials
- c. EHT Softball 2016 Financials
- d. EHT BMX 2017 Racing Schedule
- e. EHT Public Works- Buildings and Grounds summary as of 3/8/17
- f. EHTYO 2017 Board of Directors list

### **XIV. Tabled Matters**

#### **XV. Public Comment re-opened at 8:45 p.m.**

EHTYO President Domenic Branca addressed the commission. The YO board believes in democracy. All parties have had the opportunity to speak before the Recreation Commission. However, not once were any questions directed to the YO Board. The YO board respects the decision of the Recreation Commission. The issue of a husband and wife voting on issues is a non-issue. They vote as individuals. The families on the YO Board are passionate. The board was called upon to do a duty to insure that by-laws are followed. The issue of their removal of a coach has drug on since December 21, 2016. They made the decision in December so that it did not interfere with the selection of coaches in April. The YO board must now wait until March 22, 2017 for the Recreation Commission to render a decision on the coach's appeal. YO by-laws were changed and read three times. Director Audet stated that each organization must submit their by-laws on a yearly basis. As Commissioner Rispoli stated earlier, any by-law change must come to the attention of the Recreation Commission prior to its' adoption. January 4, 2015 YO sent a certified letter to Bob Wright requesting his appearance before the board. He did not appear. Domenic sated that he was elected to represent the board as president. On December 14, 2016, Domenic tried to table the vote. However, Coach Wright insisted that the vote be taken that night. There are 15 voting board members who vote on discipline. 13 out of 15 voting members were present on December 14, 2016. The vote was 8-4 to remove Bob Wright as a coach. One member recused theirselves.

Annette Williams stated that it is a conflict for a board member to vote to oust a coach when they put their on letter of intent to coach that team. Letters of intent for coaching positions are accepted January through April. The interview process begins in April. The conflict remains where a board member is allowed to vote when he put in his letter to coach that team.

Bob Wright feels that he is being removed because he is a whistle blower. The board member who is after his position should not have voted.

Commissioner Weldon stated that the appeal by Bob Wright was filed in December. YO was on hiatus in January. Board Member Brian Fox should have removed himself from the voting process. President Branca indicated that YO abides by their by-laws. He reiterated that he attempted to table the vote but Bob Wright insisted on a vote that night.

Kim Ang, 18 Coachman Drive, EHT asked what were the charges against Bob Wright and who made them?

Vicky Borden, 7 Academy Road, EHT questioned the ability of the President to vote. She asked that the by-laws be reviewed and not to worry about a precedent.

Michele Chisko, 209 Alder Ave., EHT said she has been on the YO Board for two years. Unfortunately Bob Wright's name negatively comes up all the time. The board did not want to vote that night but he insisted. Michele stated that she is not happy that the Recreation Commission tabled their decision for further review of YO's by-laws.

Chasity Branca, 23 Evergreen Ave., EHT is upset that the vote tonight was tabled. She doesn't feel that any by-laws were broken. It is heart wrenching to go through this process. They are a united board. Brian Fox rescinded his letter of intent for the coaching position; he wants to stay at the JV level. The YO board is not headhunters. There are people who love Elmo and those that dislike him. It was a hard decision to remove him as the Head Coach.

Vicky Borden, 7 Academy Road, EHT said volunteering to sit on a board is a thankless job. They made a decision and the vote could have gone either way.

**Public portion was closed at 9:15 p.m.**

Commissioner Riggs thanked Domenic Branca for his explanation of the timeline of events.

**Closed session**

EHTBA President Webber advised the Commission concerning a check from the Phillies Organization for \$824.00 that was not deposited within the 48 hour limit by the 12 U Travel team. Kim Feinstein contacted the Phillies organization on June 24, 2016 to determine where the check was. The Phillies explained that the check was sent on June 1, 2016 to the Travel team. Seven weeks later the amount was deposited via cash, not the Phillies check. EHTBA will insure that all deposits are made within the required time limit.

**XVI. Adjournment 10:03 p.m.**

<b>Motion was made by Chairman Fairfield</b>	<b>Seconded by Commissioner Riggs</b>
<b>Vote</b>	9-0