

**Minutes of the
Rec Advisory Board
September 15, 2021**

Meeting held by Zoom. Present: Jeff Blinderman, Derell Wilson, Julie Cagle, Cheryl Hancin, Lee-Ann Gomes

Minutes of the May 19, 2021 approved.

Old Business

Cheryl discussed the expansion of Jennings field. She review the work we are doing on Dickenman (planted grass/seeded, doing the pathways again to make them straight, dugout grass being fixed. Clay added to the mound, hump to third base being flattened).

Julie asked if teams other than NFA use this field and Cheryl explained that Legion, local high schools and AAU teams use this field. Recently we ran two tournaments there.

The crew prepped Fontaine for soccer and lacrosse.

Summer update

The Rec, due to partnering with the Norwich BOE, hosted the largest summer camp in terms of attendees; over 1000 kids this summer. We averaged 94 per week and used 4 different schools. We also hosted a two week camp that was free to families as it was paid by the Norwich BOE.

Beach went well although the summer was rainy on key weekends and participation was down.

Jeff mentioned that he stopped at Nightflight and that he thought Leonard Miller was doing a nice job there.

Cheryl noted that our numbers for programs are strong and that some programs have waitlists. The thought is that after a year of COVID families are ready to get their kids involved in activities.

Old Business

ARPA plans for the City reviewed by Lee-Ann.

Derell stated that recreation activities have been underserved. He thought the Council champions kids when they do great things but that they don't fund recreation. That is why he was a proponent of such large amounts going towards recreation. Some of the funding was allocated for using schools as a community center. (Note that Norwich Human Services wrote a white paper on using schools as community centers and these ideas were generated from that paper).

Some funding should go towards non-profits who provide recreation. For example, if Nightflight wants to run a program they can partner and use some of this funding to provide and expand opportunities to more kids. The ARPA contains funding to hire part time recreational staff to supervise programs in the schools.

The Board discussed how eventually a standalone community Center will be needed n Norwich. Derell said that this may be looked at with the ARP funds that the City receives next year. Bothe Julie and Lee-Ann recounted their time spend on a community center committee that determined that what the City really needs is an aquatic center with 2 pools; one for therapeutic needs and one for completeive swimming (especially high school and AAU meets). Cheryl has experience as an aquatic director.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45pm

Next meeting Nov 17, 2021