

## WORK SESSION OF MAY 8, 2007

Mayor Weinstein reconvened the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Weinstein, Deputy Mayors Tedeschi and Etlar, Councilmembers Baratta and Trawinski

**ALSO PRESENT:** Acting Manager Garrison, Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski and Attorney Rosenberg

### **Fair Lawn Recreation/Community Center:**

Free Use of Community Center by the Board of Education - Deputy Mayor Tedeschi recused himself.

Mayor Weinstein stated that in this new era of shared services he thought it was appropriate to allow the Community School Broadway Camp to use the Community Center at no cost. He mentioned many of the items they are sharing with the Board of Education. It is appropriate for the children who attend the camp to take advantage of the state of the art theater. They did pay a fee last year and they are paying a fee to use Walsh Pool. He explained the difference between the camp and the use of the Walsh Pool. If it was not for the camps using Walsh Pool, it is possible that they would not need that pool. It is used predominantly by the camps. The theater will be closed. He felt the children should have the advantage of using that theater.

Councilmember Baratta wondered if there was a fee to attend the camp and if it was a profit making operation. Mayor Weinstein replied that there was a fee and it was a profit making operation. Councilmember Baratta pointed out that the Borough will have to maintain and clean the theater. Mayor Weinstein stated that the camp program use Memorial School on rainy days. Councilmember Baratta wondered if that is the goal for shared services, would they be allowing the Community School to use the pool for free in the future. Mayor Weinstein felt the pool was different from the theater.

Deputy Mayor Etlar stated that they can always find a reason to allow someone to use the Community Center at no cost. It costs a great deal of money to operate the Community Center. He did not see any reason to change the current policy. Mayor Weinstein stated it is a camp that is provided by the Board of Education. The Borough is now working toward sharing services. In many ways it is the use of facilities by both entities. He spoke to Superintendent Watson who advised that while there may be a few children from out of town, the majority are Fair Lawn residents. He suggested that perhaps they should pay the Borough as if it was a Club. Councilmember Baratta stated that she wanted to be fair to everyone. She wondered if the other theater groups would be making the same request and how the Council would respond to those requests.

Councilmember Trawinski stated that he spoke to Manager Metzler after the last shared services committee meeting. He is not ready to express his opinion or vote on this matter yet. The Board of Education thought there was a lot they provided to the Borough but Manager Metzler listed all the things the Borough does for them. The next share services committee meeting is May 30.

He would like to hear from the members of that committee. He thought they should wait so that he, Mayor Weinstein and Manager Metzler could present to the Council a broader policy picture. He also was concerned about how many Fair Lawn residents use the camp.

The consensus was to wait until after the shared services meeting.

Use of the Community Center by the Radio Club - Mayor Weinstein reported that he met with a number of members of the Radio Club this evening. The Fair Lawn Amateur Radio Club is a member of the emergency management services. They were working at the Bergen Community College during the recent flooding assisting those who were displaced from their homes. They volunteer their time. They have raised more than \$10,000 for the equipment in the Community Center. They have participated in the Memorial Day Parade and the fireworks. He thought they should be an exception to the rule. They are members of CERT. He felt there should be no fee to the non residents to use the Community Center.

Deputy Mayor Etlar disagreed. The Radio Club is a hobby. They are not there at the behest of Fair Lawn. Fair Lawn does not depend on them. He did not see why the residents of Fair Lawn should subsidize that hobby. He would allow non residents to use the facility as long as they pay the fee. It is still voluntary for them. They do not have to help the Borough.

Councilmember Trawinski wanted to understand from Manager Metzler or OEM Coordinator Marks how the Radio Club fits into the emergency services. He was aware that during Hurricane Floyd they were an invaluable link. He has also seen them training down by Memorial Pool.

Gene Ottenheimer was present and indicated that he was a resident for more than 50 years. He has been a member of the Fair Lawn Amateur Radio Club since 1962. When they became members of the Club they became committed to volunteering their services to what was then called Civil Defense. They provide communications for emergencies, the Memorial Day parade, the firework and the Lions Club 5K run on January 1. One-third of their members are trained CERT members although they do not live in Fair Lawn. His squad of eight members has the highest response of any of the squads. They manned stations for 30 hours for the Red cross during the latest storm. They do the meaningless jobs that others do not do. He thanked them for the beautiful facility. They have raised more than \$10,000 that they reinvested into the building. On Wednesdays and Fridays they hold training sessions. They are a very dedicated group.

Deputy Mayor Tedeschi stated that given the circumstances surrounding the community, it is dismissive to say that the Borough does not need their help. It is not appropriate to say that.

Councilmember Baratta expressed concern about now allowing new members to join. Mr. Ottenheimer stated the current non resident members can pay the \$150 fee but they are not allowed to accept new non resident members. The Council members did not agree with that mandate.

Councilmember Trawinski stated that he was looking for the rational distinction and he thought it was the emergency services connection. He was inclined to support changing the policy, unless there was a compelling reason from the Manager not to change it. Deputy Mayor Etlar reiterated that it is strictly a voluntary thing when they help. Fair Lawn does not ask them to help.

Councilmember Baratta and Councilmember Trawinski pointed out that the fire department and the emergency services are all volunteers. Councilmember Baratta added that they use the Radio Club to help whenever it is needed.

Mr. Ottenheimer stated they were down to 14 members from 48.

The consensus was to allow non residents of the Fair Lawn Amateur Radio Club to use the Fair Lawn Recreation/Community Center without paying the \$150 fee unless Manager Metzler had some overwhelming objection, with Deputy Mayor Etler dissenting. Councilmember Trawinski stated that the reason he agrees is that there is a difference is because of the emergency management need they fill. Deputy Mayor Etler stated that he did not believe that the Borough of Fair Lawn should support a hobby.

### **MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Harvey Rubinstein, 28 Rutgers Terrace asked how old the campers were. He thought that they should know the cost of operating the Community Center by now. They should just charge to keep the building open. They should not be making a profit but there are costs which they should be covering. He would be willing to pay a nominal cost to bring a guest.

Arlene Rubinstein, 28 Rutgers Terrace stated that she thought it was a good idea not to charge the Radio Club since they do provide a service. She strongly objected to the Community School using the Center for free because there are non residents that attend that camp and the Community School makes a profit. She resents non residents using that Center for nothing.

Councilmember Trawinski thought that 90 percent of the campers are residents. The camp is open to those in 4<sup>th</sup> grade through high school.

Michael Silberman, 30-06 Gentner Road stated that he was working on a merit badge for Boy Scouts. He needs half a badge and then he needs to do an Eagle project.

Bob Gremillot, 1 Bristol Place stated that about a month or so ago a member of the Council was talking to a group and said that the cost of the Community Center is about \$30 per person. About three weeks ago that same person mentioned that it costs approximately \$40 per taxpayer. This is very misleading. They should state how much it costs each homeowner.

Afer some calculation, Deputy Mayor Tedeschi stated that it costs \$72.91 per year per house.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Upon motion by Councilmember Baratta and second by Councilmember Trawinski the meeting was adjourned to at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Joanne Kwasniewski, RMC/CMC/MMC  
Municipal Clerk

The undersigned have read and approve the foregoing minutes.

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Mayor Steven Weinstein

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Councilmember Jeanne Baratta

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Deputy Mayor Martin Etler

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Deputy Mayor Joseph Tedeschi

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Councilmember Ed Trawinski